



# THE INFORMER



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A MOTHER AND CHILD IS THE REASON WE EXIST

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WHPHA

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## RETRENCHED HEALTH WORKERS TO RECEIVE FREE HEALTH SERVICE



*Some of the retrenched staff who were present for the farewell pose for a picture.*

All retrenched staff of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) will receive free medical treatment when they visit a health facility within the provinces of Western Highlands and Jiwaka. Chief Executive Officer of the WHPHA, Dr. James Kintwa announced this during a gathering at Hotel Kimininga recently to farewell 20 long serving employees, two of them in absentia due to death.

Dr. Kintwa said the retrenched employees and their immediate family members would receive free medical treatment at any health facility in

appreciation for their long years of service to their people.

"Plenty of you worked under very difficult conditions with no proper communication and I thank you. Some of you are from other provinces but regardless of that, all of you had committed yourselves to your jobs.

"If you are sick, we will give you and your families free health service in appreciation for all the work that you have done for our people.

"On behalf of the Government and the people of Western Highlands I thank you all for your services and wish you good health and enjoy the rest of your lives with your families", he

said.

Dr. Kintwa also told the retrenched nursing officers and community health workers that the health service in the province was in dire need of clinical staff and may recall them to help out on short term contracts.

"I want you nursing officers and CHWs to go for a month's break and come back and work with us on short term contracts because we are very short of clinical staff", he said.

He also added that all staff of the WHPHA would undergo regular medical checks, at least twice a year to ensure they are medically fit to work.

In reference to a number of his senior staff who had died recently of preventable diseases, Dr. Kintwa said these checks must be conducted to ensure staff are fit and healthy to serve others.

The retrenched staff included 12 men and 8 women and were either nursing officers, community health workers, plumbers, housekeepers or others. They had served the Government for many years, ranging from 23 to 53 years.

A spokesperson for the retrenched officers, Sr. Acwe Mambu said there had never been an occasion like this before to farewell retrenched staff and they were very happy for the Management's recognition for their services.

She said the workplace had been home for many of them, spending the best part of their lives resulting in family ties being cut off and the management's recognition of this was very much appreciated.

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*The retrenched staff pose for a picture with members of the executive management team.*

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## Establishment of Community Health Posts and Healthy Lifestyle



**Dr. James Kintwa**

The establishment of Community Health Posts (CHP) and Provincial Health Authorities (PHAs) are new concepts in Papua New Guinea and we in the Western Highlands Province are the first to set up CHPs and one of three provinces to establish a PHA.

The creation of Community Health Posts and Provincial Health Authorities is stipulated under the 2010 – 2020 National Health Plan and the Western Highlands is the first province to implement both – the PHA concept in March 2011 and the CHP initiative in 2012.

Community Health Posts are facilities that have more than one staff, unlike in an Aid-post where there is only one staff and up to a maximum of three employees, slightly less than the number of staff in a health sub-centre.

The CHPs have a nursing officer as the Officer-In-Charge and two community health workers and the services provided include out-patients, supervised deliveries and health promotion and disease prevention. There are now five CHPs - four of them in the Mul-Baiyer District and the other in Dei District.

The former Member for Mul/Baiyer, Mr. Sani Rambai had made available funding through the District Services Improvement Program for the four CHPs in his electorate at a cost of about K500,000 each whilst medical supplies and equipment worth another K100,000 each was funded by the Asia Development Bank (ADB) through the Rural Primary Health Services Support Program.

The four CHPs have been built at Waknam, Pae, Nengil and Kwinka, all in the Mul Local Level Government area. Waknam Community Health Post was the first to be opened followed by Pae, Nengil and Kwinka.

Community Health Posts are seen as facilities that provide just about all the basic health needs of our rural population and communities are now realizing this and coming forward and requesting the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) to set up such facilities in their areas.

Whilst the WHPHA wants to see such facilities set up in most rural areas, lack of funding by respective governments is a major hindrance and our elected leaders need to include such services in their development plans for their

respective electorates such as the ones initiated by the former Member for Mul/Baiyer.

Plans are now under way for Mt Hagen Hospital to be redeveloped into a major referral hospital for the highlands region and this means our people from the rural areas will have to seek medical and other health services back in their respective areas.

The Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority has already started carrying out maintenance work on our existing health facilities such as our health centres and equipped them with basic medical equipment and drugs in order for our people to seek treatment there instead of travelling to Mt Hagen Hospital unless they have been referred.

The health centres we have are not enough to cater for the rural population and this is where our elected leaders (Members of Parliament) can assist their people by funding new community health posts in partnership with the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority.

A number of our MPs have pledged their support for the establishment of health services in their electorates including the Members for Mul/Baiyer, Hon Koi Trape MP, Tambul/Nebilyer, Hon Benjamin Poponawa MP, Dei, Hon Wesley Nukundi MP and Anglimp/South Waghi, Hon Komun Joe Koim MP and I urge other Members from Western Highlands and Jiwaka to do the same. Any assistance by our elected leaders and our other health partners such as NGOs and donor agencies would be greatly appreciated.

Community Health Posts are ideal for the rural areas as the services to be provided are basic services the people need including out-patients, supervised deliveries and health promotion and disease prevention.

Delivery sections are included in these small but significant health facilities because we do not want mothers to deliver in villages and die of complications which could be avoided through supervised deliveries. Each CHP is designed to have two delivery beds and all husbands are encouraged to take their expectant wives to these facilities for safe delivery.

Our (WHPHA) motto is “no mother or child should die during pregnancy, childbirth or the post partum period” and therefore all expectant mothers should use these facilities to deliver. I do not want to hear that a mother has delivered in the village and died as a result of complications. These facilities are being provided so that such incidents do not happen.

### Healthy Lifestyle

The Western Highlands Provincial Health

Authority has prioritized Healthy Lifestyle and Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (Key Result Area 7) of the National Health Plan as it is an important strategy.

With the insufficient number of rural facilities in Western Highlands and Jiwaka and Mt Hagen Hospital becoming a referral hospital, the existing facilities will be overcrowded with people seeking treatment and therefore the onus is on all of us to live healthy lifestyles and keep ourselves healthy so that we do not have to visit these facilities.

Healthy lifestyle is one of the objectives of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority in order to achieve its vision of “Quality Health For All” as stipulated in our five-year Corporate Plan which was launched recently.

We want to encourage our people to live in clean environments, have access to clean water for drinking, cooking and washing, live in good homes and keep them clean and tidy, plant and eat nutritious foods, have a balanced diet each day and above all, keep fit and healthy.

When we follow these simple but fundamental rules, we are helping ourselves to prevent diseases from creeping into our lives which can be life-threatening at times. Always remember that “prevention is better than cure” as it will save you and your families huge medical bills and other associated costs and above all, save your lives.

Our staff from the Health Promotion Section usually visit schools, health centres and public places and conduct awareness on how you can prevent yourself from catching some of the most common diseases such as pneumonia, malaria, typhoid, TB, tetanus toxoid etc. so listen and act and you can live a healthy life.

**Dr. James Kintwa AFCHSM**  
Chief Executive Officer



**All expectant mothers must deliver in health facilities to avoid complications resulting in deaths.**

## Eye Specialists give new hope to the partially blind



Ophthalmologist registrar, Dr. Jamie Chew checks a patient, assisted by Sr. Judith Dupi.

### CHAI donates TB diagnostic machine to WHPHA

Tests conducted by the Pathology Section of Mt Hagen Hospital to determine the presence of tuberculosis (TB) in a person can now be done a lot faster, thanks to Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), a Non-Government Organization.

CHAI which is involved in the delivery of health services in Western Highlands in partnership with the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) has recently donated a machine that can be used to carry out diagnostic tests for TB faster and accurately than before.

Known as GeneXpert, the machine is capable of doing serological tests within minutes and delivering the results for doctors to make informed decisions on the type of treatment to give TB patients.

Manager of CHAI in Western Highlands, Dr. Dale Frank said his organization had had a good working relationship with WHPHA and it was happy to donate such a machine.

He said CHAI was involved mainly with efforts to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS but TB was another big problem in PNG and it felt it would be appropriate to make such a donation to help diagnose and treat TB early before it spreads.

Dr. Frank said quality assurance and the cost of maintenance of this equipment would be met by CHAI in the first year of its use as part of the donation package.

CHAI's Highlands Regional Laboratory Officer, Theresa Palou said laboratory was the cornerstone for any tests for diseases, adding that other means of carrying out tests took longer, resulting in diseases spreading before being diagnosed and treated.

She said CHAI wanted to ensure diagnostic tests for TB were done in line with the National Health Plan and as such it provided all other equipment and air conditioning systems required to enable the machine to produce the correct results.

Director for Curative Health Services, Dr. John

ner in health service delivery in the Western Highlands and the donation further strengthened its commitment to health in the province. He said under the National Health Plan, TB was a priority area for diagnosis and treatment and the donation was in line with the Health Department's TB Control Program. He added that the Pathology Section did not have the necessary manpower and resource back up to do TB tests quickly and the machine would greatly help to speed up these tests.

A team of eye specialists visited Mt Hagen Hospital recently and assessed and conducted eye surgery on many patients, particularly those with cataracts. The team from Australia which visited Mt Hagen for the second time this year under the PNG Eye Care Project also helped train local ophthalmologists, Dr. David Pahau of Boram Hospital in Wewak and Annie Kilepak of Mendi Hospital. Led by ophthalmologist, Dr. Frances Booth, the eye specialists arrived on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013 and spent a week assessing more than 300 patients and conducting surgery on more than half of them for the removal of cataracts, pterygium (growth), refractive error

and optic nerve problems.

People from within the Western Highlands and Jiwaka as well as other Highlands provinces packed the eye clinic throughout the week, trying to make an appointment to see the specialists. The team first visited Mt Hagen in April this year but has been visiting PNG since 1995, spending most of its time in Port Moresby conducting surgeries and other assessments.

The team's visit is a volunteer service and is partly funded by donations and partly by AusAID. On this visit, the team comprised of Dr. Booth, anaesthetist, Dr. Fergus Davidson, ophthalmologist registrar, Dr. Jamie Chew and Sr. Sue Adams, theatre nurse.

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

The Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority is pleased that the visit by the Australian team had further enhanced its ongoing efforts to provide an effective health service to its people, especially those in the rural communities.

The specialists had done a great job in restoring the impaired visions of the many patients that they had operated on, giving them a new lease of life and the WHPHA is thankful to them for providing a very worthwhile service.

Dr. Kiap said the presence of TB and HIV was a major problem for the province and the country and he was happy for the donation as the machine would give exact results for early treatment of TB to prevent a possible disaster. He thanked CHAI on behalf of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority, saying such a donation was timely and would go a long way in the organization's efforts to reduce the spread of TB in the province.



CHAI manager, Dr. Dale Frank (left) and Pathology section head, Dr. Zure Kombati (right) displaying the GeneXpert machine in a box watched by staff of CHAI and the pathology section.

# Asset Management Training for Staff

**A** new asset management system for the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority will soon be put in place to keep track of all assets it owns.

This could not be done previously as there has never been an asset management system in place until recently and the subsequent asset management training of those staff responsible for keeping record of such assets.

A total of 18 staff went through five days of intensive training on fixed assets entry and management recently to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills on how to enter and keep proper records of assets using an asset management software package.

A nationally-owned computer software design company, Pacific Software Solutions of Port Moresby conducted the week-long training on asset management software at the WHPHA Training Classroom and was attended by mostly Corporate Services staff involved in asset management.

The software system has been designed to show the number and types of assets that are available within the whole organization, their purchase date, amount, value, ID, code and file numbers and location.

According to trainers, Paul Muingnepe and Marsh Narewel, if a piece of equipment is reported lost or stolen, the system would show who was the last user and he or she would be held accountable for its replacement.

They said assets such as land, housing, plant and machinery, furniture, vehicles, white goods, medical and dental equipment and other facilities can be entered into the system and their values after depreciation worked out for replacement purposes.

Director Corporate Services, Julie Bengi who designed an asset management policy said the training was in line with the aims and objectives



**Trainer, Paul Muingnepe (at the computer) shows WHPHA staff how the asset management software works watched by his colleague, Marsh Narewel standing front left.**

of the policy and had fitted in well with the needs of the organization.

She said the system was user-friendly and had been designed and tailored towards the needs of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority.

"This is all about planning, budgeting and managing the usage and distribution of valuable assets and other resources. It is about accountability, efficiency and financial management and I'm quite pleased with the

training that has been conducted", she said.

Ms. Bengi said it is hoped that a long term relationship would be established between WHPHA and Pacific Software Solutions to engage their services for future needs.

The participants said the training had helped them to know exactly how to enter and keep track of assets, something they were unable to do in the past and thanked the WHPHA for making the training possible.

## Brian Bell donates portable generator to WHPHA



**Dr. Dat (right) receiving the generator from Brian Bell's service manager, Peter Malau. Looking on are staff of Brian Bell and WHPHA.**

multi-media equipment to do awareness in schools and other areas and to power other medical equipment used by the outreach team as well as provide lights.

**A** Mt Hagen-based company has come to the rescue of people living in the rural areas of Western Highlands by donating a portable generator for health authorities to use to provide basic treatment to those in need.

Brian Bell & Company Limited which has been operating in Mt Hagen for many years has donated a 2KVA petrol engine portable generator to the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority to use during its outreach trips to the rural areas.

The generator which comes with a power board and extension cord will be used to power

During a small but significant ceremony recently, the company's service manager, Peter Malau said when presenting the gift that Brian Bell was pleased to make such a donation where many people would benefit.

He said the donation may not be a big thing but at least it was to show that Brian Bell was ready to help where the bulk of the population would benefit from.

Mr. Malau said it was also another way of showing its appreciation for doing business in Mt Hagen.

In receiving the donation, the medical officer leading the outreach team, Dr. Madison Dat said he was very happy for the generator as without power it is difficult for his team to do awareness and treat patients.

He thanked Brian Bell on behalf of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority for the kind gesture and added that he hoped other corporate bodies in the city would make similar donations to help our people.