



MULANJE MISSION HOSPITAL

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DONATIONS

National Bank of Malawi

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Editorial Comment

By Dickson Chisale

The Easter period is fast approaching, a time when Christians across the world celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, offering hope of life after death.

In this newsletter, we share several new developments at Mulanje Mission Hospital.

The hospital is introducing a new digital health record system that will help us provide better care to patients. The installation has been led by Peter, an IT specialist from Kenya, and supported by Joseph, a Malawian Smart Health expert. The MMH IT team, together with Dr Marleen, is working to ensure that the system is properly configured to suit the hospital's needs. Staff across departments are currently familiarising themselves with the

system and it is expected to be rolled out starting from 1 April 2026.

Construction of the new eye theatre at MMH has been completed. We are now preparing for the installation of operating beds, furniture, shelving, and essential equipment. MMH management and staff are very grateful for the generous support of our development partners, whose contributions have made this important milestone possible.

MMH also continues to invest in young people through skills development. Youth at the centre are trained in trades such as tailoring, carpentry, and joinery. Many graduates go on to start their own business, while others secure employment, improving their livelihoods and future prospects.

Mulanje Mission Hospital Welcomes New HR Manager

Mulanje Mission Hospital is pleased to announce the appointment of Mrs Jean Nyasulu Datchi as the new Human Resources Manager. Jean brings a strong background in public administration and non-profit work, with previous experience at the Ministry of Local Government and Orant Charities Africa.



(continued on next page)

Mulanje Mission Hospital Welcomes New HR Manager

Continued

Reflecting on her new role, Jean shares: “My experience in both government and charitable organisations has equipped me with valuable skills in staff management, organisational development, and employee welfare. At Mulanje Mission

Hospital, I aim to strengthen HR systems, support staff growth, and work towards a positive workplace culture that reflects the hospital’s mission of compassionate healthcare.”

The hospital community warmly welcomes Mrs Jean Datchi and looks forward to her leadership in building a motivated and dedicated workforce to serve the people of Mulanje and beyond.

Care of the Newborn and Young Infant & Bubble CPAP

By Innocent Kalunga



▲ Participants demonstrating CPAP technique

Mulanje Mission Hospital conducted a week-long training on the care of newborns and young infants, including the use of Bubble Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (Bubble CPAP). Clinicians and nurses gained practical knowledge and skills aimed at improving newborn survival and health outcomes.

Participants were reminded that newborns are highly vulnerable, especially in the first weeks of life, and require careful monitoring and appropriate care to prevent illness and death. The training emphasised essential newborn care, including keeping babies warm,

promoting early and exclusive breastfeeding, and maintaining good hygiene practices. Simple but effective measures such as skin-to-skin contact and proper covering help prevent hypothermia, while breast milk provides both nutrition and protection against infections.

Clinicians also strengthened their understanding of infection prevention, including handwashing and clean cord care, as well as the early recognition of danger signs such as poor feeding and breathing difficulties.

Special attention was given to monitoring growth and develop-

ment, particularly for premature and low birth weight infants who require additional care and follow-up.

The training further focused on respiratory distress and the use of Bubble CPAP, a life-saving intervention that supports breathing by keeping airways open and improving oxygen flow. Participants learned how to identify infants in need of this support and how to monitor them effectively.

Overall, the training has equipped healthcare providers with essential skills to deliver quality newborn care, reduce preventable deaths, and contribute to healthier communities.

My Surgical Attachment Experience

By *Diverson Mkwapatira*

Since completing my degree in General Surgery in 2017, I had not had the opportunity to undertake an attachment at a central hospital or work alongside specialist surgeons.

Recently, I was given the opportunity to attend a 3-week attachment at Mzuzu Central Hospital. I am very grateful to the Medical Director for making this possible.

During this period, the learning experience has been very valuable. I was able to refresh my knowledge and gain hands-on experience in

procedures I had not previously performed, including femoral lymph node resection for melanoma patients and alternative techniques for closing duodenal perforations.

This attachment will directly benefit Mulanje Mission Hospital. With improved surgical skills and increased expertise, we expect to enhance the quality of surgical care and reduce the number of patient referrals to central hospitals.

I look forward to applying these new skills in my daily work and continuing to improve patient care.



▲ *Diverson, clinical superintendent*

Digitalization at Mulanje Mission Hospital: a New Chapter

By *Marleen Zijderveld*

Over the past months, Mulanje Mission Hospital has been preparing for an important step forward: moving from a largely paper-based system to a digital one.

For many years, most of our work, from patient files to laboratory requests, prescriptions, and billing, has been done on paper. While this has worked, it often slows things down, increases the risk of errors, and makes it harder to share information quickly between departments.

With support from the Medical Benevolence Foundation (MBF), we have now been able to invest in a new digital health system called Smart Health and to purchase the necessary equipment for it. The rollout will happen in phases. From 1 April, the outpatient departments, laboratory, radiology, and pharmacy will start using the system. In later phases, inpatient wards and outreach services will follow.

A lot has already been happening behind the scenes.

Our IT team has been working to set up a reliable network across the hospital. Since February, staff have been introduced to the system, and since March, the departments involved in the first phase have been testing it in a practice context. For many colleagues, this is something completely new, so there has been a strong focus on learning together and supporting each other.

The transition is not without its challenges. However, the benefits are clear: shorter waiting times, more efficient billing, and better access to patient information. We are encouraged by how many staff members are willing to adapt and put in the effort to make this work.

Step by step, this change will help us provide better care for our patients and serve our community more effectively.



▲ *Training to work with the new digital system*

Indoor Residual Spraying

By Sheila Mangwiro, Environmental Health Officer

Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS) was introduced at Mulanje Mission Hospital in 2012 as part of efforts to reduce malaria cases in the catchment area. IRS involves the application of insecticide on the walls of houses, where it remains effective for up to 6 months, killing *Anopheles* mosquitoes responsible for transmitting malaria.

Since its introduction, IRS has been conducted annually across the MMH catchment area. During the most recent spraying season (2025–2026), a total of 63 villages were covered, reaching a population of 38,505 people, including 4,978 children under the age of 5.

In addition to the hospital's catchment area, spraying activities were also carried out at Eastern Produce Malawi Ltd, Mulanje Prison, and Mulanje Police.

Before the introduction of IRS, the hospital experienced a high number of malaria cases, both in outpatient visits and admissions. At times, the patient load was so high that some patients had to sleep on the floor



▲ Spray operator spraying a wall

due to limited bed capacity. Since the implementation of IRS, malaria cases have significantly reduced.

The success of the programme is supported by a trained workforce of experienced spray operators.

These operators receive hands-on training to ensure safe and effective spraying, with a focus on proper techniques and adherence to safety standards. Thank you to all donors who made this effort possible.



▲ Spray operators' morning preparation

Advancing My Nursing Journey

By Honest Makande

My name is Honest Makande. I joined Mulanje Mission Hospital on 2 June 2018 as a Nurse Midwife Technician after completing my Diploma in Nursing and Midwifery in 2017. From the start, I have been committed to providing compassionate, patient-centred care to mothers, newborns, and the wider community.

In 2023, I was given the opportunity to upgrade my qualifications by pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Midwifery at Kamuzu University of Health Sciences, Lilongwe Campus, through the hospital's capacity-building policy. I am very grateful for this support.

I was motivated to further my studies to improve my knowledge and skills and to prepare for future leadership roles. After completing my degree in February this year, I returned to MMH and was appointed Acting Ward In-Charge for the Labour Ward, where I now apply my training in practice.

I am better equipped to provide evidence-based care, support colleagues, and contribute to



▲ *Honest Makande back at MMH after his graduation*

improved patient outcomes. I would like to sincerely thank hospital management for their support.

To fellow Nurse Midwife Technicians: remain focused and take

advantage of available opportunities. Advancing your education strengthens both your career and the quality of care we provide to our communities.

Dispensing using Smart Health System

By Caroline Tcheru

Mulanje Mission Hospital is introducing a new digital system to improve service delivery and patient care. Staff in the pharmacy are looking forward to officially using the system from April 2026.

When asked about the new system, Caroline shared her experience: "The system is very user-friendly and makes the dispensing of medicines to both inpatients and outpatients much faster."

She added: "I expect the system to

help minimise errors caused by unclear handwritten prescriptions. It will also alert us to medicines that are nearing expiry, so we can prioritise their use."

The introduction of Smart Health is expected to enhance efficiency, improve accuracy in dispensing, and strengthen overall patient safety.



▲ *Caroline dispensing medicines on Smart Health*

Turning Skills into Success

By Wise Ndawa

Speak up for people who cannot speak for themselves, protect the rights of all who are helpless.

Speak for them and be a righteous judge. (Proverbs 31:8–9)

Mulanje Mission Hospital has been supporting vulnerable youth through its Youth and OVC programmes for the past 10 years. One of the areas of support is vocational skills training, which is helping young people build a better future for themselves.

The programme targets vulnerable youth and equips them with practical skills in trades such as welding, carpentry, tailoring, bricklaying, plumbing, and electrical installation. The training runs for 6 months, after which the youth enter a 9-month business incubation period at the MMH workshop.

During this incubation period, the youth continue to develop their skills while gaining hands-on experience. They have access to tools and work space, and they are guided by the MMH maintenance



▲ Desks made by the youth at MMH workshop

department. Some also receive internship opportunities to increase their exposure and confidence in real working environments.

This support has helped many young people transition from difficult life situations into becoming productive and self-reliant. They are now able to produce high-quality products such as school desks, steel doors, and tailored

clothing, which are sold within the community.

A recent example of this success is the work of 2 welders and 2 carpenters who produced and sold 30 desks to Misanjo Primary School. Through this project alone, the group earned close to MWK 1.5 million. This not only provided them with income but also contributed to improving the learning environment for school children.

The programme is not only about skills, but also about personal growth. The youth learn teamwork, problem-solving, discipline, and basic business skills. Many of them gain confidence and a renewed sense of purpose as they begin to see themselves as business owners and contributors to their community.

Mulanje Mission Hospital is proud to see these young people take control of their future. What started as a support programme has become a journey of transformation, where vulnerable youth are now building livelihoods and creating impact in their communities.



▲ Desks made by the youth at the MMH workshop

Improving Fistula Care at Mulanje Mission Hospital *By Major Ramarikhoane*

My name is Mayor, I serve as a Clinical Officer at Mulanje Mission Hospital. Recently, I had the opportunity to attend a 6-week training in vesicovaginal fistula (VVF) management at Bwaila Fistula Care Centre from 6 October to 14 November 2025.

The first 2 weeks of the training focused on patient assessment and diagnosis. I learned how to properly identify different types of fistula, including rectovaginal and vesicovaginal fistula. The remaining 4 weeks were dedicated to hands-on surgical practice in fistula repair.

During this training, I gained skills in identifying fistula based on their location and size, managing simple cases, and knowing when to refer more complex cases. I also learned how to repair minor rectovaginal fistula, manage old 3rd and 4th degree tears, and perform procedures such as extraperitoneal removal of bladder stones.

Fistula in Malawi is mainly caused by complications from prolonged labour. Although we have not seen

a major increase in such cases at Mulanje Mission Hospital, we are receiving more cases from Mozambique.

This training has strengthened both my clinical skills and my approach to patient care. I have also come to better understand the psychological challenges that fistula patients face, and the importance of compassionate care.

With this new knowledge, we will be able to manage minor fistula cases locally at MMH, reducing the need for referrals to Lilongwe. It will also create opportunities for junior clinicians to learn it through mentorship and on-the-job training.

I am very grateful for this opportunity to further develop my skills. I am committed to applying what I have



▲ **Major, Chief Clinical Officer in Gynaecology**

learned to improve the quality of care for our patients. I also hope that similar training opportunities can be extended to other staff, including nurses and anaesthesia providers, in the future.

From the Director's Desk

As we come to the end of this newsletter, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the past quarter. Much of our time in 2026 has been spent on one important task: preparing the annual budget.

This process has not been easy. Rising costs, limited resources, and increasing staff salaries have made the gap between what we need and what we have significant. As a management team, we have taken time to look closely at how the hospital operates and to review long-standing practices and poli-

cies. Are they still relevant? Are they still effective?

Budget cuts are not easy, but they are necessary. They force us to make difficult choices and use our resources more carefully. At the same time, they push us to think differently. We are investing in digital systems, expanding services such as surgery and gynaecology, and exploring more sustainable ways of sourcing what we need. These steps help us move towards a more resilient and sustainable hospital.

At the same time, we are aware that we cannot do this alone.

We remain deeply grateful for all those who stand with us in partnership and support. Your involvement enables us to continue this work.

To complete our digital transition, we need an additional 50 desktop computers. If you know of a company or institution that will soon replace their computers and is willing to donate their used ones to MMH, please let us know.

Thank you for walking this journey with us. Happy Easter!