



# THE INFORMER



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A MOTHER AND CHILD IS THE REASON WE EXIST

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WHPHA

A monthly newsletter of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority

## PAIAKONA COMMUNITY CONTINUES TO DONATE TO MT HAGEN HOSPITAL



Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority's (WHPHA) Deputy Director Medical Services, Dr. Michael Dokup was on hand to receive the gifts on behalf of the Authority and its Board.

He expressed the hospital's gratitude and sincere thanks to the people of Paiakona, especially Cr. Jeffery Bras and community leaders Pim Mamandi, Simbil Eka, Manuel Kewa and Paul Terma for organizing the donation.

Dr. Dokup told the leaders that the Hospital spent a lot of money each year, buying vegetables at the Mt Hagen Market to feed its in-patients and their kind gesture was greatly appreciated.

"Assistance from understanding communities like Paiakona is a blessing to the Hospital and our in-patients. I am sure many of them would be very happy when they hear of your donation", he told the leaders.

The WHPHA operates a Health Sub-Centre at Paiakona, about 30 minutes' drive out of Mt Hagen City along the Enga Highway. The community is blessed with fertile land which is very good for vegetable farming.

**Cr. Jeffrey Bras (holding cabbage in centre) with other leaders and community members displaying the donated food items.**

The Paiakona Community in the Tambul/Nebilyer District of Western Highlands has again donated food items to Mt Hagen Hospital to feed its in-patients.

The community caught the management of the Hospital by surprise when it delivered

two truckloads of food on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2014.

The food included kaukau, potatoes, vegetables and other food items totaling more than 1,500kgs.

This is the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year (2013) that the people of Paiakona have donated food to the hospital as part of their annual Community Thanksgiving Day activities to help those in need.

According to their ward councilor, Jeffery Bras, the people had had a two-week inter-denominational fellowship and celebrations before gathering the food items and other gifts to donate to Mt Hagen Hospital.



**Members of the Paiakona community displaying more vegetables such as cabbages.**

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# MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## Plans and challenges for 2014



**Dr. James Kintwa**

The Christmas and New Year festive season is over and it is now time for us to think ahead and implement what we have planned for the year 2014. There are many challenges for us this year and this will require good team work to achieve them.

Our plans for 2014 include among others, infrastructure development and health service delivery at our rural facilities. Our major infrastructure developments will include the construction of Kotna and Tambul District Hospitals and the construction of Lumusa and Kagamuga Health Centres. We will also continue with the design phase of Mt Hagen Hospital redevelopment and the renovation of Tinsley Hospital.

Work on Kotna will start soon while construction work on Tambul District Hospital will start in June followed by the others soon after. Preparation work on the redevelopment of Mt Hagen Hospital is progressing well and we expect the first buildings to be pulled down towards the end of October for new ones to go up.

This is a major development project and we will need to plan ahead as we will be facing some chaotic situations when construction begins. There will be a need for us to relocate some of our services to other areas so sectional managers, divisional heads and heads of directorates need to discuss this with your staff now and prepare in advance as there will certainly be some confusion when machines start pulling down buildings.

We would also like to carry out renovation work on Jiwaka health centres if given the opportunity to do so. Prior to the Jiwaka Provincial Government announcing its desire to manage its own health services towards the end of last year, we had planned to carry out major repairs and maintenance work on Tabibuga, Kol, Nondugl, Kimil and Minj Health Centres and we stand committed to do so if given the opportunity.

We said that as of February, patients from the rural facilities will not be treated at Mt Hagen Hospital unless they are referred by these facilities. This is because Mt Hagen is now a regional referral hospital for the Highlands region and we will be dealing with major cases only.

Having said this, we will ensure our rural facilities are well maintained and equipped with the necessary medical equipment and drugs to treat our people and keep them there. Certain tertiary services will also need to be

decentralized to the rural health centres and other facilities so that basic medical and surgical services can be accessed by the rural people.

As a start, we have stocked these facilities with medical equipment and drugs to enable our people to get the best treatment. More equipment will arrive soon so that these facilities are fully stocked to provide the necessary services. I would like to ask all our staff in those facilities to remain in your respective places and provide these essential services for our people.

With the Government's Free Primary Health Care Policy, we can expect an influx of patients at all our facilities. As a Government agency, we are obliged to provide all primary health care services free of charge and I will advise when we will implement this policy through an internal memo to our staff and on radio for the information of the public.

Finally, I said in my last message that the Board had approved separate funding for all our rural facilities in the 2014 budget. This is a major policy decision and I urge the facility managers to be responsible and accountable for how these funds are spent.

These are but a few of the many challenges that we will be faced with in 2014 and it is up to each and every one of us to do our part to deliver an efficient and effective health service for our people.

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

## KAGAMUGA URBAN CLINIC RE-OPENS

The Government-owned Kagamuga Urban Clinic outside Mt Hagen re-opened recently after being closed for almost five months.

A meeting between concerned landowners, community leaders and executives of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) had resolved to open its doors to the public after certain issues which resulted in its closure were ironed out.

The local community locked its gates and forced the closure of this major facility after they had learnt that the WHPHA had entered into an agreement

with one of its health service delivery partners, Susu Mamas, to manage the facility.

They claimed they were not made aware of the change in management and also because Susu Mamas was a Non-Government Organization and they feared it may charge high fees for the services it provided.

After two separate meetings between the local community, community leaders and WHPHA, it was agreed that Susu Mamas would operate the facility free of charge. It would operate for an initial period of six months and if all parties are satisfied with its services, the term would be extended.

Community leaders David Yak (also Board Member of WHPHA), Steven Yalda and the CEO of WHPHA, Dr. James Kintwa were very vocal about health services not reaching the population since the facility's closure and urged the community to re-consider their decision.

They said NGOs such as Susu Mamas had a track record of providing effective and efficient health services and were selected to manage the clinic so that the local community could receive better health services.

Dr. Kintwa said the WHPHA had many health facilities but lacked skilled manpower to deliver essential services, adding that it was for this reason

that it had agreed for its partners to manage some of them.

He said Kagamuga would soon be a Health Centre with services such as out-patients, delivery facilities, X-ray and others so that people could receive better health services.

He added that the building which was funded by former Hagen Open MP, late Paul Pora, and the land title would remain the properties of the Government and would not be transferred to Susu Mamas as perceived by the people.

"Susu Mamas will not charge any fees for the services it will provide. They are an NGO group committed to providing service and they will be here from 8am to 4pm, unlike Government employees who are not fully committed to their jobs.

"I cannot and will not allow Susu Mamas or any other NGOs to manage Kagamuga if I feel they will not work well. Allow them to operate for six months and see how they perform.

"You and I are the eyes and if we see that they are not performing well, they will have to go", Dr. Kintwa assured the local people.

A brief ceremony was held at the clinic on 21<sup>st</sup> February in which the keys to the facility were officially handed over to Susu Mamas by the then acting CEO of WHPHA, Ms. Julie Bengi.

She told the small gathering that WHPHA had trust and confidence in Susu Mamas to deliver an effective health service to the local community and if they faced any hiccups, they should not hesitate to seek assistance.

Susu Mamas' Provincial Team Leader for WHP and Jiwaka, Teresita Waki thanked WHPHA for recognizing them as strong partners in health service delivery and giving the facility to them to manage.



**WHPHA's then acting CEO, Julie Bengi (left) handing over the facility keys to Susu Mamas' Health Service Program Manager, Caroline Ninnes as other members of the two organizations look on.**



# WHPHA Vehicle Fleet Identification and Inspection

All vehicles owned and operated by the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) will now come under the watchful eyes of a Fleet Manager, Mr. John Greg.

This is to ensure these vehicles are used for official work only to save cost on their maintenance which uses up a lot of money as well as fuel and general wear and tear.

As a start, a fleet parade was held at the WHPHA Headquarters in late January in which all vehicles based in Mt Hagen as well as in the districts were brought in for inspection and stock-take.

During the parade, members of the executive management team expressed the need for the 40 vehicles to be looked after well and used wisely to deliver better and effective health services to the people of Western Highlands.

They said effective health service delivery depended largely on the use of vehicles to move around and urged all concerned to use them for work only and not for other purposes such as driving to alcohol outlets to drink.



*Some of the 40-plus vehicles belonging to the WHPHA being assembled for identification and inspection with their drivers standing beside them.*

Acting CEO, Ms. Julie Bengi said vehicles were useful resources for providing health services to the people and must be managed well, adding that the job of the Fleet Manager would not be

that easy.

She said the position of Fleet Manager was new and challenging and urged everyone to co-operate with him to ensure all vehicles were managed well to gain maximum benefits.

"Management of vehicles creates more issues so John's job will be to deal with those who do not perform and look after the vehicles well", she said.

Ms. Bengi said a draft policy on transport is currently in circulation for management's input and once approved by the Board, it would spell out clearly how the vehicles should be used and when they should be replaced with new ones.

She added that she was now in the process of organizing office space and a computer for the Fleet Manager so that details of all vehicles could be stored and service schedules drawn up so that they could be serviced when due for effective utilization.

She thanked all the drivers for their humbleness in carrying out their jobs and added that the management was happy for the good work they did in looking after their vehicles well.

Fleet Manager, Mr. John Greg said managing so many vehicles was a daunting task and he needed the help of everyone including the drivers, facility managers and the executive management to achieve the objectives of the new position.



*Members of the WHPHA Executive Management Team gathered to address the occasion.*



*Some of the drivers and officers responsible for the use of these vehicles are pictured listening attentively to the speeches by the management team.*



*New Fleet Manager, John Greg Wama in his office preparing for the daunting task ahead.*



# Daniel Seri passes on

**T**he Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) has been hit with another tragedy – the death of senior employee, Daniel Seri.

Late Daniel was the manager of the X-ray and Scanning Section of Mt Hagen Hospital when he died on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2014 following a sudden stroke.

He is the first employee of the WHPHA to die this year and the sixth staff member to die in the last year.

All deaths have been of senior nurses and technical officers only and is a blow to the WHPHA which has been facing an acute shortage of clinical staff to provide the necessary services at Mt Hagen Hospital and the rural facilities.

Late Daniel who was from Muglamp in Dei District of Western Highlands is survived by his wife and two young daughters. He had worked with Mt Hagen Hospital for 16 years since joining it in March 1998.

A funeral service was held for the late Daniel at the WHPHA's Chapel at the Hospital on 12<sup>th</sup> February in which his colleagues and other staff viewed his body and paid their last respects before the body was delivered to his relatives at Muglamp on the same day.

Chief Executive Officer of WHPHA, Dr. James Kintwa who was on leave returned to pay his last respects and led the rest of the staff to Muglamp to deliver the body.

During the funeral service, various speakers spoke of how humble and committed late Daniel was to his job and how friendly he was to everyone he met including his patients.

Dr. Kintwa said late Daniel was a good worker and thanked his family for giving him to the WHPHA to serve his people who needed his expertise.

*Top right—Colleagues of late Daniel Seri carrying his casket into the Hospital premises upon arrival from the Goroka Funeral Home as more staff line up to welcome back the body.*

*Right—Family members of late Daniel crying over his body in the Hospital Chapel while gathering there for a funeral service.*



## WHPHA NO LONGER RESPONSIBLE FOR HEALTH IN JIWAKA PROVINCE

**T**he Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) will no longer be responsible for health services in Jiwaka as of 1<sup>st</sup> January this year.

This is due to the non-existence of a formal agreement between the new Jiwaka Provincial Government (JPG) and WHPHA for the latter to continue to manage health services in Jiwaka until such time the JPG is ready to take over the running of these services.

Chief Executive Officer of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority, Dr. James Kintwa announced the decision of the WHPHA Board of Governance while addressing his staff during a recent gathering.

He said prior to Jiwaka becoming a separate province, health services had been part of Western Highlands and verbal agreement had

been reached for WHPHA to continue to manage health in Jiwaka with resources (financial and human resources) provided by WHPHA.

Dr. Kintwa said WHPHA had up until the end of last year carried out a number of initiatives in Jiwaka including renovating buildings in five health centres using financial resources meant for Western Highlands without being reimbursed through the Health Functional Grants given to Jiwaka.

"It is regrettable that the decision by the Jiwaka Provincial Government not to honour previously agreed arrangements through a formal agreement has effectively cut off our responsibility for health services in Jiwaka.

"WHPHA has not left Jiwaka yet but if the Jiwaka Provincial Government does not sign an

Agreement for WHPHA to continue to be responsible for health services in Jiwaka, we will leave and this is very unfortunate", he said.

Dr. Kintwa said if JPG was serious about allowing WHPHA to manage health services in Jiwaka, it would have to make available its Health Functional Grants to WHPHA to use and carry out the services.

Meanwhile, Jiwakan medical professionals including doctors, nurses, health extension officers and community health workers serving in Western Highlands Province are totally against Jiwaka running its own health services at this time.

They claim there are no experienced health administrators in Jiwaka to manage the services yet and are calling on the Provincial Government to understand the situation and allow WHPHA to continue to manage it for at least another two years during which time a Jiwaka Provincial Health Authority should be established.