



# 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

## WHPHA is a leader in health service delivery

The Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) is a leader in the provision of health services under the National Government's public/private partnership policy, according to a Non-Government Organization.

The Vice Chairman of Susu Mamas Inc., Ms. Anna Maalsen said WHPHA was leading the way in how health outcomes were achieved and her organization was happy to be part of that achievement.

Ms. Maalsen made these comments in Mt Hagen recently when signing the second Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the WHPHA and Susu Mamas to extend the health services provided by the latter.

"Western Highlands Province is leading the way in how health outcomes are achieved and in partnership with NGOs like Susu Mamas, much can be achieved and we are proud to contribute to that achievement", she said.

Susu Mamas currently operates the Kagamuga Urban Clinic under a three year agreement but this has now expired and a new seven-year agreement was recently signed.

The then Chief Executive Officer of WHPHA, Dr. James Kintwa said public/private partnerships in health service delivery were crucial to achieving better outcomes and he appreciated the good work that NGOs and FBOs did including churches.

He said NGOs and churches went to places where the government could not go, especially in the remote parts of the country, providing primary health care services to the bulk of the population and this was greatly appreciated.

"We recognize the partnerships we have



*Pictured from right – General Manager of Susu Mamas PNG Inc, Moses Moti, then CEO of WHPHA, Dr. James Kintwa and Vice Chairman of Susu Mamas, Anna Maalsen signing the MoA, witnessed by Terasita Waki of Susu Mamas.*

between us and we appreciate this because NGOs have capacities that we don't have and they provide about 60 percent of the primary health care services in the rural areas", Dr. Kintwa said.

He said primary health care services such as treatment of headaches and fever must be taken away from the hospitals so that they are freed up to concentrate on tertiary health care services.

Dr. Kintwa also invited Susu Mamas to nominate an employee to attend the next six-month mid-wifery course to be conducted at Mt Hagen Hospital in the next month.

He said the up-skilling of community health workers in mid-wifery had resulted in good outcomes following the successful completion of the first three courses and more needed to be trained and based in the rural facilities so that no mother or child died during birth.

*Pictured left — Clinical Facilitator at the Kagamuga Urban Clinic, Maureen Moti (!) diagnosing and advising two patients what they would be treated for and above, Community Health Worker, Lorna Andakis interviewing a patient before referring her to the clinical nurse for diagnosis and treatment.*



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# GENERAL STAFF MEETING WITH THE BOARD OF THE WHPHA

In light of what has been happening in the last couple of months between the Board and Management and the clinical staff unions over claims of corruption and mismanagement within the WHPHA, a general staff meeting was held on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> August 2016 to clarify the situation.

The Board called for this meeting to clarify the results of the investigations and recommendations by the Committee of Inquiry and then the Multi-Sectoral Taskforce.

The Board members led by its Chairman, Mr. David Guinn, had hoped that more of the staff working on the Mt Hagen Hospital campus would attend the meeting.

The meeting proceeded and Mr. Guinn explained that the Board and Management had cooperated with the two investigation teams and had provided all the necessary information in order for them to complete their investigations and make their final recommendations.

He told the staff that the two investigation teams had not found any evidence of corruption or mismanagement which clearly demonstrated that the initial allegations were unfounded and were the work of some members of our staff who had vested interests to see things done their way.

Mr. Guinn said the allegations were serious and ridiculous in nature and were aimed at attacking the Board and Management who had done nothing wrong and nothing to hide.

"There was lack of good understanding by

those who wrote the petition on the roles and responsibilities of the Board and Management.

"They do not seem to understand the difference between the Board and Management roles. Management is responsible for all operational issues, not the Board. The credibility of the WHPHA has been severely damaged and we need to restore it for the good of all the people of Western Highlands", he said.

On the provision of a 25-seater bus for the nurses, Mr. Guinn said this was one of the recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry and the Board had acted swiftly to provide the required transport but was rejected twice by the nurses. He said however that this would be discussed with the nurses again very soon.

Mr. Guinn said with the nurses' new accommodation unit, the job had been tendered and a contract awarded but the contractor had faced problems after starting work and the job has now be given to another contractor to build it.

The position of a Director for Nursing, Mr. Guinn said, had been created in 2011 and it would be advertised soon as it was an important position and an integral part of the hospital and the WHPHA.

Issues with the Operating Theatre and the Accidents and Emergency (A&E) Unit were also raised at the meeting by Dr. Paulus Ripa, the Deputy Director Medical Services who said they needed urgent attention.

He said all elective surgeries had been cancelled and only emergencies were being dealt with while waiting for the temporary theatre to be completed which he said was taking too long.

The theatre has been temporarily moved to the Well Women's Clinic while the clinic has been relocated on the ground floor of the new container building next to the Project Management Unit office.

Mr. Guinn said the delay was a direct result of disagreements between the doctors on how the internal arrangements of the theatre should be done but that being resolved, work was now progressing well and the theatre should be ready soon.

He said work on the A&E had also been carried out and completed, making it more conducive for clinical staff to work in and for patients to be treated and accommodated.

Mr. Guinn said a substantial amount of money had been spent to outsource a contractor, Gilsenan Melpa Ltd., to renovate the entire unit including fixing the toilets and the nurses' work station and putting in new beds and tiles on the floor.

He told the staff that no major works could be carried out on the A&E unit as the building would eventually be pulled down and replaced with new ones under the new hospital redevelopment.

## Urban clinics nearing completion

Two new urban clinics being constructed by the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) are expected to be ready for use by the end of September 2016.

The clinics at Ogelbeng and Wagbel outside Mt Hagen City in Hagen Central District are being built 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 Rebiarnul and the rural facilities in the districts so that people can receive these vital services at their doorsteps.

It will also ease pressure at the adults and children's out-patients departments of Mt Hagen Hospital where hundreds of patients visit them each day for treatment.

Steward Construction Consultants who have been contracted to build both clinics have reported that at the pace they were going, the clinics were expected to be ready by September.

The clinics each have two 3-bedroom staff houses and a clinical building with rooms for out-patients, dispensary, delivery, maternal and child health and family health services.

The clinics are being built at a cost of more than K1 million each.



*Pictured above and left - the clinical buildings at the Wagbel and Ogelbeng Urban Clinics respectively taking shape and below, one of two staff houses each for the two clinics nearing completion.*



## NGOs Partner with WHPHA to improve MCH outcomes

The Western Highlands Province can expect to see improved Maternal and Child Health (MCH) outcomes as a result of Non-Government Organizations (NGO) working together and sharing their resources and expertise.

Two NGOs - WaterAid PNG (WAPNG) and Susu Mamas - have partnered to support the integration of water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH) into the latter's existing facilities to achieve sustainable improvements to maternal and child health outcomes.

The partnership arrangement between the two NGOs has the blessing of the authority responsible for health in the province, the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA).

The WHPHA and WAPNG have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), approving the partnership. The Deputy CEO of WHPHA, Mr. David Vorst and WAPNG's WaSH advisor, Mr. Jyoti Pradhan signed the MoU in Mt Hagen recently, witnessed by senior executives of the two organizations.

The signing paves the way for WAPNG and Susu Mamas to work together and transform the lives of the underprivileged and most marginalized people by improving access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

Susu Mamas, apart from running its own clinic at Newtown in Mt Hagen City, also operates the government-owned Kagamuga Urban Clinic and the joint services of the NGOs will see improved



**Mr. Jyoti Pradhan (left) and Mr. David Vorst shaking hands after signing the MoU.**

MCH outcomes within the city and the surrounding communities.

The WHPHA's Deputy Director for District Health Services, Philip Talpa when welcoming the partnership arrangement between the two NGOs said water, sanitation and hygiene was a major program that was being carried out in the province.

He said the program used to be funded by the European Union but this funding has since ceased although the WHPHA was still providing this service at a lesser level using its own funds.

He said the WHPHA already had partnership arrangements with NGOs such as Susu Mamas, Marie Stopes and Clinton Health Access Initiative to assist with the delivery of health services in the province and this partnership would further improve service delivery.

He said where these NGOs carried out their activities more efficiently and achieved better outcomes, they were allowed to continue providing that service and the partnership between Susu Mamas and WAPNG was welcomed as it would further enhance the current water, sanitation and hygiene program.

Mr. Vorst said since the formation of the WHPHA in March 2011, its service delivery indicators and statistics had continually improved, reflecting the good partnership arrangements that existed within the Western Highlands Province.



**WAPNG's WaSH advisor, Jyoti Pradhan (left) and Deputy CEO of WHPHA, David Vorst signing the MoU**

## New computer network to benefit patients in Western Highlands Province

The Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) has installed a new computer network that will enable doctors at Mt Hagen Hospital to check and treat patients referred from district hospitals without delay.

The new network will allow doctors to identify patients using finger prints and check their diagnosis for correct treatment.

It is part of an Information Technology (IT) infrastructure development program the WHPHA has initiated that will directly benefit patients and improve patient care throughout the Western Highlands Province.

Under the new arrangements, the district hospitals will have computer terminals that will be connected to the main server at the Provincial Health Authority Headquarters and all diagnostic information on both out-patients and

in-patients will be recorded and an identification number issued to each patient.

When a patient is referred to Mt Hagen Hospital, the examining doctor will ask the patient to put his or her finger on a scanner and the diagnostic information will appear on the screen which will then enable the doctor to make an informed decision on the type of treatment to be given.

The new IT system was launched by the then Chief Executive Officer, Dr. James Kintwa during a small but significant ceremony at the WHPHA Headquarters recently, witnessed by the senior management and the media.

Dr. Kintwa said the new system was part of the National Health Plan which talked about stakeholders developing IT systems to provide better health care and "we are doing it within our

facilities to provide an efficient patient care system for our people throughout the province".

Under the system, those authorized to use it like the senior management and doctors can now call up the district hospitals through the network from their offices and find out how many out-patients have been checked and treated in a day.

Information on in-patients in district hospitals cannot be accessed at this stage as it requires more details but this is being worked on and the system should be ready for use in the next couple of months.

The introduction of the new IT system is an initiative of the WHPHA Board to improve health service delivery and patient care in the Western Highlands Province.

# Vital medical information accessed through internet



Health administrators in the western end of the Highlands region are now able to access the latest information on health issues through the use of the internet.

This follows their attendance of a week-long course on Health Inter Network Access to Research Initiative (HINARI) conducted at the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority's (WHPHA) Training Centre at Mt Hagen Hospital recently.

The course which was sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) was conducted by principal consultant, Prof Leonard Rhine of the Medical Library Association of America and assisted by WHO's trainer/supervisor based in the Philippines, Ms. Marie Villemain Parlow.

They were also joined by Dr. Boris Pavlin, Mr. Shawn Waim, Ms. Keruma Gamu and Ms. Jessica Yapupu from the WHO PNG Country Office in Port Moresby and Ms. Dillie George, a trainer at the University of PNG School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

About 20 health administrators from Southern Highlands, Enga, Western Highlands and Jiwaka Provinces attended the week-long workshop.

The aim of the course was to teach medical librarians and practitioners how to use the internet to access the latest information on medical issues that they are confronted with instead of looking up medical books and journals which was time-consuming.

The participants said they were very pleased and privileged to have attended such a training course which was both informative and useful for their work and thanked the facilitators and WHO for imparting such useful knowledge and skills to them.

Deputy Director Medical Services with the WHPHA, Dr. Paulus Ripa when closing the workshop said information was changing all the time and people needed to update their knowledge regularly in order to carry out their jobs more efficiently.

He said books and journals were expensive to buy to improve one's knowledge and urged the participants to use the knowledge gained and use the internet for easy access to readily available information.

He added that the knowledge and skills gained would be a waste if not put to practice and urged the participants to use the internet as much as possible to keep themselves up to date with the latest changes.



Pictured top left – some of the participants doing an exercise while two participants (top right and centre left) receive their certificates from Acting Director Curative Health Services, Dr. Maddison Dat (centre) and principal consultant, Prof Leonard Rhine. Above - Prof Rhine proudly trying on and displaying his highlands bilum cap and string bag while left, WHO's Marie Villemain Parlow is hugged by Sr. Julie Ekyia after presenting her with her bilum cap and string bag.