

Newsletter No. 2 September 2008



From the Trust Desk

- We had hoped to publish a second Newsletter a couple of months ago but developments have been so intensive that we decided to wait until we could give our TTT supporters a fuller picture of progress.
- We have some really exciting news concerning the **cancer support** project upon which we reported in the first Newsletter.
- The Trustees became convinced that our work in this area could lead to some worthwhile results because of the wealth of expertise built up in Britain over the years and the strength and skills available in organisations like Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Cancer Care. We also knew from our contacts with some groups in Lithuania that there is a demand for advice. However, we felt that our understanding of the groups involved in this work in Lithuania, their skills, strengths and weaknesses, was quite sketchy. There does not seem to be any umbrella body there, through which we can direct our efforts.
- In order to better understand the situation and thus allow us to target our help, we thought that a carefully organised survey of the cancer care sector in Lithuania would provide useful information, not only to us but also to the authorities in Lithuania. We are delighted to report that Macmillan has agreed to work with TTT in undertaking such a survey and the production of a report. Macmillan will provide somebody with the background necessary to look at what exists on the ground, what seems to be needed and offer thoughts on how to move forward. TTT will pay for travel and subsistence costs.
- The Minister of Health in Lithuania has been approached by our Patrons, the two bilateral Ambassadors, and has, informally, given the project his support. The timing for the survey is likely to be late winter/early spring, following this autumn's parliamentary elections and their aftermath.
- Trustees Wendy Howe and Michael Peart have also held a most productive meeting with Marie Curie to better understand their work in **palliative care** in Britain. They were particularly struck by the "Delivering Choice" programme. A team of Marie Curie specialists have undertaken studies within certain Health Authorities to see what the constraints are to giving terminally ill people their oft-proclaimed wish to spend their last days at home, rather than in a hospital. Research has led to new ways of co-operating between health, social and other organisations that need to work together to provide support for such a patient at home. Research published last year in a professional journal has indicated that Britain is at the top of the league in providing palliative care. Our information from some individuals in Lithuania is that palliative care is not yet widely available. We are therefore considering extending our cancer care project to include palliative care. Because palliative care usually involves medical and social care professionals more than volunteers, our further work in this sector will also be subject to getting the agreement of Lithuanian officials.
- In addition to their help with a survey in Lithuania, Macmillan is receiving the visiting group from the **Oncology Centre of St. Francis at Kretinga** in October, – see the story below. The programme for this visit is very much the product of a partnership between TTT and Madeleine Mulgrew and Cancer Choices in Dungannon. We hope that it will allow the Kretinga Team to broaden their understanding of methods, techniques and information available in Britain and to develop their own plans with the benefit of our experience.

- Thanks to great efforts by Trustee Mida Babiliene, Megan Blunt's book *Chemotherapy, Cakes and Cancer* (a child's narrative of her own personal journey through cancer) was printed in Vilnius in Lithuanian and has been published on the web at:

<http://www.clicsargent.org.uk/Publicationsresources/CLICSargentpublications>

We are delighted that this, our first TTT sponsored translation, is of a high quality and that its target audience is children in need of support at a difficult time for them. We have learned a lot about the translation, proof –reading, printing and publication processes through Mida's hard work and should be in a better position to manage the process next time. Megan's book in Lithuanian may be viewed at:

http://www.clicsargent.org.uk/Publicationsresources/Otherlanguages/ChemotherapyCakesandCancer/main_content/CCCLithuanian.pdf

- Trustee and TTT Secretary, Kastytis Baublys, has been approached by the Chairperson of the Lithuanian Association UK to explore whether they might be able to arrange a formal working relationship with TTT. Discussions are ongoing.

- Trustees Tom Macan and Wendy Howe have been busy looking at **Healthcare and the Arts** and we see potential for a project in this area. From Wendy's professional experience she notes that children soon become institutionalised. In the past, there has been sponsorship for a poet in residence at Liverpool's Alder Hey hospital, children have been able to express themselves through this medium and examples of their work are displayed in the corridors and wards. See Tom's article below.

- The recently appointed British Ambassador to Lithuania, HE Mr Simon Butt, has readily agreed to become a Patron of TTT in place of Colin Roberts who has returned to London to become Director, Overseas Territories, at the FCO. Simon has already been in action in support of TTT in contacts with the Minister of Health.

- Finally, for this Newsletter, TTT has received its first contribution from HM Government, this being the **Gift Aid** contributions for which many of our supporters signed forms. This amounted to £704.85 a not insignificant sum, given the size of our Trust.