



Mulanje Mission Hospital

Newsletter

December 2021

Mulanje Mission Hospital
CCAP Blantyre Synod
PO Box 45 Mulanje
Malawi

E-mail:
director@mmh.mw

National Bank of Malawi
P.O. Box 945 Blantyre

Hospital accounts:
407275 (\$)
286818 (£)
380873 (€)

SWIFT CODE:
NBMAMW MW

Editorial comment

By Dickson Chisale

Dear readers, friends and partners all over the world. We hope this newsletter finds you well! As the year 2021 is coming towards the end and Christmas is approaching, Mulanje Mission Hospital would like to share stories and experiences with you.

2021 has been associated with COVID-19, as for the whole world. MMH tested 1208 suspected patients and 360 came out positive with 21 deaths during the year. Though the new variants are concerning many; we also celebrate good cooperation with many partners including the Ministry of Health who kept a good

supply of C-19 tests available.

In this Newsletter you can read about improving water and sanitation in rural health centres in the region: because only with good basic infrastructure we can beat C-19 and many other diseases. Also: reports from a delightful visit by national sports star Towera Vinkhumbo, advocating for young girls and women; developments in Eye health and Rehabilitation, new graduates and arrivals, and our Christmas appeal. Enjoy reading.

Merry Christmas and a happy new year!

Keep up to date with all the news from MMH.

MMH website is regularly updated



Visit our site at
www.mmh.mw

Please send feedback to
info@mmh.mw

Children's ward nurse completes BSc degree

Ruth Dziwani, nurse in-charge of the Children's ward has graduated from a Bachelors programme in Paediatric Nursing. She was supported through the Capacity Building Programme at MMH.

Ruth has taken up work at the Paediatric ward, which is in the end stage of a two-year renovation programme funded by the English Reformed Church and Wilde Ganzen. The ward has been refurbished, will soon have a renovated high-dependency unit with good medical equipment and is designed to provide a safe and comfortable environment for sick children and their caretakers. It is a blessing to have Ruth back to continue improving care on the ward.



Ruth Dziwani ▲

During the past quarter the construction of a new clinic has started.

Several areas of need, that are currently not adequately addressed at the hospital, will receive the attention they deserve through this development.

First of all, the opening of an Eye clinic. About 1% of people in Mulanje and beyond are blind, with the

main cause being cataract. Cataract surgery and basic eye care can very well be done at our level. We are teaming up with several partners from across the world to make an Eye unit and cataract surgery reality.

The new clinic will also host a rehabilitation/physiotherapy department. With basic rehabilitative interventions many patients can realize im-

proved quality of life; including disadvantaged groups like disabled children and those who suffered from stroke.

The clinic will also offer space to the dental clinic; with plans to use the current dental clinic for an orthopedic department.

Here are some photos from the construction work in progress!



For more photos, see our website www.mmh.mw or the Mulanje Mission Hospital facebook page





▲ *Dr. Marleen and David Zijderveld, with Jedidja (standing right), Jafeth (left) and baby Sifra.*

In November our community received new members from the Netherlands.

Dr. Marleen Zijderveld, her husband David and their three children have come to work at MMH after a year of preparations.

Dr. Marleen is a graduate from the

tropical medicine/international health programme in the Netherlands and has recently finished a six month internship at Nkhoma Mission Hospital in Malawi. She will be working as a Medical Officer.

David is a sports teacher with wide interests, ranging from computers to

drones to sustainable agriculture. He takes care of the family and no doubt will find useful areas to work on in and around the mission.

David and Marleen are receiving support by a committee in the Netherlands related to their church, and the organization iTeams NL.

Construction—continued from last page

For the construction of this new clinic we work together with Christian Blind Mission International, who also invest in the Sustainable Livelihood Programme. Clinical equipment has already been shipped by UK based charity Sight2020. We also received generous donations from individual donors and the Camellia Foundation, who are affiliated to the local Eastern Produce tea estates.

The drone photo right shows the layout—left upper Rehabilitation, right Eye clinic, downwards Dental clinic.



Safe healthcare and prevention of Covid-19 depends on the availability of proper water and sanitation in all healthcenters.

A needs assessment done by MMH in December 2020 showed serious problems with water and sanitation in many rural facilities in South Malawi. Some facilities did not have piped water at all to serve patients. Many had inadequate toilets.

In the EMMS-funded Mokwanira project, water and sanitation for health (WASH) was completed at Muloza and Chinyama health centres. During the past quarter, the project officers concentrated on Nkomaula and Mpala health centers. Between the two, Nkomawura's problems were more pathetic. According to the In-charge who has been at the facility since 2012, he has never seen water in pipes of its building. There were many factors which led to this problem, like: a water storage tank which because of its emptiness was

blown off by wind and got damaged, the solar pump got damaged as well and was never repaired, it is also alleged that the borehole was shallow and got dry. As a solution, patients and health worker used to draw water from a nearby community borehole which was most of the times congested. This caused a lot of problems mostly at labour ward which needs a lot of water.

To fix the problem, the project installed a powerful solar pump, solar panels, drilled a 54 meters borehole and replaced a damaged tank with 2 tanks. Plumbers have repaired the leaking pipework in the building.

The Nkomaula community is so thankful to the project because they now have water inside the hospital, and even at staff houses, all staff members are happy to use water closet toilets for the first time since they started work at the hospital. Water closet toilets are also reducing pressure at pit latrines.

Mafanizo, a Nurse Midwife technician, expressed happiness: 'for the first time, I can take a shower at home during my time here!'

What Mpala Health Center needed was a borehole and plumbing works of the old piping system. A 54 meters deep borehole with Afridev pump was drilled during the dry months, and piping is being repaired as we write.

The hospital lobbies intensively with the local government to continue maintaining the infrastructure.

On behalf of the community MMH serves, we would like to thank EMMS and it's donors for this project which is so unique: it directly helps poor people and it is multifaceted because it helps to fight covid, promotes personal hygiene, provides safe water to drink, motivates health workers to stay in remote areas and motivates patients to go to hospital when sick because they know they will find water there.



▲ *Nkomaula water improvements: a new borehole (L), and a storage tank filled using solar power (R)*

This season, we would like to ask your help in providing a new **Full Blood Count Machine**.

The Need: Full blood count testing can reveal anemia, blood cancers, dangerous clotting disorders and many more. It also helps to reduce the overusage of antibiotics.

It is theoretically possible to do manual blood counts; but with the high patient turnover at the hospital this would be extremely laborious and demanding.

The current full blood count machine has served 4 years and should now be replaced, as it is expensive and difficult to continue maintaining it and frequently out of order. This complicates patient management decisions.

A new machine costs 6 million Malawi kwacha; equivalent to **£ 5.200 / € 6.000 / \$ 7.500**. It is expected to last for 4 years and run more than 75,000 samples.

Maintenance of the equipment and the procurement of reagents is covered through patient fees. To charge the cost of renewal would make testing inaccessible for the poor majority of our clients.

Please consider a donation.

- In € you can make a donation to:
The English Reformed Church IBAN NL44 ABNA 0547 6235 50. Please indicate 'Mulanje Mission Hospital'.
- In £ you can make a donation to the Mulanje Mission Hospital Trust:
 - Bank: Bank of Scotland
 - Account name: Mulanje Mission Hospital Trust
 - Account Number: 21658669
 - Sort code: 80 22 60
- You can also donate online to the Trust via PayPal and Debit/Creditcards using the QR code or the link on <https://www.mmh.mw/fundraising-and-donations/>
- Make a direct transaction to one of the Account numbers listed on the frontpage of this Newsletter.



Thank you very much—zikomo kwambiri!

We were delighted to have Malawi national netball and football player Towera Vinkumbo visiting MMH and taking part in our teenage pregnancy prevention program. She is a true role model for adolescent girls and helps to keep girls being motivated to go to school and to protect themselves from getting pregnant. Towera joined MMH in October for visits to a primary school, a youth

club and girls in vocational skills training. Her talk to them was very inspiring and touching: her own sister got pregnant at the age of 17 and passed away after the delivery, leaving a little preterm baby with her and her family. Towera herself has been working hard to become who she is and to get this far. This was eye opening to the girls whom she spoke to: they saw that aiming for a

goal can bring you far, although it is a road of challenges and needs resilience.

If a girl bears children before she is physically, mentally and emotionally ready, it can have major negative consequences. Child marriage and teenage pregnancy are interlinked, when a girl falls pregnant, she is expected to marry the father of the baby. Often, girls are not supported by



▲ Towera visits girls on vocational training

the father of the baby. All this prevents young people from completing their education. Consequently, young girls miss the educational and economic opportunities that can help them and their babies to rise above poverty. The goal of the three-year teenage pregnancy project at MMH is to promote safe reproductive health practices by young people and to support economic empowerment by providing vocational skills training and sending girls to secondary school.

Towera came to MMH in her position as ambassador for EMMS International to create a Climate of Change for Girls.

Thank you so much, Towera!



▲ Netball star Towera Vinkhumbo addressing students at school



Meet Mrs Rhodes Nyadani—79 years old - from Salamba Village, Traditional Authority Mabuka. She is a wonderful person; Mulanje Mission Hospital cherish her contribution to the Sustainable Livelihoods Programme.

Mrs Nyadani is a source of inspiration because of the way she ignores her age and pains when it comes to doing something for other people. She passes her kindness to humanity by taking part in replenishing nature through tree planting and maintaining an extensive tree nursery.

An example for all of us – if she can do this at age 79 in a remote rural village, what can I do?

It is possible to support the tree-planting work by compensating your carbon emissions through the SL programme, supporting the livelihoods of Mrs Nyadani and others. Write us an e-mail if you wish to know more.



▲ Mrs. Rhoda Nyadani tending tree seedlings