

Maternal and Newborn Care program launched in WHP

Mothers and newborn babies in Western Highlands Province will greatly benefit from a new Maternal and Newborn Care program launched in Mt Hagen recently.

Initiated by UNICEF, the program focuses on preventing and managing bleeding after delivery, a common cause of death in mothers and neonatal hypothermia (low body temperature) in newborn babies.

The program – “Saving Lives, Spreading Smiles” – will ensure up to 30,000-plus babies born in the province over the next three years receive a comprehensive package of care to ensure they survive.

The package of care involves the prevention and management of bleeding after delivery through the use of a Non-Pneumatic Anti-Shock Garment (NASG) for mothers while a hypothermia alert device known locally as the Bebi Kol Kilok will be used to prevent and manage neonatal hypothermia for the babies.

Western Highlands is the first province in the country to have the program launched with funding support of K2 million from UNICEF Australia. The funding assistance will also cover the cost of setting up a world standard neonatal intensive care unit in the province.

The K2 million funding assistance by UNICEF has been supported by the Australian Government with another K9 million to expand the program to the rest of the country.

The Mt Hagen project was officially launched on 19th September 2018 by UNICEF Country Representative, Mr David McLoughlin and the Western Highlands Deputy Governor, Mr Michael Mai. It was witnessed by officials from the World Health Organisation, National Department of Health, UNICEF, Department of Western Highlands and the Provincial Health Authority.

Mr McLoughlin said the new package of care promoted simple cost-effective life-saving practices that were so crucial for mothers and newborns to survive.

“We thank the Australian Government and UNICEF Australia for their support which will help us to implement this program throughout the



Three mothers trying out the Bebi Kol Kilok on their babies, watched by officials including UNICEF Country Representative, David McLoughlin (clapping centre) and Michael Mai (second from right).

country”, he said.

Deputy Chairman of the WHPHA Board, Mr Michael Pundia said the staff of the Provincial Health Authority had been working hard to reduce maternal and child morbidity and mortality and paediatric case mortality rates were now nearly a third lower than the national average.

“This shows how the Provincial Health Authority Reform can have a major impact on the health of our people. It is also a reflection of the commitment and dedication of all of our staff including our hardworking understaffed doctors and nurses.

“This innovative program being launched today will see a further improvement in those key indicators and more mothers and babies will survive”, Mr Pundia said.

Western Highlands Deputy Governor, Michael Mai said his province was honoured and privileged to receive support from international partners such as UNICEF and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

“This is a blessing for Western Highlands, especially for our mothers and babies. I thank the leadership of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority for displaying strong commitment in leadership which has attracted the support of the international partners.

“Everything falls down to leadership and WHPHA has good and strong leadership that has attracted donors to invest in the health of our people and I thank you all”,

The guest speakers and other officials are seated for the official launch.



he said.

Mr Mai said through good leadership, the WHPHA had recently opened the refurbished Emergency Department at Mt Hagen Hospital and later launched the polio vaccination exercise in the province where 92 percent of children under 5 years had been vaccinated.

He said these initiatives together with the launching of the “Saving Lives, Spreading Smiles” project had reflected strong leadership of the organisation and assured the international partners that his government would work closely with all agencies to ensure all these programs were implemented successfully.

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Social mobilisation key to polio campaign



The Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) is mobilising influential target groups in the Western Highlands to help spread the message on polio and how to avoid catching the virus.

It is engaging groups such as church pastors, councillors and teachers throughout the province to spread the message as it believes they have a lot of influence in their respective communities.

The Authority's health promotion team, headed by its deputy director, Fredah Pyanyo has been working tirelessly to try and reach all parts of the province to get the message across that polio is dangerous and that there is no cure for it and must be avoided at all cost.

The team has been meeting with the selected groups at the Holy Trinity Teacher's College's Ross Meere Hall over the last week, telling them of how the virus spreads and what people need to do to avoid catching it.

The groups were told that polio spreads through the stool of an infected person and advised them to tell their people to keep their households and the surroundings hygienically clean, avoid

drinking contaminated water, have one toilet per household, use clean cooking utensils to cook and eat with and wash hands after using a toilet and before eating.

The health team showed the respective groups, photographs of paralysed children and diagrams on how the virus spreads and the participants acknowledged everything and pledged to do their part by telling their communities how to avoid the disease and live happy lives.

The pastors, councillors and teachers were told that vaccination was the only means to stop the spread of polio and urged them to tell parents to take their children under 15 years to their nearest health clinics to have them vaccinated.

The health team advised that the second round of the nationwide vaccination would be



conducted from 1-14 October and the third round from 29th October to 11th November and further advised that all children under 15 years must be vaccinated during all three rounds to stay safe.

Pictured top and bottom left - Health promotion officers addressing church pastors and councillors and demonstrating how polio spreads and below and top right - the participants listening attentively to the presentations by the health officers.



TB DRUGS FINALLY ARRIVE IN MT HAGEN

The Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) has now received much needed TB drugs to treat its patients.

The Area Medical Stores at Badili in Port Moresby had couriered 15 boxes of the drugs to Mt Hagen in late October with 35 cartons more to be delivered soon after.

The quick action has resulted from complaints by TB patients that their lives were at risk if they did not take their daily doses on time.

The patients spoke on camera which was later aired as the lead stories on EMTV and NBCTV News. They expressed their concerns when they visited the TB clinic at Mt Hagen Hospital and discovered there were no more drugs for them.

They complained that the National Government was concentrating too much on the APEC Summit and spending millions of kina on luxury cars and other activities while health, education and infrastructure development were given a blind eye.

The WHPHA while appreciating the quick response has also revealed that there were other drugs and medical consumables that were not available but were critical to the lives of patients.

A senior paediatric surgeon said he would cancel all his elective surgeries requiring specific paediatric surgical sutures because they could not be supplied by the National Department of Health.

A patient referred for x-ray also said he could not have his x-ray done because he had been told that there were no films available, a situation which was also faced by other hospitals in the Highlands region.

The senior surgeon said the supply of drugs and medical consumables was the responsibility of the National Department of Health and



TB Clinic staff from right – Martha Kilya (CHW), Anna Koubuli (HEO), Roselyn Pakil (CHW) and Masua Pupu (CHW) displaying the boxes of drugs.

something urgent needed to be done to rectify the drug shortage problem in the country before more lives were lost.

He said respective hospitals and provincial

health authorities in the country could not buy their own drugs and medical consumables because they were also faced with acute shortage of funds.

WHPHA Security Guards Receive New Uniforms



All security guards employed by the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) have been issued with new uniforms.

The dark blue uniforms comprising a pair of trousers, shirt, boot, jacket, cap and belt were issued to the 35 guards recently after going through an intensive 10 days training in all aspects of security work.

The training was conducted by a Security Industry Authority certified trainer from the National Security Training College in Lae, owned by the Guard Dog Security Company.

The WHPHA is a licensed security employer



with a Class C licence issued under the Security Industry Authority (SIA) Act and the training of its guards by the certified trainer means it is now

fully compliant with all requirements of the Act. The completion of the training which saw them receive certificates as trained guards was a proud moment for all of them as they proudly wore their new uniforms and marched up to receive their papers.

The new uniforms are aimed at boosting the morale of the guards to commit themselves fully to their work and perform more effectively to improve crowd control and movement of people and vehicles as well as protecting all assets and services at Mt Hagen Hospital.

The 34 male guards and one female have all

been issued with three sets of uniforms each.

The uniforms which cost a total of K29,000 including the cost of embroidery work were made by Paradise Tailoring, a nationally-owned company based in Port Moresby.

The acting Chief Executive Officer of the WHPHA, Mr David Vorst while presenting the certificates congratulated all the guards on completing their training successfully and urged them to wear their uniforms with pride.

Pictured above left - the security guards proudly displaying their new uniforms, joined by some members of the management team and top, the guards in their new uniforms displaying their certificates.



The casket of late Sr. Mary Culligan is being brought into the Hospital premises by the pall bearers and nurse colleagues for the funeral service.

Sr. Mary Tinemau Culligan Passes On



The casket is being placed in the Hospital Chapel for staff to view the body and pay their last respects.

The Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) has lost a senior clinician through death.

Sister Mary Tinemau Culligan who was a unit supervisor at Mt Hagen Hospital passed away in the early hours of 6th October 2018 following kidney failure.

From Koglamp village outside Mt Hagen, Sr. Culligan had spent more than 40 years in the nursing profession since graduating from the Mt Hagen School of Nursing in 1975.

She had spent half of her working life as an ordinary nurse and mid-wife and the other half as nurse manager and unit supervisor. She was also the president of the Western Highlands branch of

the Nurses Association at the time of her death.

She died while admitted at the Intensive Care Unit of Mt Hagen Hospital where she had spent nearly her entire working life, serving her own people of Western Highlands and other neighbouring provinces.

Sr. Mary was married to rugby league star and former Kumul, David Tinemau who passed away early this year. They have left behind four children and several grandchildren.

A funeral service was held for the late nurse at the Mt Hagen Hospital Chapel on 10th October in which staff, colleagues and friends viewed the body and paid their last respects before it was

delivered to her family at Koglamp village on the same day.

Acting Chief Executive Officer of the WHPHA, Mr David Vorst in farewelling the late Sr. Mary said she was a champion in her chosen career and had fought very hard for the rights and benefits of all nurses.

He said patient care was most important and the late sister was a hero in this area and was also a mother to all nurses and staff of the WHPHA and she would be greatly missed by everyone.

Director of Nursing Services Dies



The casket of the late Sr. Roselyn Kali is being carried by pall bearers into the Hospital premises, led by Acting Deputy Director Nursing Services, Sr. Joan Okk and other nurses for a funeral service to be conducted.

The Director of Nursing Services with the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA), Sr. Roselyn Kali has died following a long battle with breast cancer.

Sr. Kali's death comes only a month after the death of another senior nurse, Unit Supervisor, Mary Culligan who died of kidney failure in early October 2018.

Sr. Kali was the first officer to be appointed to this position following its creation within the WHPHA in 2017.

She was admitted to the cancer treatment centre at Angau Memorial Hospital in Lae where she had spent almost two months before succumbing to her death on 4th November 2018.

A funeral service was held at the Mt Hagen Hospital premises on 8th November where staff, colleagues and friends viewed the body and paid their last respects before it was handed over to her family for burial.

The late Sr. Kali had served in several hospitals and a school of nursing as a nurse, tutor, mentor and manager after graduating from the Port Moresby School of Nursing in 1980.

She was a committed worker who rejected requests by her family to resign because of her health condition and continued working because she had had a dream – to see that the Mt Hagen School of Nursing was rebuilt.

Her dream will be fulfilled as the School of Nursing is part of the new Hospital Redevelopment Program which will start soon under a private public partnership arrangement.