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Issue#
ONE

June 2022

Our Mission
"Ä Healthy Western Highlands"

WHPHA Newsfeed A Quarterly Insight into the Current WHPHA Events & Activities.

WHP Covid-19 Updates

"Behainim niupela pasin"

2021 Overview

Positive Cases – 3364 (254 staff)

Number of Admissions – 700

Deaths - 81

2022 Current

Positive Cases – 900 (142 staff)

Number of Admissions – 161

Deaths - 16

current topics >>>

CEO's Corner!



One of the many things that we can improve on is keeping in touch with each other about what is going on.

We have decided to commit to a quarterly newsletter to just highlight some of the activities and especially the good things we are doing.

It is easy to focus on what is going wrong but equally important that we acknowledge when we are doing well.

This first newsletter is introductory and I am hoping that you will provide feedback and articles you think people should share.

Please send any articles to newsletter@whhs.gov.pg

We welcome stories with photos.

I am concerned that the issue of re-instating our Board is ongoing and we continue to work with agencies to get this in place.

Governance is key to good organisations.

The External Audit of years 2015-2021 should be completed by the end of June which is also a good outcome.

I do acknowledge the real challenges our rural staff are facing without medications – we are working daily with NDoH to try and get an outcome and the release of 100% kits that are in POM awaiting a decision of logistics.

Please everyone take extra care with your personal safety during this election time.

Please also don't forget that the risks of COVID re-surfing during this period is also high so wearing a mask is just sensible and compulsory in health facilities. *Best wishes.*

Jane Holden

Helping Hands

WHPHA Acknowledges Donations.

Despite the many challenges that WHPHA continues to face in its Mission to create "A Healthy Western Highlands" through the delivery of quality primarily health services that is accessible for all who seek our services, there are communities, concerned citizens, corporate entities and NGOs who have stepped forward and lend a helping hand in terms of donations both in cash and kind to support our mission. The Board & Management takes this opportunity to thank everyone of them for their generosity and support.

In 2021-2022 WHPHA received and continues to receive donations of cash, fresh garden vegetables for the Mt Hagen Hospital Kitchen and other items including much needed medical equipment such as BP Machines and Covid-19 thermometers. Our donors range from individuals, communities, church congregations, corporate business houses and even foreign consulates.

Kind Hearts

Introducing Kind Hearts, which will be a feature section in WHPHA Quarterly News that which will acknowledge and inform on the donations that are received quarterly.

WHPHA appreciates the following donors:

1. Tininga Group Ltd
2. Brian Bell Foundation
3. Catholic Church in Wurup
4. SDA Church members-Hagen
5. Bori Family
6. Trukai Industries
7. ICRC
8. British High Commission
9. Goldline Lodge
10. WHP Elites
11. UK EMT Team
12. Leanne from NSW, Aus
13. Rotary Against Malaria
14. Digicel Foundation
15. Hon. MP Win Bakri Daki

And many thanks to everyone who have supported WHPHA in cash or kind!



Pictured: Mr. and Mrs Duckworth on another year of sharing the Christmas spirit with generous gifts for the children inpatients in Paediatric Ward.

set the stage >>>

Ophtalmology Outreach in Tambul Nebilyer District 2022

A successful Surgical Outreach by a team of 8 amazing professionals led by Dr. Waimbe Wahamu into the Tambul Nebilyer District from March 28th to April 2nd 2022.



Challenges

The road to success was sadly not easy for our Eye team. Some of the challenges they faced and noted were logistics, lack of consistent power supply, manpower, and others extensively outlined in Dr. Wahamu's report called "Tambul Nebilyer District Eye Surgical Camp Report 2022".

Health Facilities Visited

The Ophtalmology team visited Alkena CHP and Tsinsipai CHP recording a combine total of 910 activities. From these activities it is worth mentioning that a collective total of 119 surgeries were performed. Well done!



Acknowledgment

The Eye Team acknowledges the financial support of K10,000 from the Member for Tambul Nebilyer Hon. MP Win Bakri Daki for this outreach program and Ms. Jane Holden, WHPHA Management and others involved in making this possible.

*Visit our WHPHA intranet for the full report by Dr. Wahamu.



Pictured (from left): Miss. Stephanie Korowa and Ms. Regina Leo assisting the Audit Team with administrative requests – Executive Office.

WHPHA External Audit

The Auditor-Generals Office in partnership with WHPHA rolled out the External Audit for the periods 2015 – 2022 which commenced on 01/05/2022.

The External Audit Project is still in progress after the Office of the CEO submitted all requested areas on Friday 20/05/22. The Audit Team are now doing their review and will furnish a report to Ms. Jane Holden in the following weeks to come.

A warm appreciation to all officers who worked tirelessly to ensure all audit requests met and before deadline.

Outreach.. >>>

WHO Funded FSC Rollout in the 4 Districts

The World Health Organisation in partnership with WHPHA have funded K100,000 towards the implementation of the Family Support Centre services rollout into the 4 districts of the WHP. The FSC Outreach started from the 11th October 2021 to the 24th December 2021.

Tambul HC (Tambul Nebilyer), Tinsley DH (Mul Baiyer), Kotna DH (Dei) and Togoba HC (Hagen Central) were the four major facilities selected from their respective districts for the FSC program rollout. Two nursing officers were selected per facility and based on their prior GBV training to undergo a further two weeks attachment with the Mt Hagen Hospital FSC clinic in preparation for the rollout.

Sr. Edit Namba led the team of 9 nursing officers for the 9 week rollout throughout all 4 districts.

Despite interruptions and the challenges of Covid-19 the team was able to make progress and also identified that at the community level the need for more awareness on Gender Based Violence and Family & Sexual Violence and the services that are available to them at their local health facilities. Furthermore the report (Report on the Rollout of the Family Support Centre to the Four Districts) by Sr. Namba highlighted the significance of educating community leaders to become advocates. The full report can be accessed on our WHPHA intranet.

'WHPHA taking Lead'

"Two important projects are now underway in WHPHA after several years of collaborative research with PNGIMR and the National Department of Health. These are the Elimination of cervical cancer in WHPHA and Viral Load testing for HIV." Dr. Paulus Ripa.

Elimination of Cervical Cancer

Cancer of the cervix is the commonest cancer killing women in WHP and PNG as a whole. It is caused by a virus known as the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). Once cancer is established and diagnosis is made it is usually too late for a cure and in a fortunate few who present very early may require radical surgery removing the uterus and other organs.

Fortunately there is a vaccine against this which can be given to girls aged 9 -14 years which effectively prevents the cancer from taking place. However this primary prevention when implemented can take up to 15 to 20 years to show effect.

Meanwhile it is possible to detect those women in whom early cancer is beginning to form and can be effectively treated by heat therapy (thermal ablation). In women after years of research in PNG and particularly Mt Hagen Hospital PNGIMR developed screening methods that can pick up very early changes in the women's cervix and can be effectively cured. In the last 3 years over 6000 women have been screened and 15% tested positive and were treated. WHPHA together with PNGIMR and the Kirby Institute at University of New South Wales have received financial support from the Minderoo Foundation (and others) over next five years to be the PHA rolling out the Elimination of Cervical Cancer in the Western Pacific (Vanuatu and WHPHA).

Plans are already being implemented in increasing capacity and manpower to double capacity in Mt Hagen Hospital and then to roll out to the districts.

Whilst screening and treating is the initial part of the project it encompasses prevention in revamping awareness and health education and the school health system to introduce vaccination of eligible girls as well as improving diagnostic capability and treatment regimens for those already suffering from cervical cancer.



Above: Sr. Kolopu assisting a mother at O&G Ward 7.

HIV Viral Load Testing

WHPHA is also the major site of collaborative research with PNGIMR on HIV and is now participating in viral load testing. Viral load testing is crucial in the HIV program as it informs whether treatment is actually working in patients who are on treatment. Treatment failure can be due to either patients not taking treatment well or if the virus is resistant to the treatment. This can then be quickly remediated by increased adherence counselling in the former and changing drug treatment in the latter. This also prevents transmission of the infection as if the viral load is completely suppressed the patient cannot transmit the virus to another person.

The other major development is early infant diagnosis of infants born to HIV positive mothers. If mothers are detected early in pregnancy and treated with antiretroviral drugs the chances of the baby born with the HIV infection is greatly reduced (to less than 2% from about 30% plus if untreated).

WHPHA is taking major steps to improve the detection and management of pregnant women who are positive for HIV.

WHPHA is also testing babies using gene Expert at 6 weeks of age to identify whether baby was infected during pregnancy/delivery or not. WHPHA and PMGH are the only sites in the country doing this whilst the other centres send specimens to the Central laboratory in Port Moresby which is at the moment unable to give results in a timely manner with sometimes parents waiting months to find out if their children is free from HIV or not.



WHPHA Elimination of Cervical Cancer Committee 2022

From front row left: Sr. Edith Namba and Dr. Paulus Ripa.

Second row left: Dr. James Tony, Sr. Rose Lesley, Josephine Gabuzzi (IMR), Sr. Serah Dot, Jane Holden, Dr. Michaela Riddell (IMR), Sr. Gloria Munull, Vanessa Price (Kirby Ins.), Prof. Andrew Vallely (University of NSW) and Dr. Zure Kombati.



Pictured: Sr. Susan Minar conducting clinics at the Well Baby Clinic, Mt Hagen Hospital.

Corrective Cardiac Patient Referral to PoM

Preliminary report by Dr. Clyde Kamo.

This is a preliminary report following the 4 cardiac patients who were referred to Port Moresby for corrective surgery with much needed funding from Tininga Group.



All four have been diagnosed with *Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA)*, a condition where a blood vessel connection (*ductus arteriosus*) that normally close at birth does not close, and persists staying *patent*, in some cases even into adolescence. The corrective surgery is one that closes the abnormal persisting connection, a procedure that up until recent years has been done by visiting Operation Open Heart (OOH) Teams.

The 4 patients (aged between 19 months-11 years) and their guardians were transferred to Port Moresby on 18th May after being cleared to fly by the medical team. Due to the fact that they were all outpatients, the flight itself was uneventful. Upon landing, the group were transported with assistance from the Paediatric Society Vehicle to the Children's Outpatient Department and admitted to the new cardiothoracic ward later that evening.



Kel Ronomu, Female 6 years was the first of the four to undergo ligation surgery on the 25th May, a week after arriving. Melvin Willie, Male 5 years, had a PDA Device closure at the new state of the art catheter lab of PMGH the next day (26th May). This was a first for a public hospital. The procedure had been done before in country but at Pacific International Hospital. This procedure doesn't require opening up the chest, but instead accessing the heart defect from a peripheral artery under ultrasound imaging guidance and insertion of an occlusion device-essentially closing off the abnormal connection. Because the closure is minimally invasive, turnaround and recovery times are quick and the risk of complications is low.

The two remaining patients, Faith Dulson; Female 19 months, and Shirley Hela; Female 10 years; also had their procedures at the cath lab, which was done today (31st May). All of the cases were done by our local team of interventional cardiologists and cardiothoracic surgeons without any intra-operative complications. Melvin Willie and Kel Ronomu are due to return home sometime this week. Shirley and Faith will recover this week and should fly back next week.

The parents have conveyed their gratitude to Tininga group with the timely funding that made the referrals possible especially at very short notice. A final report will be submitted when all patients have returned back to Mt Hagen.

Toksava Kona

Election Period

We are in the election periods, all staff members are cautioned by the Management to take extra precaution when moving to and from work. Safety is paramount.

Services will continue as normal. Enquire with your supervisors or line managers for rosters during the voting period.

Staff Spotlight

The staff spotlight is a tool that will be used by the Management to acknowledge their appreciation for high performing or well improved members of the staff.

Find out who will take the spotlight in the next edition!

coming soon >>>

In The Next Issue

Intro to the SEM

Message from the Board

Staff Welfare

Capital Funds & Projects

Update on Major Restructure

Staff Spotlight...

Protect your family, community and YOURSELF! Get Covid19 Vaccination.



Write to WHPHA Newsfeed

If you have stories, public announcements, questions, queries or need further information on a certain issue or topic relating to WHPHA or health, please send requests to newsletter@whhs.gov.pg or drop in the Request Box at the Reception, Office of the CEO.



Contact us at 5411200 Ext: 223

www.whhs.gov.pg