



Mulanje Mission Hospital Newsletter

August 2024

Mulanje Mission Hospital
CCAP Blantyre Synod
PO Box 45 Mulanje
Malawi

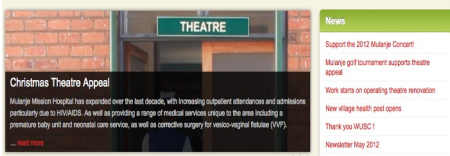
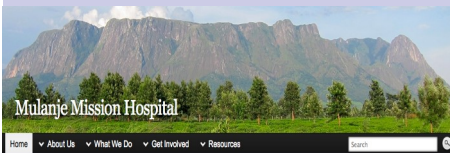
E-mail:
director@mmh.mw

National Bank of Malawi
P.O. Box 945 Blantyre

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

SWIFT CODE:
NBMAMW MW

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

Editorial comment

By Dickson Chisale

Dear friends, partners and donors all over the world,

This is yet another newsletter being sent to you to appreciate new developments taking place at Mulanje Mission Hospital - fondly abbreviated as MMH.

The hospital started with only a maternity wing almost 100 years ago. Gradually, it has been expanding its services over time, such as the introduction of the paediatric ward and then on to a fully-fledged hospital around 1990. Recently, we have seen the dental clinic occupying a new modern and more spacious room, sharing the same building with physiotherapy and eye clinics. This setting enables patients to access three health care services within one umbrella with one reception area. The arrangement helps patients to spend less time at the hospital.

The introduction of the eye clinic department at MMH a few years ago resulted into high demand for theatre operating space for patients with eye sight problems. The existing theatre is most of the times busy with elective and emergency operations, like cae-

sarean sections and other patients from general wards.

Therefore, today, we are extremely excited to see MMH putting on another new face, as the magnificent eye theatre is now under construction. The theatre will have two operating rooms, meaning two patients can be taken in for operation at the same time. Upon completion, this will greatly improve the quality of service delivery to our patients around the catchment area and beyond.

As MMH team, we are so thankful to the hospital management for dreaming in colour and making ideas come into reality. We also cherish the hospital donors for the financial and moral support rendered to our hospital.



Δ Eye theatre under construction

30 years work anniversary - Nelson Chikowi



We want to recognize radiologist Mr. Nelson Chikowi for three decades of exceptional service at Mulanje Mission Hospital. His hard work, perseverance, and loyalty have shaped our organization's identity.

Nelson, you are a most valuable colleague. Thank you for your dedication and hard work over the years. Your patients are blessed and your colleagues don't take it for granted!

Three of our staff members, Diverson Mkwapatira, Sunganani Sabuni and Tiyamike Lupenga travelled for a month to the Netherlands for a summer school on Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health, Global Surgery and Global Health at the UMC Utrecht. They also had the chance to meet some of the partners of MMH, which was a great success.



△ From left to right: Tiyamike Lupenga, Sue Sabuni, Diverson Mkwapatira at the UMCU

Diverson Mkwapatira reflects:

“Days went so quick, the first week was about getting to know people and places and moving around the beautiful country of the Netherlands. It was so amazing and memorable. The church



△ Boat trip with Werkgroep Malawi Leeuwarden members

services were so lit, though I couldn't understand the language but the message of Jesus Christ is universal.

This country sits below the sea level and that makes trees evergreen, even in summer, though this year's summer was strange at the beginning with heavy downpouring in some cities like when we were in Leeuwarden.

The second week was a busy time at Utrecht university, it was a fantastic week to meet with students from around the globe.

I went to a summerschool Global Surgery and Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Worth noted is the fact that the global burden of disease amenable to surgical interventions, such as trauma, cancer, and complications to childbirth, is substantial and growing. All people on the globe should have access to high quality surgical and anaesthetic care with financial protection if needed. The world is on the move to find solutions to ever increasing demands for surgical and obstetrics and gynaecology services. Also at MMH we are trying to provide good quality surgical and obstetric care.

The third week we had a course in Fundamentals of Global Health which was also a week to remember, it was about health and funding, disease burden and access to health.

The last week we had an clinical hospital attachment at the Wilhelmina Kinderziekenhuis (WKZ). This is a specialised international paediatric referral centre and all my days were filled with being in the operating theatre. I was inspired by the



△ The group with former medical director Bram Sizoo at the English Reformed Church in Amsterdam

collaboration between departments in making a diagnosis, the modern equipment, nuclear medicine and laparoscopic surgeries. My eyes saw a lot of new things.

Overall, when one travels one learns, the experience is life long and diverse: from the airports, the planes, the different countries during transit, the Dutch cities, the North sea, the industrial farms and Utrecht university with its humble professors who some invited us for dinner.

Finally, we are thankful to the partners who support Mulanje Mission Hospital and all individuals who kept us in their houses: Helen, Henriette, Dr Bram Sizoo and Sascha Sizo, Rev Dr Alex and Mai Abusa to mention but a few...”



△ Diverson presenting during the Global Surgery Summerschool



△ *Tiyamike and Sue at the Obstetrics department in Utrecht*

Also Sue Sabuni wants to share about her experiences during her clinical placement.

She writes:

“I joined the team at the obstetric department at the WKZ and also joined the primary health care midwives along their homedeliveries. Expecting a rural setting, I was surprised to find a fully equipped consultation room in the village. I was able to observe a waterbirth at home and it was a great experience. The midwife and I went into the car to the home of the woman and the midwife took all her equipment along, including all resuscitation equipment for mother and baby, even oxygen! When we arrived, the woman was very relaxed in an inflatable pool and the midwife was monitoring the fetal condition with a

water doppler. The delivery went very smooth and quick and it was beautiful to see how the woman was able to be the first one to take her baby when it was born. This experience has learned me how water can help in relaxation and pain relief and make delivery a memorable experience.

I was also surprised to see the partner of the woman being so involved, he checked the water temperature and cut the cord of the baby. These are some of the things that have inspired me to new implementations here in Mulanje Mission Hospital.”

We want to thank all who have made it possible to visit the Netherlands: the UMC Utrecht, de Ankergemeente, the ERC, Werkgroep Malawi, Stichting Steun Malawi, and many many individuals. Thank you!

Eliza’s determination in the face of adversity

- By Wise Ndawa

Eliza K., a 19-year-old girl is an inspiring example of resilience in the face of challenging circumstances. She is enrolled in the Orphan and Vulnerable Children (OVC) program. The OVC program aims at improving lives of OVC children in different aspects and one of them is vocational skills training- but Eliza did it in a different way as you can read below.

As part of the OVC program, Eliza was given a goat to rear. This was not just an act of charity but a seed of hope planted in Eliza’s life. Although this might seem like a modest gift, it was a crucial stepping stone for her. She took great care of the goat, and with time, it had kids. Eliza decided to sell some of the goats to generate income; this was a risk-taking move from her part.

She used the money earned and carefully saved from selling the goats to pay for tailoring lessons because she thought it was a very practical skill that could help her earn a living. Her determination paid off, and she successfully completed her training.

She made it her dream to be a tailor and that one day she should be able to own her own tailoring shop.

Today, Eliza is putting her tailoring skills to use, earning a living by working at various tailoring shops. She does not own her own shop yet, but hopefully one day she will. Eliza faces significant challenges in her daily life but despite that, she remains steadfast and encourages her peers to do the same. Her journey is a powerful reminder that sometimes, life requires us to pursue paths we never decided on initially in order to survive and support our loved ones. Her advice to other young people facing similar adversities points out that life may not always give you what you want, but use what you have to create a better future. Persevere, even if the road is tough.

Her story serves as an example of how resilience and adaptability can help one navigate through the toughest of challenges.



△ *Eliza*

Oxygen concentrator repairs

- by *Wilson Kachikuwa*

Mulanje Mission Hospital is well known because of his holistic services , many people choose Mulanje Mission Hospital as their first choice. We serve patients from our catchment area, Mozambique and surrounding districts.

For this to happen, it is important to have good management, a good facility and well working machines, to mention a few. Its our duty to service hospital equipments periodically. This time around we had an opportunity of servicing all the oxygen concentrators together with NGO OpenO2. Oxygen concentrators take air from your surroundings, extract oxygen and filter it into purified oxygen that can be used for patients in use of oxygen. We were able to put in new spare parts and to



Δ Some of the repaired oxygen concentrators

check the purity of oxygen. With the assistance of OpenO2 we were able to repair 11 out of the 17 concentrators that needed repair.

We even have some oxygen concentrators that have worked for more than 10 years and are now ready to take their last breath.

With this project, many more coming patients will be assisted who are in need for oxygen, such as babies with pneumonias, neonates or patients with heartfailure.

The hospital recently recruited its' own Biomedical Engineer who will continue the maintenance on concentrators and work on preventative maintenance for al e quipment at the hospital.

Teaching at Mulanje Mission Hospital

- by *Marleen Zijderveld*

Teaching is one of the corner stones of the hospital. Throughout the year, MMH hosts many nursing students (from Mulanje Nursing College) and medical students (both from Kamuzu University of Health Sciences in Blantyre as well as from abroad).

We also frequently welcome new nursing and clinical staff members. On-going teaching and learning is part of medicine and therefore prioritized.

Teaching is provided in different ways, such as individual and group teaching. An important teaching moment is the handover, where cases from the last 24 hours are discussed. Other group teaching moments are the CPD (Continuous Professional Development) sessions. Every Tuesday and Thursday morning there is a presentation held by a nurse or clinician, respectively. On Wednesday morning it's time for the grand round, whereby a



Δ Grand round in female ward

group of clinicians will review complex patients in the ward.

Occasional visits from external consultants take place as well.

By doing so, a safe learning environment is created where in every member is challenged to ask questions, to grow in skills and knowledge and to learn from each other.



Precious Kadzongwe, clinical officer, has completed his training in ophthalmology and cataract surgery at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre in Moshi, Tanzania.

The course took about two years to complete, and included extensive practical work. MMH is working closely with the tertiary Zomba Central Hospital concerning Eye services; Precious will be attached to that unit for a few months in order to gain more experience, after which he can practise more independently.

Eye operations currently take place in the main operating theatre, but a separate Eye theatre is under construction. This will allow surgeries in

all areas to proceed without disruption and assure best possible quality of care.

There are many people in Malawi living with avoidable blindness and poor vision, often due to cataract. The number of surgeries done annually is quite low.

MMH is committed to provide high quality, affordable care. In setting up a new service like this, coordination with stakeholders such as the government and other hospitals is vital but can also take a lot of time. Informing and educating partners about the need to fund those centers where quality is measured and assured is important too, so that funds donated towards eye health are used as well as possible.



△ Precious, △ △ Eye Theatre

CCAP General Assembly celebrates 100th anniversary

The General Assembly of the Church of Central Africa celebrated its' 100th birthday this month. The General Assembly is a body comprising of the Synods of Blantyre, Livingstonia, Nkhoma, Zimbabwe and Zambia.

The contribution of the Church to the development of society in Malawi was recognized by Dr. Lazarus Chakwera, the State President, during the

centennial celebration on Sunday 25th August in Lilongwe.

The President spoke: "...These hospitals are contributing a lot in terms of universal health coverage, which demands citizens to have hospitals within reach."

Visitors were informed about health programmes and services at a stand on

the pavilion during the celebrations, manned by MMH staff.

MMH like many mission hospitals has seen a serious reduction in government support for salaries over the past 3 years. Constant advocacy has been pursued; and this opportunity was also utilized to make the case for continued support for mission facilities in the country.