



Information sheet

News from St Anne's hospital

St Anne's Hospital in its endeavor to proceed with the healing ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ operates in an area that has a population of 230,636 people. As a main referral Hospital for Maternity cases in the District, which has almost 65% of the population living below the poverty line (earning less than US\$1.00 per day) it faces the challenge of not being able to recover an average of 80% of its costs due to incapability of its clientele to pay Hospital fees.

Although fiscal challenges are there, the Hospital in collaboration with its four health centers provides some outreach activities to the public. These among others include; Home Based Care (H.B.C.); Primary Health Care (P.H.C); and Palliative Care as an extension within the ambit of Home Based Care.

Home based care

The Home Based Care programme has the goal of improving the health of chronically and terminally ill patients by alleviating their suffering through the provision of locally available resources. This is implemented by St Anne's at Kapiri Health center. This project started in August 2002 and now has 266 patients that are registered on the home-based care programme of which one third are HIV positive. The implementation of the project also involves a team of 54 home-based care volunteers that were trained following the curriculum of the National Aids Commission of Malawi.

Palliative Care

Palliative Care Services are incorporated into home-based care programme to help terminally ill patients to be freed of symptoms, and to allow them to die peacefully in their own home. So far 20% of home-based care patient benefit from palliative care.

P H C highlights

Primary Health Care Services offered to the community by St Anne's Hospital encompasses a wide range of activities. The usual services offered are those with outreach clinics. There are currently 8 clinics within a catchment area of 42794 km², with 2140 children below 1 year of age, 7275 children below 5 years, 9843 women of child bearing age, 2140 pregnant women, and 321 women with emergency obstetrical problems. There is a plan to extend the programmes to include food security and health education. This will among other things involve; introduction of irrigation techniques like treadle pumps to boost production levels, civic education on traditional practices that enhance fast depletion of food reserves, and health talks to people in the community.

Development projects

Minor Theatre

We have recently introduced a minor theatre. Previously all operations were taking place in our major theatre but there was pressure and congestion due to the increased number of

cases being performed, on average 80 per month; three quarters of these being major cases. The minor theatre was established to cater for minor cases, and this has proved most beneficial to the smooth running of our surgical unit.

TB project

The most wonderful development is that St Anne's Hospital has taken a challenge of becoming a TB treatment center. All along if patients were diagnosed as TB positive they were sent to the government hospital for treatment. This was a bit embarrassing to both the patient, who opted to come to the hospital for comparably better services, and to the medical personnel, who have the capability to administer the treatment but because of no authorization from the government were unable to do so. A meeting was held between the Regional TB Officer plus ourselves and the go ahead was given to become a TB unit. The challenging aspect is that since treatment is free, more people will come to be treated but the hospital does not have the capacity to cope up with this upcoming pressure unless donors come in with resources for the expansion of the existing facilities. So far *Hilfe fur Malawi*, a German based charity donated money for renovation of our laboratory and modification of a certain building so that it can act as a TB ward. However, we need donors' support to have a well- established TB programme.

Solar water project

Hilfe fur Malawi, also donated money to the hospital that was marked for solving water problems that were prevalent at the hospital. In the event, the solar pumped water system plus a complete well was fixed and it has helped to reduce the monthly water bills by 62%.

Integrated reproductive counseling room

There has been an extension of the existing Ante-Natal Counseling room because there was pressure as the number of clients increased. This is a multi-purpose counseling room for Antenatal, VCT, STI and Family Planning. Toilets have also been constructed.

Staff houses

The hospital has been hit by an acute shortage of staff houses to an extent that St Anne's staff are being housed in rented buildings which are relatively expensive in comparison to the house allowance allocated to staff. The Hospital is currently paying for the difference despite the fact that it is going through financial hardships. *Beit trust Fund and Lancing College Students* donated money for building two blocks of staff houses. The houses are now complete and staff have occupied them but there is still a need to build extra ones so that the hospital can be saved from these recurring costs. Recently we had one of our Health Centers blown down by wind and this has been a set back on our devilmment efforts.

Staff development

The hospital has so far sponsored four of its staff for training, equipping them with skills to match the prevalent medical practice needs. This is part of the staff motivation and retention process that the hospital has embarked on. This exercise involved sending two Medical assistants to school to upgrade to full a clinical officer and Anesthetic Clinical Officer respectively, and paying for two members of staff for a three year clinical medicine course from which they will qualify as clinical officers and finally one nurse /midwife technician was sent for a community nursing course.