



Newlands Clinic management team strengthened with addition of Matthias Widmaier as Country Director

Zurich, 1 December 2014 – Following on from Sabine Lüthy taking over as CEO in 2012, Swiss Aids Care International has taken the next step in its succession planning. After an induction programme lasting several weeks, Matthias Widmaier (47) is taking on the role of Country Director of Swiss Aids Care International (Zimbabwe), thus also expanding the management team of Newlands Clinic in Harare financed by the foundation. Prof. Ruedi Lüthy (73) will remain on-site as Medical Director, and will be responsible for the treatment of patients and the training of healthcare professionals.

“We are absolutely delighted to have secured the services of Matthias Widmaier, an experienced development cooperation worker with strong integrative skills who will fit in ideally with our organisation,” said Sabine Lüthy, CEO of Swiss Aids Care International. “The patients at Newlands Clinic need life-long HIV treatment. With Matthias Widmaier as Country Director, we are expanding the Clinic’s management team and putting its future on a sound footing.”

Matthias Widmaier brings on board a wealth of experience in development cooperation in Africa. He latterly spent six years as Administration Director at a rehabilitation hospital in Uganda. As Country Director of Swiss Aids Care International (Zimbabwe), he will lead the team of 65 local staff together with Prof. Ruedi Lüthy. The Clinic now treats some 5,300 HIV patients, and its Training Centre provides courses for around 500 doctors and nurses from across Zimbabwe every year.

Matthias Widmaier, Country Director of Swiss Aids Care International (Zimbabwe): “I am really looking forward to my new task, and to working together with Ruedi Lüthy and all the team in Harare and in Switzerland. Newlands Clinic does highly professional work in Zimbabwe, and has changed the lives of many HIV-positive people for the better.”

Prof. Ruedi Lüthy, founder of Swiss Aids Care International and Newlands Clinic: “We were looking for someone who shares our values and who can run the Clinic in the future. I am convinced we’ve found the right person in Matthias Widmaier. Together with my daughter, Sabine Lüthy, he will ensure that our urgently needed work is continued, and I am very happy that this is the case.”

As Medical Director, Prof. Ruedi Lüthy will in future concentrate fully on the treatment of patients and the training and further education of local professionals. He will continue to spend most of the year in Zimbabwe.

Profile of Matthias Widmaier

Country Director of Swiss Aids Care International (Zimbabwe)

Matthias Widmaier (47) has many years' experience in development cooperation. From 2003 to the end of September 2014 he worked in Uganda for CBM, initially as a program manager and latterly as the administration director of a rehabilitation hospital. Before that, Matthias Widmaier worked as a sports therapist and was Deputy Director of Dr. Loew, an institution dedicated to helping people with disabilities.

Matthias Widmaier initially qualified as a physical education teacher, and went on to complete a second Masters in Motology in Marburg, Germany. He has also completed further education courses in finance, hospital management, and leadership.

Profile of Prof. Ruedi Lüthy

*Founder and Medical Director of Newlands Clinic,
founder and member of the Board of Trustees of Swiss Aids Care International*

Prof. Ruedi Lüthy (73) studied medicine at the University of Zurich, where he also received his doctorate. He set up the Division of Infectious Diseases and Hospital Epidemiology at University Hospital Zurich, and was its head for more than 20 years. He was also the co-founder and head of the hospice "Lighthouse". At the end of the 1980s, he was President of the Swiss HIV Cohort Study, which made a significant contribution to knowledge about HIV and AIDS. He was also President of the Swiss National AIDS Commission. Since 1997, he has been an honorary professor at the Medical Faculty of the University of Zurich.

Ruedi Lüthy set up the foundation Swiss Aids Care International in 2003 and travelled to Zimbabwe to set up an HIV outpatient clinic in the capital, Harare.

Images:

Click [here](#) for a selection of images of the management team (photos: Patrick Rohr) and the Clinic (photos: Pia Zanetti / Patrick Rohr).

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Swiss Aids Care International

The foundation Swiss Aids Care International was set up by Prof. Ruedi Lüthy in 2003. It operates the Newlands Clinic in Zimbabwe's capital, Harare, providing HIV and AIDS patients with medical treatment and psychosocial support. The Clinic also has an ongoing training programme for local doctors and nurses. Zimbabwe is one of the poorest countries in Africa. Around 1.4 million people there are HIV-positive or have already developed AIDS, many of them children. Through Newlands Clinic and its mobile clinics, Swiss Aids Care International now treats more than 5,300 patients and trains around 500 specialists from across Zimbabwe every year. It also distributes food, carries out gynaecological screening tests, and provides self-help groups for young people. The foundation is mainly funded by donations and by contributions from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Sabine Lüthy, Prof. Ruedi Lüthy's daughter, has been CEO of the foundation since 2012.

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