



THE INFORMER



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A MOTHER AND CHILD IS THE REASON WE EXIST

January-March 2013

WHPHA

Commemorating the Second Anniversary of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority

EYE SPECIALISTS GIVE NEW LEASE OF LIFE

Many people in the Western Highlands and Jiwaka provinces with bad eyesight are now able to see clearly, thanks to a team of visiting ophthalmologists from Australia.

The visiting ophthalmologists or eye doctors were in Mt Hagen for two weeks from 20th April to 4th May, checking patients with eye problems and correcting them where possible through surgery.

The team of two eye doctors, an anesthetist and a theatre nurse who were joined by one of PNG's own national eye doctors, Dr. David Pahau were able to screen more than 200 patients during the two weeks.

The specialists were here on their annual visit to PNG and decided to visit Mt Hagen this year because the Mt Hagen Provincial Hospital's eye specialist had completed his contract and left the country two years ago.

The team conducted a total of 191 successful surgeries of which 170 of them were for the removal of cataracts. Three of those that went under the knife were children - two of them aged six years and the other a two-year-old boy.

Mt Hagen Hospital's Eye Clinic and Callan Optical Services of Goroka had joined hands and spent the previous two weeks checking patients at the clinic as well as conducting mobile clinics in the health centres and identifying and registering those who needed to see the eye specialists.

Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority's Acting Director Curative Health Services, Dr. Guapo Kiagi said the team had done a great job in restoring the



Photo above - A patient signs her papers to undergo surgery in the presence of Australian eye specialist, Dr. Michael Scobie and witnessed by Sr. Esther Nii and CHW, Daniel Mendai. Pictured below is Dr. Scobie checking a Hagen Park Day Secondary School student's eyes.

impaired visions of these people and giving them a new lease of life and he thanked them for volunteering their time to help.

He said time did not allow the Callan team to visit all the health centres to check people's eyes and refer those with problems to the eye specialists. The specialists

Included ophthalmologists, Dr. Frances Booth (team leader) and Dr. Michael Scobie, Dr. Fergus Davidson (anesthetist) and Sr. Sue Anderson (theatre nurse).

Dr. Kiagi said the team would make another visit to Mt Hagen in September this year but before they arrive, arrangements would be made for the Callan team to travel the length and breadth of the two provinces and screen all those who have eye problems and recommend if they need glasses or surgery.

He said he was pleased that the visit by the Australian team had further enhanced the ongoing efforts of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority in providing an effective health service to our people, especially those in the rural communities.



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Second Anniversary of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority



Dr. James Kintwa

Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority celebrates its Second Anniversary on 7th March 2013.

As we reflect back on the two years and the activities that have taken place, we acknowledge that most of our time has been spent on establishing systems,

processes and plans to set our organization in motion while not forgetting our core business of "patient care".

In this Anniversary edition, I will highlight some achievements over the last two years and indicate some new proposed work and development.

We have agreed to the priorities of Healthy Lifestyle, Disease prevention and Health promotion (KRA 7 of the National Health Plan 2011 – 2020) and Maternal and Child Health (KRA 5 & 4 of the NHP) for our province and our key medium term plans including our different Agreements with our stakeholders and partners have captured these priorities.

We have Board approved Corporate Plan 2012 – 2015, a Health Services Plan (Role delineation) and the Five Years Strategic Implementation Plan. This year 2013 is the first year of implementing all these plans and agreements.

Our motto statement is "Accountability for Quality Health Services" where "No Mother or Child should die during pregnancy, childbirth and the post partum period".

Other decisions made by the Board of Governance include the approval of several Board policies, negotiations with Western Highlands Provincial Government for its support for WHPHA, approving the Health Services Agreement with AusAID for support to the PHA implementation, contract arrangements with Marie Stopes and Susu Mamas for partnership to deliver specific interventions in family planning and maternal health and recruitment for the position of CEO and getting its deemed departmental head status from NEC,

The appointment of the full executive team will now have a management team that will lead this important health reform. At this juncture, I thank and acknowledge the support and contribution from the senior staff who have been acting in the senior executive management team over the last two years.

To be able to deliver effective health services, the WHPHA needed the support of all stakeholders including churches, NGOs, development partners, donor agencies and the Western Highlands Provincial Government and the Open Members of Parliament. Stronger partnerships and dialogue had been established with these groups, organizations and individuals and as a result service delivery and infrastructure development had been realized.

One of these had been the Rural Primary Health Services Delivery Project for Tambul/Nebilyer and Mul/Baiyer Districts where ADB had provided funding for the maintenance and upgrading of old infrastructure for Health Centres and Aidposts

Cervical cancer which claims the lives of many women in the country is another area that the Board and Management have addressed. In March last year the WHPHA through the Western Highlands Provincial Government and private businesses had trained several staff in Thailand and in Mt Hagen and had also purchased a cervical cancer cryotherapy equipment from Thailand at a total cost of over K200,000.

The equipment and staff are set up at the Mt Hagen Provincial Hospital to screen using acetic acid and treat patients using frozen carbon dioxide through cryotherapy. We anticipate rolling out the screening to all the seven districts of WHP and Jiwaka.

Maintenance of rural health facilities to make these places conducive for health care and treatment is another area that the WHPHA has worked on. Scoping for maintenance of selected facilities in the rural areas, particularly health centres has started and once completed, work would start.

The tender for the design for Tambul District Hospital is being facilitated by Central Supplies and Tenders Board. We envisage that once the design is complete we would use the Western Highlands Provincial Supplies and Tenders Board to tender the actual construction so that the work can be expedited. We hope also to start similar work for Kotna District Hospital.

During the course of the two years, communication between the WHPHA Headquarters and the rural facilities had seen much improvement through the use of the Closed User Group (CUG) system with Digicel. Mobile phones had been purchased for all OICs of facilities and DHOs to call Mt Hagen during emergencies so that help could be sent without delay.

A classic example of this is when a young mother from Togban village in the Lower Jimi

area, Mrs. Susan Moses had had retained placenta after giving birth to her fifth child in May last year.

The OIC of Togban Health Centre had attended to her immediately and tried to remove the placenta

by following all protocols of O&G but without success and called Mt Hagen Hospital where an aircraft was organized to medivac her to Mt Hagen immediately, resulting in her being attended to and the placenta removed safely.

Another issue that had been addressed was staff accommodation. Institutional houses within the Mt Hagen Hospital premises had been built almost 20 years ago and needed urgent maintenance. The Board had approved an expenditure of more than K2.5 million to renovate these houses and have white goods such as fridges, washing machines and electric/gas stoves put in all of them in a bid to increase the morale of employees.

The Board and management have looked at staffing accommodation and with the National Government support, the National Nurses Association made available K2 million to the Western Highlands Branch of the Association to build accommodation for nurses and this was topped up by the WHPHA with another K1 million to help build the units.

The WHPHA's IT system and in particular the local area network system is an ongoing issue. Attempts have been made on many occasions to try and improve telephone and internet systems but without much success and funds have now been secured to improve these systems.

Tenders have been called for the installation of local area network cabling and supply and installation of network hardware, equipment and software for the whole WHPHA premises so as soon as a bidder is selected, work should start on it immediately.

These are some of the many achievements of the WHPHA aimed at strengthening our core business of "patient care" and ensuring that "no mother or child dies during pregnancy, childbirth or post-partum" through "increased accountability for quality health care".

The restructure of the WHPHA is currently being put together with support from the Department of Personnel Management and as soon as it is approved, all positions should be advertised and hopefully filled so that staff are available at all times to serve our people.

Having said these there are still many challenges ahead and these will require the leadership of our executive management team, commitment and increased level of accountability from all our staff and support of all stakeholders including our partners who have committed a lot of their time and resources to provide much needed health services to our people.

Dr. James Kintwa AFCHSM
Chief Executive Officer

From the Editor's Desk

Hello everyone and welcome to "The Informer", your monthly newsletter containing news and information about happenings within the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority.

"The Informer" is an in-house newsletter aimed at informing you, our staff at the Provincial Headquarters as well as the Mt Hagen Provincial Hospital and our rural facilities including health centres, aid-posts and health sub-centres about what goes on around you.

This is the first issue for the year 2013 and the

fourth since its introduction in June last year and we dedicate it to the 2nd Anniversary of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority.

Our CEO, Dr. James Kintwa has a column in this newsletter on page 2 titled "Message from the Chief Executive Officer" in which he talks about topics or issues of importance which he wants all of us to know about so take time to read this newsletter whenever you get the chance to pick up a copy.

In this Anniversary edition he highlights some of our achievements since the establishment of the

WHPHA and our plans for future developments.

Copies of this newsletter will be sent to all urban and rural health facilities in both the Western Highlands and Jiwaka Provinces and I urge you to read it so that you are kept informed of what is happening around you.

We would also like to know about anything interesting happening at your facility so flood me with all those stories (and pictures) and let your colleagues know of what is happening in your area.

Until the next issue, happy reading!

Manga Bengi
Editor

IMMUNIZATION FOR TETANUS TOXOID

A nationwide immunization for tetanus toxoid was carried out by respective provinces not so long ago.

In Western Highlands, the Provincial Health Authority organized teams to visit public places such as markets, parks and schools to immunize mothers and young girls of child-bearing age from 15-45 years..

The WHPHA's public health directorate took the lead in organizing teams to visit various public places in both Western Highlands and Jiwaka Provinces to conduct the immunization exercise.

Sr. Giagao Kipa who organized the teams said the injection was mostly aimed at preventing pregnant mothers from getting tetanus which could affect their unborn children.

She said mothers and girls who sustained cuts from dirty knives, wires and any other metallic objects were more likely to be infected with tetanus and urged them to seek treatment early.

She added that men could also get tetanus if fresh cuts were not treated quickly, adding that hospital and health centre out-patient departments normally treated patients for tetanus if they presented themselves with cuts.

The exercise was a success with many people, especially mothers and girls turning up to be immunized.



Different immunization teams visited different places in both the urban and rural areas of WHP and Jiwaka. Shown in these pictures is a team conducting immunization in Mt Hagen City. The pictures above and top right show health staff demonstrating how tetanus toxoid is administered while the photo on the right shows one woman receiving her immunization while another awaits her turn.



EXECUTIVE EXPRESSES SHOCK AT FATAL ROAD ACCIDENT

A senior health executive has expressed shock at how a 25-seater PMV bus had run off the road in the Western Highlands on the morning of Wednesday 3rd April, killing 24 of the 33 passengers on board.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority, Dr. James Kintwa who was out of the province and learnt of the accident said he was saddened to hear of the shocking news.

He said there had been accidents involving 25-seater buses before but never one where the deceased came from the same village or where all were related. He passed his sincere condolences to all the relatives and the community.

Dr. Kintwa said police investigations would reveal what had happened but if it is true that the driver had suddenly fallen asleep due to driving all night from Lae till daybreak, then concerned authorities including police, the provincial PMV control board and PMV owners need to address this very seriously to stop any further similar accidents.

He said for the safety of the travelling public, bus drivers who drive all night till daybreak should take at least a day's rest before driving again. He said buses should also be given a rest before being driven again as anything can happen if driven continuously.

The accident occurred at about 9am near Murip village along the Mt Hagen – Baiyer River Road when the driver was alleged to have fallen asleep and the bus ran off the road and down a steep gorge. It was overloaded with 33 passengers, all from the Epilka tribe and was travelling from Baiyer River to Kagamuga Airport to pick up a dead body being flown up from Port Moresby when it met its fate.

Twenty-three of the passengers died instantly while the driver of the bus died whilst being resuscitated at the Accidents & Emergency Unit of Mt Hagen Provincial Hospital. Another two people died in hospital a day later.

"We had a similar accident involving a 25-seater bus close to Kuli Gap outside Mt Hagen some years ago and it was due to a driver falling asleep on the return trip from Lae.

"The practice of PMV drivers driving to Lae in the daytime and then making a return trip to Mt Hagen in the night (tulait tulait trips) should be stopped by PMV operators and the police for the sale of public safety.

"Tulait tulait trips should cease immediately unless there is proof that a driver had rested for a maximum of 8 hours as our body requires such rest to function effectively," Dr. Kintwa said.

He said money was not everything in life and urged owners of PMV buses to be considerate

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and allow their drivers and the buses to take a good rest before taking off on the next trip.

"Police and the Western Highlands Provincial Government which issues PMV licences should work together and address this issue seriously such as putting up roadblocks and monitoring the movements of the buses and their drivers.

"Such unwarranted accidents do not only cause the loss of innocent lives but they also put a lot

of pressure on the health service in the province which is already down on manpower and other resources," Dr. Kintwa said.

Pictured above and below — The bodies being taken out of the Mt Hagen Hospital Morgue and loaded onto waiting buses and utilities to be taken to the Queen Elizabeth Park in Mt Hagen City for provincial leaders, politicians and the public to pay their last respects before being taken to Baiyer River for burial.

