Twitter Thread by Martin J Keatings #VoteAFI2



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@MartinJKeatings



Today is a very special day for my family and a testament to the Scottish NHS and to @StagecoachEScot - And now you are thinking what the heck has a bus company and the NHS got to do with each other. Well, today marks the 30th anniversary of my mother and her colleagues...

....establishing a midwifery unit in Malawi which over the last 30 years has saved tens of thousands of lives.

On this day, 30 years ago, after collecting massive amounts of unused medical equipment from hospitals around Scotland, my father and I transported them to....

...the stagecoach depot in Perth. Stagecoach loaded all of that equipment onto buses and transported it to Malawi where my mother (who was a midwife) and colleagues used them to create one of the first dedicated midwifery units in Malawi.

Everything from basic midwifery supplies to things like mosquito nets was transported en-masse to the new unit.

It was a co-operative effort by hospitals from the borders to the Highlands.

What would have been thrown out because it was fast approaching the end of its use, was retasked to assisting some of the most impoverished in the world. This unit still exists to this day and continues to provide proper midwifery care to tens of thousands of expectant...

...mothers in Malawi.

All made possible by cooperative efforts of nurses across Scotland. Volunteers transporting medical supplies to the borders and then onward with my father and multiple lorries to Stagecoach who then transported it to Malawi!

I thought it important to mention this today because it is 30 years to the day AND it's good to mention in-light of the current climate about our responsibility when it comes to international medical cooperation.

It's a forgotten page in history, but what happened 30 years ago was a monumental achievement.

It's also important to note that this was also a public effort within Scotlands schools which might be of interest to @JohnSwinney. As part of the fundraising efforts, my mother ran what was called the 1p initiative. It was pretty simple.

Kids across the country would fill smarties tubes (the sweety) with 1p coins. At that time a smarties tube was the exact diameter of a 1p coin. When the kids had filled those tubes they would then deposit them at a central point in the school for collection.

Thousands of kids across Scotland (and their parents) participated in this, raising tens of thousands of pounds. They also held charitable events to assist with the fundraiser. All of which was spent on medical equipment.