



THE INFORMER



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A MOTHER AND CHILD IS THE REASON WE EXIST

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WHPHA

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Hagen schools praised for helping to promote School Health Program



A senior health official in the Western Highlands Province has praised schools in Hagen Central and Mul/Baiyer Districts for helping to promote healthy living among their students and staff.

Director of Curative Health Services with the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA), Dr John Kiap said health was everyone's business and he was proud and happy to see schools taking it upon themselves to promote it.

Dr Kiap was addressing a gathering of senior teachers, principals and elementary teachers-in-charge of schools in Hagen Central, organized by the WHPHA to

advocate and create awareness on the Health Promoting School Program, launched in the province recently.

The program is aimed at making children in elementary schools and students in community, primary and high schools and colleges to become change agents for health in their respective schools, families and communities to make the province a healthy place to live in.

The gathering was held at the Mt Hagen United Primary School and attended by more than 100 senior teachers, headmasters and principals of both public and private schools in Hagen Central District.

A similar gathering was held at Rugli Primary School for senior teachers and principals of schools in the Mul/Baiyer District a week earlier where they had also pledged to implement the program.

Dr Kiap told the senior teachers that the introduction of the health program in schools followed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) signed in June last year between the National Departments of Health and Education to

engage schools to help promote healthy living in schools and the surrounding communities.

He said schools, and not health centres, aid posts and community health posts had been identified as the best places to promote health activities and the keen interest shown by the heads of schools to help implement the school health program was very much appreciated.

Dr Kiap said that the country's population was growing at 3.8 percent per year. This was putting a severe strain on the resources available to health and it was nearly impossible to cater for such a rapidly growing population.

"Smoking and chewing betel nut can cause problems if the heart and lungs fail. We need to grow a healthy population for our future and schools are the best places to teach good health so that our children can become change agents for their families and the communities they live in", he said.

The headmaster of a primary school said schools were fundamental places to teach children anything and the respective schools were prepared and ready to implement the school health program.

"We accept this program into our schools and settings because we see this is a good and successful way to teach our children about good health so that we have a healthy population to lead our future", he said.

Pictured above and below - Principals and senior teachers listening to how they can encourage their students to become change agents for health in their respective schools.



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

SECURITY ISSUES AT MT HAGEN HOSPITAL



Dr. James Kintwa

This month I thought it would be helpful to discuss some of the issues surrounding the security of staff, patients and visitors to the Mt Hagen Hospital campus.

First we need as a community to acknowledge that security and law and order are community wide issues for

which we must all take responsibility.

Our community is less safe today than it was yesterday. People cannot park their cars in the main street without attempts to break into them. One of our own staff recently had two such attempts in as many days when he parked his vehicle in the main street.

It is difficult to go to some places including the market without the risk of being robbed and the devastation caused by alcohol fuelled violence is catastrophic.

Within this context our staff are often subjected to abuse and at times violence and this clearly is unacceptable.

While some of the Industrial Associations have labelled the WHPHA's attempts to protect staff as "pathetic" others have indicated a willingness to keep working with management to make the environment safer.

Clearly the WHPHA is limited in what it can do as we have limited influence in the community.

We do meet with community leaders and use the media to promote appropriate behaviour within the hospital.

However it is the role of Police and Community Leaders to work with the community to improve the lives of all living in our province.

The WHPHA has taken the following initiatives to improve the safety of staff, patients and visitors.

Security Risk assessment – the Management engaged an external services provider to provide an independent assessment of the security services and an assessment of the actual requirement in terms of staff and function and provide recommendations. The assessment was seen as best performed by an organisation which had the skills, qualifications and experience to make the assessment. A number of recommendations are being implemented.

Community Engagement – a series of meetings were held with community leaders at the height of the incident involving Dr. Kirau's assault in 2013. Ongoing engagement with community leaders is being maintained, for example, raising awareness on the importance of protecting the lives of health workers and looking after them in terms of their safety. A staff has been appointed to be the community liaison officer and this is in place.

Media attention – on numerous occasions WHPHA has gone to the media, voicing concerns over actions and damages to hospital property/equipment by certain nearby Hagen community groups. This is done to draw the attention of the general public and state agencies towards the plight of the organization whilst delivering its patient care responsibilities.

Increased manpower – calls by the medical and nursing fraternity to increase manpower as part of the security measures was fulfilled by the recruitment and engagement of 22 casual guards, including 7 females. The resources commitment by the Management to this action is significant however, this must happen to provide adequate safety for the staff and property. The additional security has cost K101,162 to date and the remaining part of this year will cost approximately K160,000 in additional wages.

Security uniforms – uniforms were issued to boost security moral and empowerment. The need to elevate the identity and profile of the security force to the public was necessary. A total of K15,000 was committed to this action.

Security Management outsourcing – in early 2013 there was a move to outsource the management function and a compromise was to call public tenders for the management of the workforce. In the event not one bid was received and it is not beyond possibility that the process was less than ideal.

However, compelled by the situation and the need to improve security services management, again public tender was called in 2014 for bids from professional security firms by advertising in the media. Only two companies submitted their bids. A technical evaluation process identified one of them as meeting the requirements in terms of capacity however, WHPHA went back to them to reconsider their budget which was far in excess of what was affordable. They rejected our request to decrease their cost. The specification can be made available if required.

Recruitment of Security Manager – the unsuccessful outcome of the above action then forced

the Senior Executive Management to pass a resolution to recruit an individual with high level security management competencies. This action is currently being undertaken and will result in recruitment of a manager shortly.

Allocation of vehicle – a full time driver and vehicle has been made available for ease of mobility for medical staff on-calls and emergency calls. This move was both to ensure security of staff movement between their place of residence and hospital, and for quick and efficient responses to patients in emergency. Lack of quick responses to patients at A/E has been cited as contributing to build up of frustrations from relatives of patients in distress or serious conditions, thus a contributing factor to the security risks, a fact acknowledged recently by the NDA representatives.

CCTV – this is being installed in the A&E for 24/7 monitoring allowing for a faster security response and in AOPD for monitoring that service when it is open.

Further actions are planned including:

A boom gate at the main entrance is an option to explore, however, the redevelopment work of the hospital is also happening that needs to be considered if this is necessary.

Reorganizing the physical setup of the A&E to minimize number of relatives is being undertaken.

Communication system improvement is being undertaken with a new PABX system being implemented

Time-keeping by hand punch machines, a whole of PNG Government initiative, are being installed to manage staff punctuality and absenteeism. These should be operational later this month.

Security has been flagged as an important design feature of the redeveloped hospital.

The safety of our medical and clinical staff, patients and visitors is of paramount importance to me and all of the management team.

WHPHA will continue to look to ways to improve the security of staff, patients and visitors.

However, it must be acknowledged that there is a general increase in law and order in Mt Hagen and the Hospital is, like many other organisations, experiencing the effects of this major community problem. It will require a collaborative effort from all parties to find lasting solutions.

Dr. James Kintwa AFCHSM
Chief Executive Officer

WHPHA expresses concern over public attitude towards overworked staff

The Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority is concerned that some members of the public continue to cause problems for its staff while they are performing their duties.

Chief Executive Officer, Dr. James Kintwa said today that when people harass staff or intimidate them while carrying out their duties, sick patients who need our care and attention most would suffer.

He was referring to recent and past experiences where some people have physically and verbally attacked medical staff, especially doctors and nurses over claims of non-attendance to their sick relatives.

He said if medical staff were left alone to perform their duties, those needing their assistance would get treated quickly and sent home. He urged the public to exercise restraint and respect his staff.

Dr. Kintwa said to prevent such harassments, the WHPHA Management had recruited more than 20 security guards late last year on three-month short term contracts but the need was such that it has extended the term of their contracts to one year.

He said on top of this, it is organizing to recruit an experienced and qualified security manager to manage the current security personnel and

operations at the hospital.

Dr. Kintwa said to make the security guards more visible and accessible they have been issued with new uniforms which include blue trousers, shirts, jackets, helmets and brown boots.

"We are concerned about the safety of our staff just as we are of those who seek our help and care and we are doing everything possible to ensure the environment is conducive for all of us to work in and for patients to receive treatment", he said.

Dr. Kintwa said the option of engaging a professional security company to manage security personnel and operations at the hospital had been considered and public tenders had been out late last year but the response had been very poor.

UNICEF Regional Director Visits Mt Hagen



Mr. Daniel Toole chats with a mother and child at the Mt Hagen Urban Maternal and Child Health Clinic.

The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) is ready to help organizations that produce good results in their respective fields, according to its Regional Director for East Asia Pacific, Mr. Daniel Toole.

Mr. Toole said children's lives were most important and UNICEF was prepared to assist organizations that had good programs for

children and produced good results.

The UNICEF executive said this in Mt Hagen recently while on a one day visit to the Western Highlands capital to see how programs and projects it funded were operating.

He spent about two hours with the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority where he visited a number of the facilities that UNICEF had

funded before being briefed on the operations of the organization by the acting Chief Executive Officer, Mr. David Vorst.

Mr. Vorst explained that the WHPHA had a strong focus on maternal and child health care and saw UNICEF as one of its important partners and was happy for all the help it provided.

He said the WHPHA had established good relations with private and Non-Government Organizations, churches and donor agencies including the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Asian Development Bank and this had helped to deliver vital health services to the people of Western Highlands.

He added that under the Provincial Health Authority reform, Government, Churches and Non-Government Organizations all worked together with an integrated approach to health which worked well for health service delivery in the rural areas.

Mr. Vorst said more facilities were being built in the districts including aid posts, community health posts and district hospitals to bring services close to where the people were but staffing was a major problem.

He said to alleviate this problem the WHPHA was currently negotiating with Divine Word University to establish a nursing school in Mt Hagen under a partnership agreement where the Authority makes available the facilities while the University provides the teaching staff.

The UNICEF Regional Director, Mr. Daniel Toole before meeting with the management was taken on a guided tour of Mt Hagen Hospital to see some of the facilities that his organization had funded including the cold chain room at the MCH clinic and the Well Women's Centre.

Mr. Toole said he was impressed with how the cold chain room had been kept and managed, adding that it was clean, tidy and looked fantastic, unlike other places that he had seen.

He said UNICEF had established good relations with the WHPHA just like other partners and it would continue to provide assistance if needed. "We have a good partnership with you and we will continue to help", he said.

Hagen Central U/5 children receive treated mosquito nets

Many families in Hagen Central District with children under five years of age now have treated mosquito nets to protect their children from malaria and other vector borne diseases.

Rotary Against Malaria (RAM) in partnership with the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) has recently distributed more than 18,000 treated bed nets to various families following an earlier survey.

The distribution of the nets took place from 15 – 20th March following four weeks of planning and identification of families and involved more than 100 volunteers.

Nelson Manasseh, the Provincial Malaria Supervisor with the WHPHA said the distribution exercise was done under a new program called the Long Lasting Insecticide/Integrated Nets (LLIN) for under five-year-olds only and covered all families with children under five years in Hagen Central.

Nelson said the LLIN distribution program proved successful in the National Capital District where it was first trialed and because of this, the program had been extended to cover the Highlands region starting with Western Highlands

and later Simbu, Eastern Highlands and Morobe provinces.

He said in Hagen Central, 20 teams of six

volunteers each and team leaders comprising health workers distributed the nets and if the incidence of malaria in children decreases, other districts in Western Highlands would also be covered.

The expected coverage rate for children under five years in Hagen Central District sleeping under treated mosquito nets is 90% or above.



The volunteers with Nelson Manasseh (standing far right in orange shirt) posing for a picture before going out to the villages to distribute the mosquito nets.

Water supply for Alkena villagers

The people of Alkena in the Lower Kaugel area of Tambul/Nebilyer District in Western Highlands now have access to clean fresh water for cooking and drinking.

The water supply project which cost more than K60,000 to set up was officially opened on Sunday, 1st March 2015.

It was jointly funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the PNG Government through a loan arrangement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) under its Rural Primary Health Services Delivery Program.

The opening of the water supply coincided with a ground breaking ceremony for a new Community Health Post to be built at Akena where more than 10,000 people would benefit from both services.

The Australian Minister and Counsellor for Development Cooperation at the Australian High Commission in Port Moresby, Mr. James Hall turned on the tap, signaling the official opening of the water supply for the people to use.

Mr. Bruce Davies, Asian Development Bank's Vice President Administration and Corporate Management Operations said donor partners were investing a lot of money in such projects to improve the living standards of people in the province.

"We have built this water project to help improve your health because your lives are important. If you look after what is given, then you can expect more to come", he said.

A spokesman for the people and community leader, Philip Talpa thanked the donors for funding the project.

He said people had to walk long distances to access good fresh water for drinking and cooking



DFAT's James Hall officially turns on the water supply as a young boy prepares to drink from the tap.

and they were happy that this will now be a thing of the past.

Mr. Talpa said his people had also been affected by water borne diseases such as typhoid and with the new water supply, he

expected such cases to be reduced.

"Our people do not have to go far now to look for clean drinking water and we thank all parties involved in this project from the bottom of our hearts", he said.

Nambawan Super encourages people to join new savings scheme

National Superannuation Fund, Nambawan Super Ltd is encouraging its members and others to save in a new savings scheme called

Choice Super to gain maximum benefits.

The new savings scheme allows members and non-members alike to join and save money but cannot withdraw at any time unlike commercial banks.

The Fund has also encouraged its members to increase their fortnightly contributions from the current compulsory deduction of 7% in order to have more money when they retire or resign from their jobs.

Nambawan Super's Highlands Regional Team Leader, Allan Koi Titip revealed this at Mt Hagen Hospital early this month when addressing staff of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority on the different forms of

savings schemes available to contributors.

Mr. Titip said the compulsory savings scheme where public sector employees contributed 7% and their employers 8% was good but employees could increase their contributions if they wanted to save more.

He said many contributors had increased their contributions by 2-3 percent and they were seeing good results at the end of each year when the statements came out.

The new savings scheme is intended mainly for grassroots and illiterate people who have difficulty opening up accounts in commercial banks. It is aimed at getting them to save their money and let it grow with interest.

Mr. Titip said this savings scheme was especially good for village people like PMV operators, trade store owners and chicken farmers to save but employees on fortnightly wages could also join as long as it was under a relative's name to the one used in Nambawan Super.

He said under Choice Super, anyone can open up an account with a minimum deposit of K20 with no limit on the maximum deposit.

He added that deposits can be made at any time but only one withdrawal will be allowed after five years in order to encourage people to save.

"We see this as a good way of saving money and we encourage those who earn some sort of an income to join and save and watch their money grow", Mr. Titip said.



Nursing Supervisor, Mary Culligan discusses her statement with Reuben Ponig, Service Clerk at Nambawan Super's Mt Hagen Office.