



EVENT TOOLKIT

Restoring Dignity, Nurturing Change



THIS EASY-TO-USE KIT INCLUDES:

- STEP
1 CHOOSE AN
EVENT
- STEP
2 SET
GOALS
- STEP
3 START
PLANNING
- STEP
4 SET AN
AGENDA
- STEP
5 GET THE TOOLS
YOU NEED

Members of the Hamlin Fistula USA's leadership team are ready and eager to help make your event a success! Please contact info@HamlinFistulaUSA.org and note **"My Event"** in the subject line to get started. Thank you for supporting Hamlin Fistula USA!



STEP 1

HAMLIN EVENTS

BEFORE YOU PLAN YOUR EVENT, FIRST ASK, WHAT KIND OF EVENT DO YOU WANT TO HOST?

READ FOR HAMLIN

Host a Read for Hamlin event by sharing the Hamlin story through your book club.

- *The Hospital by the River* by Dr. Catherine Hamlin and John Little is the autobiography of Catherine Hamlin and the Hamlin Fistula Hospital in Ethiopia.
- For a fictional story, read *Cutting for Stone* by Dr. Abraham Verghese. Verghese uses the Hamlin Fistula Hospital as inspiration for setting of the story, and through this setting illustrates life in Ethiopia in the '60s and '70s, and describes the plight of women in childbirth in Ethiopia. Please note this book covers adult themes and may not be appropriate for a young audience.

Introduce your book of choice to your book club and get it into your book rotation. Set aside a special day or month to discuss the book and raise money and support for Hamlin. Use the discussion prompts included in this kit to guide your conversation and raise awareness about childbirth injuries in Ethiopia.

As the host of the event, please consider providing:

Beverages and refreshments

Copies of the book

[Study guide or discussion prompts](#)

HAMLIN COFFEE CLUB

Set up a coffee date with your friends to share the Hamlin story and gather supporters in your community. Your coffee club can be big or small, morning or afternoon, with coffee, tea or champagne! Host it at home, school, church, work or public venue. Share selected excerpts [[see discussion prompts](#)] of *The Hospital by the River* by Dr. Catherine Hamlin to spark conversation.

YOUR OWN IDEA

There are many ways to raise money and awareness for Hamlin Fistula USA. Are you an athlete? Love running marathons? Play in a band? Eager to throw parties for cause? Host an event that speaks to your strengths and interests and it will undoubtedly be a success. We're happy to support you in any way you choose to raise awareness for Hamlin Fistula USA.

Be sure to take photos throughout the event and send them to us so that we can share your success online and on social media!

STEP 2

EVENT GOALS

WHAT'S THE FOCUS OF YOUR EVENT?

Depending on your event, set specific goals.

1 Do you want to educate and engage your community about Hamlin Fistula USA?

If your goal is to **EDUCATE**:

- Increase awareness about preventable childbirth injuries in Ethiopia – and how Hamlin Fistula is working towards a future where fistula treatment is no longer necessary
- Be a multiplier! Find one person to host their own Read for Hamlin or Coffee Club event.

2 Do you want to raise money for Hamlin Fistula USA?

If your goal is to **RAISE MONEY**:

- Set a target of raising a total or per person amount of money, then work to hit this target!
- Be a multiplier! Find one person to host their own Read for Hamlin or Coffee Club event.



STEP 3

EVENT PLANNING GUIDE

1 Recruit co-hosts and generate event ideas

Having a friend or two help brainstorm for your event can increase your event success and guest list.

2 Pick a date, time and location

Give guests as much notice as possible – weekends and evenings are best. Your location will depend on your type of event but some ideas are: cafes and restaurants, your/friend's home or backyard, book club location, church.

3 Create a guest list

Think broadly about your social contacts. Plan to invite two to three times the number of guests you expect to attend. Buckets of people to invite: friends and family, people you worship with, people you see at the gym, colleagues, people from organizations you're a part of like sports teams, PTA, book club, labor union.

4 State "suggested donation" on invitation

If you are putting on a fundraising event, it's important to clearly communicate this to your guests. Listing a "suggested donation" on your invitations is a great way to let them know what you're asking. Consider \$50, \$75, \$100, or more depending on what you think is appropriate.

5 Send invitations and track RSVPs

Send your save-the-dates as far in advance as possible, and plan to send your invitations three to four weeks in advance. This kit includes examples of [save-the-dates](#), [invitations](#), and [thank-you emails](#). Evite, PaperLess-Post.com, and Facebook are good options for free and easy invitations and RSVP tracking.

6 Make personal contact to confirm attendance

Budget time to follow up with your undecided and confirmed guests. Sending a reminder the week before the event, or making a personal phone call, can make all the difference in ensuring your guests' attendance. This is also a great opportunity to talk to your community about Hamlin Fistula.

7 Post-event follow-up

Email to thank those who volunteered and attended and even those who couldn't make it, let them know how much money was raised and give them a link to the Hamlin Fistula USA website (www.hamlinfistulausa.org). This is a great reminder for those who might want to find out more. Send your materials back to Hamlin Fistula USA: donation envelopes, filled out [event report](#), and your [sign-in sheet](#).

8 Keep in touch with your Hamlin Fistula USA representative

Let us know how the event went. Email your Hamlin contact along the way so she can answer any questions, help you brainstorm, and provide materials to help make your event a huge success.

9 Most important – we want to hear from you!

Please be in touch to share your story with the Hamlin Fistula USA team – send us photos, personal stories, or information on your success, and indicate if we can share it on our website and Facebook page. We also want to hear why you support Hamlin Fistula USA and your thoughts on how to make the organization even stronger.

STEP 4

EVENT FLOW

TO MAKE YOUR EVENT FLOW SUCCESSFUL:

- Settle in and start the party
- Mingle, grab your coffee (or glass of vino), and then start gearing up to talk about why you're all there.
- Get some conversation going
- Share Hamlin Fistula's mission, why you chose the book, and dive into the story
 - Share your favorite book excerpts
 - Refer to the study guide for more Q's and conversation starters
 - Tell your guests about what women face giving birth in Ethiopia
 - Talk about how Hamlin Fistula Hospital is treating women and girls with nowhere else to go and are pioneering techniques
- Encourage your friends to take action
- Brainstorm together about how you can continue to spread the word about Hamlin Fistula.
 - Can one of your guests host their own party next month?
 - Can you get something going at your job or school?
 - Have a fundraiser at church or on campus?
 - Follow Hamlin on social media
 - Sign up for monthly e-newsletters
- Use your event goals to determine what you're going to ask your guests to do. For example, to write a check if you are hosting a fundraising event, or to sign up to volunteer, if your event is an educational event.
- Share the Hamlin video, [found here](#).
- Share what it means to be a Pillar: Hamlin Fistula's Pillar Program, our designation for donors who give \$1000 or more. It is the single most impactful way to support Hamlin Fistula. As a Pillar of Hamlin, you will receive a certificate of recognition and a special gift connection from a very grateful Hamlin fistula patient. If you are a Pillar, what does it mean to you? Why do you give? Share your personal motivations with your guests.
- If you are hosting a fundraising event, collecting contributions is very important. You should distribute donation forms, and have your guests make their donations. Please make sure that all forms are filled out completely and clearly.
- AFTER your event
 - Within 24 hours of your event, please mail or drop off any donation envelopes, [sign-in sheets](#), and an [event report form](#) to:

Hamlin Fistula USA
P.O. Box 460312
St. Louis, MO 63146

STEP 5 EVENT MATERIALS

FOLLOW THE LINKS BELOW:

Brochure	Talking Points	Discussion Guide: <i>The Hospital by the River</i>	Discussion Guide: <i>Cutting for Stone</i>
Slide Presentation	Video	Sign-in Sheet	Sample: Read for Hamlin Invite
Sample: Fundraising Event Invite	Sample: Thank You Email	Sample: Save The Date	Event Report Form

Once your event has taken place it is important to share your success! Post photos of your event on Facebook and encourage friends to spread the word. Finally, please fill out an [Event Report Form](#) and send it in.



TALKING POINTS:

MOST CHILDBIRTH INJURIES ARE PREVENTABLE

- Hamlin Fistula USA (HFUSA) is dedicated to the treatment, care, and prevention of childbirth injuries in Ethiopia – injuries that leave women devastated emotionally, debilitated physically, and isolated from their families and community.

- One out of every 27 women dies in childbirth in Ethiopia, usually due to lack of health care and delivering the baby on their own.

- Many expectant mothers must walk or be carried to the nearest health care center to give birth; cars or trucks are not available. They travel over treacherous terrain, for days, to reach a healthcare provider.

- Just over 800 midwives work in the remote Amhara Region, home to more than 17 million people. This is a fraction of the minimum ratio recommended by the World Health Organization.

- Obstetric fistula is a devastating and preventable childbirth injury that occurs after prolonged and agonizing obstructed labor. Pressure from the fetus forms a hole between the vagina and the bladder or rectum through which urine or feces leak uncontrollably.



- Women in Ethiopia who develop fistulas are often abandoned by their communities; they are left to live in isolation without hope.

- Childbirth injuries from prolonged obstructed labor are very rare in the United States. But they still occur far too often in countries like Ethiopia, where millions of women lack access to the maternal health resources that could prevent them.

- **TREATMENT:** Fistula is treatable, and almost all cases can be repaired with a simple surgery. For 40 years, the family of Hamlin Fistula hospitals has provided treatment for about 50,000 women with a success rate of 90 percent.

- Hamlin Fistula's Addis Ababa hospital and five regional hospitals provide free repair surgery to approximately 2,500 women each year

- **CARE:** Addis Ababa Hospital's Ethiopian doctors and nurses take a patient-centered approach. In addition to providing the best treatment, many patients are trained in literacy, craftsmanship, and other life skills. This helps women not only to heal from surgery, but to also regain senses of dignity and self-worth, and fully reintegrate into society.

- **PREVENTION:** There is a dire shortage of maternal care in rural Ethiopia. Hamlin trains surgeons and midwives and helps place them in rural areas, so pregnant women can get help delivering their babies safely. When a Hamlin midwife arrives in a regional healthcare center, new cases of fistula drop to almost zero in nearby villages.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Hospital By The River

- 1 How does one get an obstetric fistula?
- 2 How is it that Reg and Catherine Hamlin, two very experienced OB/GYN's, had never seen a case of obstetric fistula, before their journey to Ethiopia?
- 3 Discuss what contributes to the occurrence of obstetric fistula and other childbirth injuries. What factors can help prevent obstetric fistula and other childbirth injuries?
- 4 Reg and Catherine Hamlin built the only hospital in the world dedicated solely to the care of women suffering from obstetric fistula. Their goal was to provide holistic care or care for the whole woman, body, mind, and spirit. Discuss the various ways that obstetric fistula and other childbirth injuries may affect a woman's well being and how the Hamlin Fistula Hospital addresses those challenges.
- 5 Both Reg and Catherine's families had long histories of faith and service and the book describes their career restlessness that led them to try different things until they signed on for 3 years of service in Ethiopia in 1959. After that, it was clear they had found their mission, and ended staying in Ethiopia the rest of their lives. Have you ever felt that way about something? Have you found your life's work, something that you are passionate about? Are there risks? Sacrifices? What role does faith play? ...Or a restlessness? Or a longing to be of service? Or a longing to find your life's purpose?
- 6 Part of Reg and Catherine's holistic plan is also to work with the people of Ethiopia, not only as recipients of care, but also train and support local providers of care so they become self-sufficient in providing the best maternal care for women in Ethiopia. As such, the Hamlin model doesn't look to train western or foreign doctors/volunteers who want to help. In what ways could we help Hamlin's cause right here from home?
- 7 Looking towards the future, in what ways can Hamlin share their successful holistic model of prevention and care of women with childbirth injuries with the developing world and increase the level of maternal care for women throughout Ethiopia?



DISCUSSION GUIDE

CUTTING FOR STONE

- 1 Abraham Verghese has said that his ambition in writing *Cutting for Stone* was to “tell a great story, an old-fashioned, truth-telling story.” In what ways is *Cutting for Stone* an old-fashioned story—and what does it share with the great novels of the nineteenth century? What essential human truths does it convey?
- 2 What does *Cutting for Stone* reveal about the emotional lives of doctors? Contrast the attitudes of Hema, Ghosh, Marion, Shiva, and Thomas Stone toward their work. What draws each of them to the practice of medicine? How are they affected, emotionally and otherwise, by the work they do?
- 3 What do Hema, Matron, Rosina, Sister Mary Joseph Praise, Genet, and Tsige—as well as the many women who come to Missing seeking medical treatment—reveal about what life is like for women in Ethiopia?
- 4 Marion observes that in Ethiopia, patients assume that all illnesses are fatal and that death is expected, but in America, news of having a fatal illness “always seemed to come as a surprise, as if we took it for granted that we were immortal” (p. 396). What other important differences does *Cutting for Stone* reveal about the way illness is viewed and treated in Ethiopia and in the United States? To what extent are these differences reflected in the split between poor hospitals, like the one in the Bronx where Marion works, and rich hospitals like the one in Boston where his father works?
- 5 Addis Ababa is at once a cosmopolitan city thrumming with life and the center of a dictatorship rife with conflict. How do the influences of Ethiopia’s various rulers—including Italy and Emperor Selassie—reveal themselves in day-to-day life? How does growing up there affect Marion’s and Shiva’s worldviews?
- 6 In the novel, Thomas Stone asks, “What treatment in an emergency is administered by ear?” The correct answer is “Words of comfort.” How does this moment encapsulate the book’s surprising take on medicine? Have your experiences with doctors and hospitals held this to be true? Why or why not? What does *Cutting for Stone* tell us about the roles of compassion, faith, and hope in medicine?
- 7 There are a number of dramatic scenes on operating tables in *Cutting for Stone*: the twins’ births, Thomas Stone amputating his own finger, Ghosh untwisting Colonel Mebratu’s volvulus, the liver transplant, etc. How does Verghese use medical detail to create tension and surprise? What do his depictions of dramatic surgeries share with film and television hospital dramas—and yet how are they different?
- 8 Although it’s also a play on the surname of the characters, the title *Cutting for Stone* comes from a line in the Hippocratic Oath: “I will not cut for stone, even for patients in whom the disease is manifest; I will leave this operation to be performed by practitioners, specialists in this art.” Verghese has said that this line comes from ancient times, when bladder stones were epidemic and painful: “There were itinerant stone cutters—lithologists—who could cut into either the bladder or the perineum and get the stone out, but because they cleaned the knife by wiping their blood-stiffened surgical aprons, patients usually died of infection the next day.” How does this line resonate for the doctors in the novel?
- 9 Almost all of the characters in *Cutting for Stone* are living in some sort of exile, self-imposed or forced, from their home country—Hema and Ghosh from India, Marion from Ethiopia, Thomas from India and then Ethiopia. Verghese is of Indian descent but was born and raised in Ethiopia, went to medical school in India, and has lived and worked in the United States for many years. What do you think this novel says about exile and the immigrant experience? How does exile change these characters, and what do they find themselves missing the most about home?