

THE INFORMER

Volume 8, Issue 1

A MOTHER AND CHILD IS THE REASON WE EXIST

January-February 2019

WHPHA

A bi-monthly newsletter of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority

Five-Year Strategic Health Plan Launched

The Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) has launched its Five-Year Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023, aimed at guiding its programs towards achieving a “Healthy Western Highlands” in the next five years and beyond.

Minister for Health and HIV/AIDS, Sir Puka Temu officially launched the Plan during a ceremony at the Mt Hagen Hospital Car Park on 20th February 2019, witnessed by the Chairman of the WHPHA Board of Governance, Mr David Guinn and Secretary for Health, Mr Pascoe Kase.

Other guests included WHPHA Board Members, CEOs of Dei and Tambul/Nebilyer District Development Authorities, service partners such as churches and non-government organisations and WHPHA staff.

Sir Puka said health was one of the top five priorities of the Government under its Vision 2050 development goals and it was an important asset for all people in PNG to ensure they were smart, wise, fair and healthy.

He commended the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority for providing good leadership in health matters and further congratulated it for developing the Five-Year Strategic Plan which he said would guide it to improve the quality of health care in WHP.

Sir Puka said the creation of health boards was the brainchild of Western Highlands Governor, Rt Hon Paias Wingti when he was Prime Minister in 1994 and as Health Secretary then, he had made a commitment for all provinces to have boards because it was a good idea.

He said the creation of boards had taken some of the workload off health administrations so that they could concentrate on providing quality health care for the people and leave policy matters to the boards to decide.

Sir Puka said the WHPHA was a good example of health administrations and boards working together in partnership to provide a better health service for its people and “I take my hat off to the Board and say thank you for the good work you are doing”.

He said the board system initially started as hospital boards and was later absorbed into the Provincial Health Authorities when the first PHAs including the WHPHA were established in 2011.

Sir Puka said the current chairman, Mr David Guinn was the longest serving chairman since being appointed to the Mt Hagen Hospital Board in 1994 and continued to serve in this role with the WHPHA because the government recognised

and valued his services in WHP and the country.

He said through good leadership, Western Highlands was leading the way in the provision of health services in the country and he would be looking for a day during his term as Health Minister when he would publicly announce this and urge others to follow.

“Your Strategic Plan is very smart because you all participated in putting it together and you will now take ownership of it and ensure its goals and objectives are fulfilled”, he said.

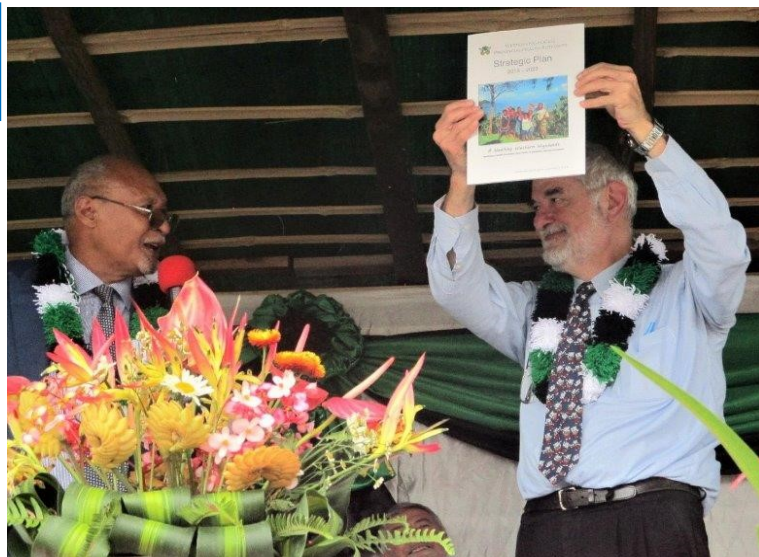
Chairman Guinn said the Plan outlined the priorities that the organisation intended to focus on over the next five years as it worked towards its vision of “A Healthy Western Highlands” with high quality services valued by people who accessed them including regional hospital services.

“Our vision for health care is underpinned by our core belief that Western Highlanders need and deserve access to quality health care services including access to doctors and or specialist services at the facility levels through effective outreach programs”, he said.

Mr Guinn said for the WHPHA to achieve “A Healthy Western Highlands”, it would continue to build and nurture strategic partnerships with the Western Highlands Provincial Government, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Asian Development Bank, the International Finance Corporation and private entities and service partners such as churches and non-government organisations.

He said: “This plan will allow us to do better for our patients and our people. It is about ownership – it is our plan for the present and the future and we are one team united in a common vision and mission.

“It is really important that we hold onto that as we move forward and I encourage you to all play your part to make the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority the best health



CEO of WHPHA, David Vorst displaying the Strategic Plan after being launched by the Minister for Health & HIV/AIDS, Sir Puka Temu



Staff of the WHPHA braved a hot sunny day to witness the launch service in PNG”.

In this issue:

Page

| | |
|---|---|
| Five-Year Strategic Health Plan Launched | 1 |
| Fourth round mass polio vaccination begins in WHP | 2 |
| Long-serving employees recognized with certificates | 2 |
| Hand held two-way radios for security guards | 3 |
| Nurses and Management reconcile | 3 |
| New house a fitting New Year present | 4 |
| PAU medical students provide comfort for patients | 4 |
| COPD gets a major face-lift | 4 |

Fourth Round Mass Polio Vaccination Begins in WHP

The fourth round of the nation-wide polio vaccination program started on 4th March and ran for two weeks.

In the Western Highlands, health teams had mobilised and gone out to all four districts of the province to conduct awareness on the disease followed by vaccination of all children under 15 years.

As a first step, the Health Promotion team from the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority conducted a one day social mobilisation training for stakeholders and partners on Monday, 4th March in which it sought their support and educated them on how the disease spreads and what they could do to help prevent its spread.

The stakeholders and partners included those from church health services and schools inspectors from the four districts of Hagen Central, Tambul/Nebilyer, Dei and Mul/Baiyer as well as staff from the Department of Western Highlands. UNICEF's Dr Arnold also attended.

The program started on Monday, 4th March and ended on 18th March 2019. During this period, parents were urged to take their children under 15 years to the nearest health facility or vaccination point to be vaccinated.

The vaccination teams did not only immunise children against polio but also carried out other routine immunisation activities to save time and cost as well as to prevent children from catching other preventable diseases.

A service message or toksave had been put on the local NBC radio station in the week leading to 4th March and printed messages had also been placed at strategic locations in all the four districts where the public could easily access them.



A WHPHA employee helps a mother to comfort her child as a nurse prepares to vaccinate the child.

The Education Division in the Western Highlands had taken ownership of the vaccination exercise with its Executive Manager, Mr Kiap Knox writing to all schools in the province, directing them to participate fully by organising all the children in their respective classes to be vaccinated.

Polio which spreads from person to person through contact with the stool of an infected person is a dangerous disease that has no cure and can cause lifelong paralysis or even death. The only protection that children have is through vaccination.

Long-serving employees recognised with certificates

Twenty-three long-serving employees of the health system including the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) were recently awarded with certificates of recognition for their long and dedicated service to the organisation.

The employees, most of them nurses and community health workers, had spent more than 40 years continuous service in various capacities in the health system and most of them had spent that time working at the Mt Hagen Hospital as well as in the rural facilities.

To show how important their services were to the WHPHA, Chairman of the Board of Governance, Mr David Guinn CSM OBE OAM took a day off from his private accounting practice in Port Moresby to fly to Mt Hagen on 6th March, 2019 to congratulate and present them with their certificates of recognition and flash drives.

Mr Guinn said about 178 employees had served the WHPHA for more than 25 years but this group had served the longest term of 40-plus years and he congratulated them for their commitment in serving the people of PNG by dedicating their lives to the health service.

"The Board is pleased to formally acknowledge the number of years you have spent here. We

are on a road that never ends and we need to continue to provide health services to our people", he said.

Mr Guinn said 30% of patients who sought treatment at Mt Hagen Hospital were from other provinces where drugs were in short supply or the treatment needed wasn't available and this was a significant issue faced by WHPHA.

He added that the Health Minister had recognised the efforts of the WHPHA to improve services at Mt Hagen Hospital and other rural health facilities and had undertaken to support it more because the hospital was a regional facility.

Mr Guinn said he was pleased to see the commitment shown by the staff in their respective areas of responsibility and told the long-serving employees that he appreciated all their services and commitment over the years.

He went on to say the WHPHA had set up one of the best IT (Information Technology) systems for storing and keeping all its database intact and he was pleased that the system was also helping doctors and clinicians to access the internet to further their knowledge on clinical governance and other patient care issues.

Photos - Two of the long-serving employees who have reached more than 40 years of service receiving their certificates from Chairman, Mr. David Guinn.



Hand held two-way radios for security guards

Security personnel deployed at various locations within the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) premises will now be able to communicate well with each other and discuss issues affecting their operations.

This follows the purchase of 10 new hand held two-way radios for the security guards to use to contact each other on operational issues and for the security manager to monitor and ensure they are at their assigned posts.

The security section took delivery of the radios recently together with a base radio which has

been installed in its operational office at Mt Hagen Hospital.

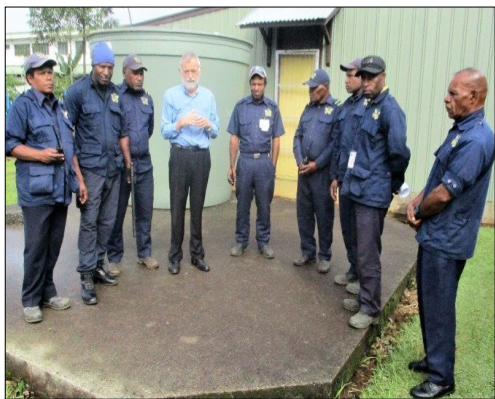
Security Manager, Major (Ret) Bill Nende said the WHPHA had a big area with more expansion work taking place and two-way radios were needed to communicate with guards posted at the various locations.

Chief Executive Officer, Mr David Vorst officially launched the introduction and use of the new radios during a brief ceremony at the hospital on Tuesday, 22nd January 2019.

He said with the planned redevelopment of Mt Hagen Hospital, better and effective communication was necessary and as such the management had made a decision to purchase these radios for the security guards.

Mr Vorst said as the launching was taking place, a team from the World Bank was also present on site to see the infrastructure of the

Pictured right - Some of the security guards displaying the new two-way radios and left, CEO, Mr. David Vorst officially launching the introduction of the radios.



hospital and discuss funding arrangements for the redevelopment program.

He said with such expansion, improved communication and additional manpower and radios was necessary but these would be looked at in the near future.

The 10 hand-held radios and the base radio were purchased from TE (PNG) Ltd in Lae at a total cost of K30,000 and another K30,000 was paid to a service provider in Mt Hagen to install the base radio and set up the right frequency for the radios to be used.

NURSES AND MANAGEMENT RECONCILE



The nurses agreeing to some points raised during their meeting to reconcile with the management.

Nursing staff of the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority have reconciled with the Management and Board to leave behind their past differences and to work together as a team for the sake of patient care in 2019 and onwards.

During a Reconciliation and Repentance meeting organised by the nursing management on 10th January 2019 at the Mt Hagen Hospital Chapel and attended by nurses and some members of the management team, the nurses said they were sorry for the dispute in 2016.

They said the dispute over allegations of mismanagement by the Management and Board

was a thing of the past and that they were now ready to work together with them to uphold "our core business of patient care".

In separate statements by the different cadre of clinicians including nurses, community health workers and the allied health workers, the nurses said they were truly sorry for what had happened and apologised to the Management and Board.

They also named individuals such as the current Chief Executive Officer, Mr David Vorst, Director Corporate Services, Ms Julie Bengi, Hospital Manager, Ms Jane Holden and former CEO, Dr James Kintwa, saying if anything that they had said or done during the dispute had

affected them personally or professionally, they were deeply sorry for that.

"We also say sorry to the Board for spoiling its reputation because we believe it is still the best Board. 2018 is water under the bridge and 2019 will be different and we want to work together to provide a better health service for our people", they said.

Acting Director of Nursing, Sr. Janet Yamu said nurses were at the frontline in health and despite what had happened in 2016, they still made themselves available to treat patients and she was pleased to see many of them present for the repentance and reconciliation.

She said this was the first time that such a gathering had taken place where the nurses and the WHPHA Management had reconciled to forget about the 2016 dispute and she believed 2019 would bring a lot of goodness, prosperity and blessings for the nurses and WHPHA.

"On behalf of the nurse management I say sorry to all those that had been affected including patients. 2018 is water under the bridge and 2019 will be different", she said.



New house a fitting New Year present for Mt Hagen nurses

Mt Hagen Hospital nurses have received a well-deserved New Year present – a brand new three-bedroom house built on the hospital premises.

The Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority (WHPHA) has given the house to the nurses in appreciation of their tireless efforts in caring for their patients every day.

The house which was built by a local contractor, Stewart Construction, and donated to the WHPHA in appreciation of the numerous building contracts it receives from the organisation was a welcome present for the nurses who have been longing for accommodation for years.

The house has been built in the same area as another 12 houses. These houses have been funded jointly by the Nurses Association and the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority at a cost of more than K3 million.

The keys to the donated house which cost

about K250,000 to build but without white goods was received by the nursing management on behalf of the WHPHA Management during a brief ceremony on site on 16th January 2019.

Acting Director of Nursing, Sr. Janet Yamu and her deputy for nursing administration, Michael Kaweya were full of praise for the contractor and the WHPHA Management for the kind donation.

They said it was history in the making for a building contractor to give away such an expensive item like this and thanked the owner, Paul Berry for helping to meet the housing needs of nurses.

Sr. Yamu said only about 3 percent of the 200 nurses lived in hospital accommodation and such a donation would greatly help to accommodate shift nurses while on night shift.

"Nursing is a calling and we leave everything behind and come to work to serve our people. We need houses like this to accommodate our

shift workers, most of whom are young nurses with new families", she said.

Sr. Yamu said people don't usually give away something like a new house for free and for the WHPHA to receive it and then give it to the nurses was highly commendable as it would really serve its purpose of keeping the family unit alive with less problems during shift work.



Acting director of nursing, Sr. Janet Yamu receiving the keys to the new house from Stewart Construction owner, Paul Berry, witnessed by other nurses and staff.

PAU medical students provide comfort for patients

Patients who visit the out-patients section of Togoba Health Centre in the Nebilyer area of Western Highlands will now have good shelter and benches to sit on while waiting to receive treatment.

A group of five fourth-year medical students from the Pacific Adventist University (PAU) in Port Moresby have gone out of their way, spending their own money to build a veranda for the out-patients building to allow patients to sit in

comfort while waiting to be treated.

The students were attached to the Seventh Day Adventist Mission-run Health Centre recently to gain practical experience when they saw the patients' need and decided to contribute money to build the veranda.

Prior to the construction of the veranda, patients have been seeking shelter under nearby pine trees to avoid getting wet from rain and heat from the sun.



The five students (in blue shirts) with church and WHPHA officials in front of the out-patients building.

The current out-patients building is one of several built in the late 1940s by the colonial administration to accommodate and treat leprosy patients.

It has limited space inside where clinicians check a few patients at a time and treat them while the rest have to wait outside for their names to be called, resulting in them getting wet during rainy days.

A student representative, Leahine Yapi said although they had school fees to pay this year, their hearts were

broken when they saw patients seeking shelter under pine trees to avoid rain and this had prompted them to contribute more than K1,000 to build the veranda for them.

The acting Director for Population Health with the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority, Dr Maddison Dat and the Seventh Day Adventist Mission Health Director, Mr Simon Peter jointly opened the extension during a small ceremony on 18th February 2019.

Mr Peter said the SDA Church did not have any funds available to carry out maintenance work on existing buildings which were run-down and he was very happy with the students for spending their own money to build the veranda for the patients.

Dr Dat said the project was small in size but for the students to see the need and put up something like this showed they had a vision to do bigger things in future not only for themselves but for the communities in which they would work in after their graduation.

He said providing quality health services was not about giving medicine only but making the environment conducive for patients and others who seek our care to get treatment.

He added that what the students had done was a challenge for health workers and the communities at large to see and do something similar at the facilities level to benefit everyone.

Children's Out-patient Department gets a major facelift

The Children's Out-patient Department (COPD) of Mt Hagen Hospital will soon be more spacious and more conducive for children to receive treatment.

In its continued efforts to provide a healthier and more friendly environment, the Western Highlands Provincial Health Authority is spending in excess of K350,000 to renovate the existing building.

Lack of space for overnight observation and treatment and consultation, is now a thing of the past.

The renovation will provide fresh air and a better work station for nurses, health extension officers and doctors.

Work on the renovation of the COPD started in December 2018 and is expected to be completed by mid-March this year.

A local building contractor, Eco Engineering Ltd has been contracted to carry out the renovation work.

The COPD shares the same building as the Emergency Department and the Adult Out-patients Department which were renovated and opened for use in August last year.

The new-look COPD will have a bigger waiting area for patients, more consultation rooms, more overnight observation beds, separate showers and toilets for patients and clinicians, tea room and change room for clinicians and a bigger treatment area.

The renovated building will also be fitted with ventilators and air conditioners as well as a hot water system, similar to the Emergency Department.



Project Supervisor, Stanis Pilakue (right) watches as a carpenter sorts out some timber to be used.