



THE INFORMER



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A MOTHER AND CHILD IS THE REASON WE EXIST

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WHPHA

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URBAN CLINICS TO BRING SERVICES CLOSE TO PEOPLE

The Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) is constructing a number of urban clinics in the Hagen Central District to bring primary health care services closer to the people.

This is in addition to services already provided by the existing urban clinics at Kagamuga and Rebiamul and the rural facilities in the districts so that people can receive these vital services at their doorsteps.

Two of the new urban clinics to be built will be at Ogelbeng along the Baiyer River road and Wagbel village in the Warakum area outside Mt Hagen City.

Acting Chief Executive Officer of WHPHA, Mr. David Vorst said the idea of building these urban clinics was to stop the people having to travel long distances to get services.

He said travelling long distances is expensive and carries risk which is why we are improving access to services closer to where people live.

Mr. Vorst said Mt Hagen Hospital will concentrate on referrals from these urban and rural clinics thereby improving access to specialist services available at the Mt Hagen Hospital.

He said to facilitate services at the district level, the WHPHA and its donor agencies including the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) have spent in excess of K70 million to build district hospitals at Kotna in Dei District, Tambul in Tambul/Nebilyer and Tinsley in Mul/Baiyer/Lumusa District.



Pictured above and below - Contractors working on the new clinic and staff houses at the Wagbel Urban Clinic at Warakum outside Mt Hagen City

The donor agencies have also funded the reconstruction of Lumusa Health Centre in Baiyer River and the refurbishment of Kagamuga Urban Clinic.

Chairman of the WHPHA Board, Mr. David Guinn said in addition to this, the Western Highlands Provincial Government under the Governorship of Rt. Hon Paias Wingti and local MPs, Hon William Duma (Minister for Public Enterprises and State Investment and Member for Hagen Open), Hon Koi Trape (Member for Mul/Baiyer/Lumusa), Hon Wesley Nukundi (Member for Dei) and Hon Benjamin Poponawa (Minister for Labor and Industrial Relations and Member for Tambul/Nebilyer) have also provided significant funding for health services in the Province and the districts.

Mr. Vorst went on to say the WHPHA was also pleased to work with service partners such as Susu

Mamas, Marie Stopes, Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) and Anglicare, saying these partnership arrangements have further enhanced the efforts of the WHPHA in providing primary health care services to the people in both the urban and rural areas.



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

"Year of Achievement through Positive Change and Affirmative Action"



Dr. James Kintwa

The Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) Board at its first meeting for 2016 held at the PHA Board Room at Mt Hagen Hospital on 25th February 2016 deliberated on a number of important issues.

The Chairman, Mr. David Guinn CSM OBE OAM in his report to the Board touched on issues in relation to the operations of the Authority and in particular services provided at Mt Hagen Hospital.

He also made mention of the sit-in protest by members of the National Doctors' Association Mt Hagen Branch as well as nurses, community health workers and allied health workers and the issues that they had raised.

Most of what they had raised were mere allegations with no concrete evidence to support their claims. The Board and Management have nothing to hide and would welcome and support any investigation instituted by the Health Minister or Health Secretary.

The Board during its meeting discussed at length the recent happenings and concluded that there needed to be change in attitude among all

staff in order for us to appreciate what the Board and Management were doing to take the Authority forward and provide much needed health services to our people.

To this end, the Chairman, Mr. Guinn proposed a theme for 2016 to be the "Year of Achievement through Positive Change and Affirmative Action" and the Board agreed and adopted it as the way forward for the Provincial Health Authority.

Mr. Guinn further stated: "We have the Redevelopment Support Unit working hard to lay the foundation for significant attitude change and we are also close to seeing the Hospital Manager (Ms Jane Holden) on the campus to team up with the Director Corporate Services (Ms Julie Bengi) so we need to set a theme for this year and clearly there is change a foot.

"Change always comes at a cost but if we are to see the redevelopment take place, if we are to see the District services and infrastructure improve, if we want to make the transition from where we are to a centre of excellence at level 6/7 then we must be prepared to embrace change and support those charged with the responsibility to lead and manage that change.

So what does it mean to have a theme such as the "Year of Achievement through Positive Change and Affirmation Action"? Simply put, it means doing things in a positive way and doing it

correctly to address situations which may not look right but which can be corrected through positive change and affirmative action.

Look at for example our staff. The majority of the staff in this organization are women but how many of them are represented in the top management?

Sadly we have one strong leader in Ms Bengi and with Ms Holden coming on board soon, these two women I believe will mentor other women in this organization to aspire and achieve senior positions in the WHPHA.

I am more than certain that if this happens, the WHPHA will be a more compassionate and caring organization where everyone would be happy to work together and bring about positive changes for the good of the patients who seek our care and attention.

We have other women leaders such as Roselyn Kali (Deputy Director Nursing Services) and nurse sectional managers like Janet Yamu, Mary Culligan, Serah Dot etc. who, once properly mentored can assume senior roles in the WHPHA and this will help improve service delivery and take the organization one step further.

Dr. James Kintwa AFCHSM
Chief Executive Officer

IMPROVING SERVICE DELIVERY IS VITAL

The Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) has done and will continue to do what it can to improve health services at Mt Hagen Hospital for the sake of patients.

Basic service delivery is essential for the treatment of patients and the Authority would do everything possible to ensure these services are delivered.

Chief Executive Officer, Dr. James Kintwa said this while brushing aside allegations by hospital staff recently that some services including the operating theatre had been closed for the last eight months due to waste water leaking from the floor above it.

Dr. Kintwa said there had been problems experienced with water leaking from the top floor into the operating theatre but every time this happened, maintenance staff had been sent in to rectify the problem and the theatre has been operating from time to time and not shut down completely as claimed by some staff.

He said the WHPHA Management was just as concerned as the staff to have improved services at not only the hospital but the rural health facilities as well to provide a better health service for everyone and there was no way it could turn a blind eye on such situations.

He said while the hospital lacked some services such as full microbiology and ophthalmology surgical services, many others were functioning.

Dr. Kintwa said allegations in separate news stories in the two national dailies attributing the doctors' sit-in protest to lack of services at the hospital was not true. The fact was that their protest was over the advertising of the position of Director Curative Health Services (DCHS), demanding that it be withdrawn or they would continue their protest.

"Their petition over lack of services at the hospital has been taken carriage by the National Executive of NDA. They should not use this petition to fight for some-one's contract of employment; in this case the position of Director Curative Health Services which we have advertised in the papers due to the fact that the contract expires on 23rd March 2016", he said.

Dr. Kintwa went on to say that the current incumbent, Dr. John Kiap had been told he was welcome to re-apply but as the duties of the position have changed, the position needed to be advertised.

He said the sit-in protest was not over these allegations according to a letter he received from the union on 29th February 2016. It was a letter demanding him to immediately withdraw the advertising of the position of DCHS in both the national dailies within 24 hours or its members would stage a four-day sit-in protest starting at 1pm on Tuesday, 1st March 2016. It further warned that if the advertisement was not withdrawn by Friday, 4th March 2016, its members would walk off their jobs starting

Monday, 7th March 2016.

Dr. Kintwa said the position had to be advertised so that someone could be appointed to it as soon as it became vacant so that services through that office could continue. He added that this was a normal administrative process that had been carried out and not an industrial issue for the union to take it up.

"The staff claimed the timing of the advertisement (of the position of DCHS) was wrong, especially when the issue of poor services and equipment at Mt Hagen Hospital was being raised and further alleged that the General Orders governing the renewal or non-renewal of such contract had not been properly followed.

"This was a complete switch from their original demand which had been taken carriage by the National Executive of NDA and I replied on 1st March 2016 that I would not withdraw the advertisement of the position of DCHS as it was a normal administrative process to advertise a contract position when its term neared its expiration", he said.

Dr. Kintwa said the position of the WHPHA Management and Board was that they had nothing to hide from anyone and if the Secretary for Health or the Minister for Health felt there was a need for an investigation to be conducted the Management and Board would give their full support and co-operation.

He also made it known to the protesting staff that the Management and Board were also looking at legal options for the sake of patients who would be affected should the members of NDA go ahead with their planned actions.

Province Launches Maternal Health and Death Review Task Force



Members of the newly-formed WH Provincial Maternal Health Task Force and Maternal Death Review Committee pose for a picture after their meeting.

The Western Highlands Province has launched a Provincial Maternal Health Task Force and Maternal Death Review Committee to deal with issues affecting the lives of expectant mothers.

Initiated by the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA), the Committee held its first meeting at Hotel Kimininga in mid-February after which the Task Force was launched.

The Committee comprises doctors and nurses from WHPHA, its service partners such as Susu Mamas, Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), Anglicare, Marie Stopes and Church Health Services as well as Faith Based Organizations, Education and the Police Sexual Violence and Child Protection Unit.

The meeting was told that in PNG about 250,000 babies were born every year and only 36 percent of these were supervised deliveries.

It was further told that the Family Planning coverage across the country ranged from 20-24 percent on average and this was not very good.

Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority's Director for Curative Health Services, Dr. John Kiap said because of the many unsupervised deliveries, many mothers and young girls who fell pregnant died of infection and other complications and urgent action was needed to prevent such deaths from occurring.

A representative from Susu Mamas said that if a woman attended antenatal classes at Susu Mamas or one of the other service providers in Hagen Central, her probability of having a supervised delivery increased to 98%. This resulted in much better health outcomes for both mothers and their babies.

Dr. John Kiap said after seeing the aftermath of what was happening in the communities, it was decided such a Committee be formed to address maternal health issues.

"Our motto is "no mother or child should die during pregnancy, childbirth or post-partum period" and we must all live up to this", he said.

The Committee is believed to be the first to be established outside of Port Moresby and will have its own Terms of Reference (TOR) but will be in line with the guidelines set by the National Maternal Health Task Force for provincial committees to follow.

It will hold quarterly meetings and make recommendations to the Senior Executive Management of the WHPHA, the National Maternal Health Task Force and the WH Provincial Government for appropriate action

CHILDREN RETURN HOME SMILING

Three children from Mt Hagen who recently underwent open heart surgery to correct abnormalities in their hearts have returned home with smiling faces.

Delilah Peter (2 years), Pamela Jeffrey and Philomena Siune (both 7 years) were selected from more than 60 children from the Highlands Region to go to Port Moresby for the operation.

They were among many others from around the country who had been selected to go for the operation at the Port Moresby General Hospital early this month. They returned home recently, happy with the operation they had undergone.

A team of Papua New Guinean heart specialists assisted by two visiting specialists from Australia had performed the operations with nearly all of them leaving the hospital with smiling faces.

The three girls from Mt Hagen who had been sent by the Loo Pok Heart Clinic at Mt Hagen Hospital were among the many from the Highlands Region who had been diagnosed with heart problems. One of them was from Western Highlands, the other from Jiwaka and the third one from Chimbu Province.

It is hoped some more children with similar problems would be selected to travel to Port Moresby for the next Operation Open Heart later this year.

The Sister-In-Charge of the Loo Pok Clinic, John Umba said he was pleased with the outcome of the operations on the three children and he hoped those still waiting would undergo similar successful operations.

He said he had many patients waiting to undergo similar operations and he hoped the number of patients selected from Mt Hagen for the next operation would increase.

However he added that this would depend on the type of operation that would be conducted and the number of open heart surgeons available to do it.



The three girls with their parents before leaving for Port Moresby for surgery. They are from left – Pamela Jeffrey, Delilah Peter and Philomena Siune with the Sister-In-Charge of Loo Pok Heart Clinic, John Umba.

Tinsley District Hospital Gets New Water Supply

Tinsley District Hospital in the Baiyer River area of Western Highlands Province now has a regular water supply to cater for its needs.

The new water supply which took almost one year to construct was officially opened on January 22, 2016 by the new Australian High Commissioner to Papua New Guinea, His Excellency, Mr. Bruce Davies.

The water supply cost K800,000 to build and was jointly funded by the Member for Mul/Baiyer/Lumusa, Hon. Koi Trape, the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

Mr. Trape contributed K250,000 from his electorate's District Services Improvement Program funds while the WHPHA chipped in K150,000. This total amount (K400,000) was matched by DFAT which contributed K400,000 under its kina for kina aid policy.

The water comes from two streams up in the nearby mountains and has been piped over a ten kilometer route to the hospital.

The water project not only services the hospital but also the nearby Kumbareta High School, Dalapana and Kumbareta Primary Schools, the Baptist Union of PNG Head Office, the Tinsley College of Nursing and the five clans who live in the water catchment area and along the pipeline.

According to the Baptist Union's Health and Rural Water Supply Project Manager, Mr. Joseph Lakai, the water has been connected to all areas within the hospital including staff houses and teachers' houses and everyone including



Officials including the Member for Mul/Baiyer/Lumusa, Hon Koi Trape (third on the left with black hat) and Australian High Commissioner, Mr. Bruce Davies (next to Mr. Trape) clapping as the tap is turned on.

the local community was very happy for the clean water that they will have access to.

Prior to the construction of the water supply, the hospital had depended largely on rain water

which had been collected and stored in a large Southern Cross tank and supplied to the various sections.

Health staff told to change their attitudes



Members of the newly-formed WH Provincial Maternal Health and Maternal Death Review Task Force listening attentively to Mr. David Vorst.

Health workers in the Western Highlands Province have been told to change their attitudes towards work if they are serious about helping sick people.

Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA), Mr. David Vorst said staff must commit themselves fully to their work if they want to help others including mothers and children.

He was speaking at the launching of the first ever Provincial Maternal Health Task Force and Maternal Death Review Committee at Hotel

Kimininga in Mt Hagen recently.

Mr. Vorst told the participants that at the end of the meeting everyone needed to "walk the walk" and not just "talk the talk". He said often we were good at talking but less good at implementing programs.

He gave an example of how Susan Moses, a young mother from the remote Jimi District in Jiwaka Province had been saved in 2012 when she had retained placenta after delivering her fifth child. Health workers could not remove the placenta and had to stretch her for four days to the nearest airstrip at Koinambe where she was airlifted to Mt Hagen and saved.

Mr. Vorst said Susan's life was saved because a former director for curative health services, Dr. Guapo Kiagi had said WHPHA's core business was patient care and the management could not sit back and say there was no money to fly her in.

"This event had resulted in a change in attitude and since then our care for mothers and children has increased", he told the participants.

He said service partners such as Susu Mamas, Marie Stopes, Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) and Anglicare have also committed resources to improve maternal health services and their efforts were very much appreciated.

Mr. Vorst said one of the biggest problems in health service delivery was there was not enough accountability and as such the Call Centre (Free Call 1542) had been set up by the Australian Government's health service provider, HHISP in partnership with the WHPHA and everyone needed to increase their level of commitment in their work.

"The theme agreed to by the WHPHA Board for 2016 is "Achievement through Positive Change and Affirmative Action." By adopting this theme the Board was hopeful that we would achieve more for patients and not just talk more".

"Let's see some action out of this workshop", he said.