



A baby girl after Fistula

Enku's story

“They [Hamlin hospital staff] took my happiness as their happiness. When I gave birth to my child, all of them were very happy.”

Enku lives in a small rural village called Midakeya. She has three children and was eagerly looking forward to the arrival of her newest baby. With no access to qualified medical professionals, Enku prepared for another home delivery assisted by village elders.

During an excruciating four-day labour, Enku sustained a complex obstetric fistula injury. As there was no transport in her village, her family carried her on a traditional handmade stretcher to the nearest health centre. Tragically, her stillborn baby had to be removed by surgery. Enku's bladder had also ruptured.

Hope for a cure

Due to the severity of her injuries, Enku was referred to the local hospital where staff told her about Hamlin's Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital.

Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia's partnerships with local health bureaus, health care providers and communities are changing the reality for women with fistula. The condition is recognised earlier and women are referred to Hamlin's fistula hospitals sooner. This prevents women from suffering for years, sometimes decades, without knowing there is a cure.

Enku told us: *“The people who work here [Addis] take care of me very well. I could not move my hands and could not stand by myself. I did not move properly and could not use the toilet. I leaked and I smelled bad. But the people here accept me with all my deformities. I stayed here for a long time with other women who had the same problem.”*

With the help of “these good people”, Enku received physiotherapy for four months to regain her movement before receiving life-changing fistula surgery after eight months. She made a full recovery and returned home to her family.

A new life begins after fistula

Enku is one of few fortunate women who was able to fall pregnant after the trauma of a fistula injury.

She was overjoyed when she realised she was expecting a baby girl. Just eighteen months after she had left Hamlin's Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital, Enku was welcomed back for the safe caesarean delivery of her daughter.

“I am very lucky to have conceived this baby after all the unforgettable and painful injuries. I gave birth to a girl and they gave me nutritional food to make me and my child healthy. They do all the necessary requirements to make me comfortable and happy in my pregnancy,” says Enku.

Did you know that Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia encourages all former fistula patients to return to a Hamlin Fistula Hospital when they become pregnant after their fistula injury has healed?

Every woman can deliver her baby via a caesarean section free of charge, thanks to the support of people like you.

Enku is so grateful for the loving care and support she received from everyone at Hamlin's Addis Ababa hospital. She says,

“I thank all the hospital staff for accepting me back happily. They take care of me, just like a mother and a father. I am very happy now.”



Expert Physiotherapist Support for Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia

With the support of Hamlin Fistula NZ, Canterbury expert gynecology physiotherapist Ann Johnson recently returned to Hamlin Fistula in Addis Ababa to mentor the local physiotherapy team.

Just as she did last year, Ann brought a suitcase full of donations from her church and work friends. These included old training shoes for women with dropped foot from nerve damage during prolonged labor, underwear to hold pads in place during exercise, and socks for the cold nights. Staff were delighted with the gifts, as last year's donations had all been distributed to women in need.

Assisting Dr. Yeshineh, the Medical Director, Ann compiled a list of necessary equipment for the physiotherapy department. By listening to the local staff about the department's evolving needs, Ann assessed the functionality of old equipment purchased many years ago. She ensured that the new equipment requested would maximize the value of donors' money before sending the list to UK supporters of Hamlin Fistula.

Ann spent time with Yetem, one of the physiotherapy assistants who was a patient herself many years ago. Each morning, Yetem visits patients who have had fistula or prolapse surgery to teach them exercises that reduce the risk of post-surgery complications.

During her stay, Ann also met women who had recently arrived at the hospital from across the country. One woman, who was 38 weeks pregnant, had her fistula repaired nine years ago and returned for a Caesarean section. Due to her previous repair, doctors

were concerned she might not be able to pass urine easily after surgery, so the physiotherapists taught her how to use a catheter to ensure she fully emptied her bladder and prevented incontinence.

Another woman lost her baby and suffered a fistula injury during a difficult forceps delivery six months ago—a rare complication in New Zealand. Unfortunately, her perineum also became infected, causing significant pain and immobility. She had developed contractures that immobilized her. Standing at only Ann's shoulder height, she appeared very young.

She will need extensive physiotherapy, antibiotic treatment, and good nursing care before she is ready for any surgery. However, she is now in the right place to receive the comprehensive care she needs and is expected to make a good recovery in time.

As a gynecology physiotherapist, Ann has examined thousands of women, but until visiting Addis, she had never felt a fistula. She was shocked to feel how large the hole in the vagina could be but is confident in the surgeons at Hamlin Fistula who have the skills to repair these injuries and transform women's lives.



Barefoot for Hamlin

On May 11th, the very same Ann Johnson, along with her colleague Anna Leggat and four friends, braved the cold, walking barefoot from Spencer Park to Southshore Spit (Christchurch). With the help of a generous dollar-matching donor, they raised over \$6,000 for Hamlin's vital work in Ethiopia. We are deeply grateful for their incredible efforts!



Donations can still be made and new challenges set if you'd like to complete your own Barefoot Challenge to raise funds for Hamlin. Visit: www.hamlinfistula.org.nz/barefoot-challenge

Thanks to volunteers like Ann and our supporters, women with childbirth injuries can receive life-changing treatment from Hamlin's expert medical team.

Gift a Comfort Pack



Thanks to your support, Meseret is free from fistula after 28 years of suffering.

At home in central Ethiopia, Meseret (pictured above), endured an agonising, obstructed labour without anyone to help her. Her baby was stillborn and Meseret sustained a devastating obstetric fistula injury which left her leaking urine. She told us ...

“In the past almost 29 years I had never visited family or neighbourhoods. I stayed in pain for those long years.”

A long journey: Meseret’s son told her she had suffered enough and insisted they search for a cure. It took fifteen days for Meseret to travel with her sister to Hamlin’s Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital.

On arrival, Meseret was given a Comfort Package, including a new nightgown and slippers, hygiene items, a homecoming dress and beautiful Hamlin blanket, to mark the start of her healing journey.

Meseret’s healing continued with fistula repair surgery and loving care to restore her dignity and confidence. She has returned to her family and community with her health restored.

Comfort and care: **“This blanket serves as a remembrance of my beautiful stay here and helps me to recall the day of my cure. So I am happy having it.”** says Meseret.

With your support we continue to find and heal more women like Meseret, hidden away in shame with untreated fistula injuries.

All patients are treated free of charge, thanks to our wonderful supporters like you ❤️

If you'd like to gift a Comfort Package to show you care deeply for a woman as she heals from the trauma of obstetric fistula, visit www.hamlinfistula.org.nz/support

Meet Jayne Rattray, our Fundraising Manager



Jayne joins us with a wealth of experience in marketing, fundraising, event management and graphic design.

Jayne has a varied and interesting background in community outreach and project management. One of her many achievements, Jayne and her husband created the Tranz Alpine Scooter Safari, a significant fundraiser for the Cancer Society, and was also behind the Rangiora Earthquake Express following the devastating Christchurch earthquakes.

In her graphic design role, Jayne had sponsored the design of Hamlin’s newsletters and fundraising materials over the past nine years, making her deeply familiar with our work before she joined Hamlin in a full time role.

Jayne has been with us for just over three months now and has thoroughly enjoyed getting to know our donors and projects - whilst also making significant inroads into our database cleaning and upcoming events. *[Did you know that Jayne is our only full-time staff member?]*

Jayne is deeply passionate about our goals and is a wonderful asset to our organisation - we hope you’ll reach out to her with your support and ideas.

In her personal life, Jayne lives on a lifestyle block in North Canterbury with her husband and two teenage children. She has a myriad of pets and enjoys spending her holidays boating in the beautiful Marlborough Sounds.

Renewing Bonds: New Zealand Ambassador Visits Hamlin’s Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital

We are delighted to share the heart-warming story of the recent visit to Hamlin’s Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital by New Zealand’s Ambassador to Ethiopia, **Michael Upton**, accompanied by his wife Vera and their two daughters.

The visit was a momentous occasion, filled with emotional exchanges and renewed commitments to our shared mission.

The Upton family was graciously hosted by Dr. Biniam, one of our esteemed surgeons, and Negash, the head of HR, along with myself, Joli, Chair of Hamlin Fistula NZ.

The Uptons were deeply moved by Mamitu, who tearfully reminisced about Drs. Reg and Catherine Hamlin, calling them “Abiye” (dad) and “Emaye” (mum). They also met Tena, our head nurse of 34 years, who was personally recruited by Dr. Reg.

This visit not only highlighted Hamlin’s ongoing impact but also renewed our relationship with the Ambassador and the NZ Embassy in Addis Ababa.

We look forward to continued collaboration in our mission to support Ethiopian women.





Hamlin
Fistula
NZ

High Tea for Hamlin



Saturday 7 September

2-4pm | Aldersgate Centre | Christchurch

Indulge in an afternoon of elegance & impact this September!

Join us for a delicious afternoon tea, special guest performance from virtuoso violinist Fiona Pears, an auction and updates from the Hamlin Fistula NZ team.

**BOOK
NOW**

Tickets \$55 per person

www.hamlinfistula.org.nz/high-tea

This event is proudly sponsored by:



Or, you can HOST YOUR OWN High Tea anywhere in the country to support Hamlin.

From cozy gatherings to lavish affairs, your High Tea can be tailored to your style and location. Whether it's at home, work, school, church, or your local community centre, your event will make a meaningful impact.

By participating, you're not just savouring delightful treats; you're spreading hope and raising awareness. We can help you with a presentation, brochures, whatever you need to make your event a success. Please visit www.hamlinfistula.org.nz/high-tea for more information.

Ethiopian Supporters Tour Update

Unfortunately we didn't meet the minimum numbers required for an October Tour so will postpone our trip until early 2025. If you'd be interested in joining us then, please get in touch for more information.

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Be sure to Like and Follow us for updates on our work

www.facebook.com/HamlinNZ



This August, our chairwoman, Joli and Fundraising Manger, Jayne, will be traveling North to share the inspiring stories and critical impact of our work.

If you've read Catherine's books, 'The Hospital by the River' or 'Healing Lives,' you'll know the captivating nature of our story. Joli, fresh from a four-week stay in Ethiopia will also have plenty of updates to share.

We'd love to meet with our Friends of Hamlin to hear why you choose to support us and your ideas for helping us end obstetric fistula forever. We also invite you to bring your family and friends to hear the plight of Ethiopian women and learn how Hamlin Fistula NZ is making a difference.

Mark your calendars and please join us at one of these must-attend public events. **We look forward to seeing you there!**

Tentative dates and locations:

August 2024

- Auckland Saturday 17th
Sunday 18th
- Hamilton Monday 19th
- Whakatane Tuesday 20th
- Hawkes Bay Wednesday 21st
- Palmerston Nth Thursday 22nd
- Wellington Friday 23rd

Please visit www.hamlinfistula.org.nz/events

for further information on times, venues and to reserve your seats.

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Charity
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