



# BWINDI COMMUNITY HOSPITAL NEWSLETTER

Volume 5 Issue 1

January 2018

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## Our Vision

A healthy and productive community free from preventable disease and with excellent health services accessible to all.

## Our Mission

Serving Jesus Christ through giving holistic health care and life in all its fullness to the staff, patients, clients and visitors in the Hospital and community

## Vision 2020

A regional centre of excellence offering specialist health services contributing new scientific knowledge through research and UNSB as an outstanding institution in health care training

## Surgery Department gets a new home, kudos Africomed!



*Dr Forat Sadry (right), at the grand opening of the new operating theatre*

As we strive to achieve our goal of expanding both our trauma and non-trauma surgical services, Bwindi Community Hospital (BCH) has made tremendous strides in growth of the department over the last year.

The newest change is that the Surgery Department now has a new home! Through support from our partner, Africomed Switzerland, BCH now has a well-modified, spacious, state of the art operating theatre. The theatre has been expanded from one operating room to two and includes a new recovery room and a new patient preparation area.

This is seen to be core as the hospital looks forward to vision 2020. 'A regional centre of excellence offering tertiary health care, training top notch nurses, and leading in innovation through research'

The approximately \$70,000 USD theatre renovation was opened with a specialized urology camp held from 7<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> October, in collaboration with a team from Africomed Switzerland. During the camp, ten open prostatectomies (removal of enlarged prostate gland) were performed for

men who had been having serious urology problems for over one year.

"Yosamu could not believe that he would be able to urinate finally without trouble like before, it was a miracle when we saw him three weeks after the surgery," Dr. Gideon Kurigamba narrates.

There was a lot of knowledge and skill transfer to the BCH surgical team which was invaluable.

Five urethroplasties (repair of the passage of urine) were also done for patients who had blockage of their urethra after infections like gonorrhoea or after trauma/accidents.

Other activities conducted during the camp included examination of the urinary bladder using a cystoscope, a new special skill that was acquired by our theatre staff during the camp.

With the presence of a surgeon in the department, we are now able to offer many specialist services. These have included thyroidectomies for over 20 cases of goitre, 50 open prostatectomies, at least four mastectomies for breast cancer, and six cholecystectomies, among others.

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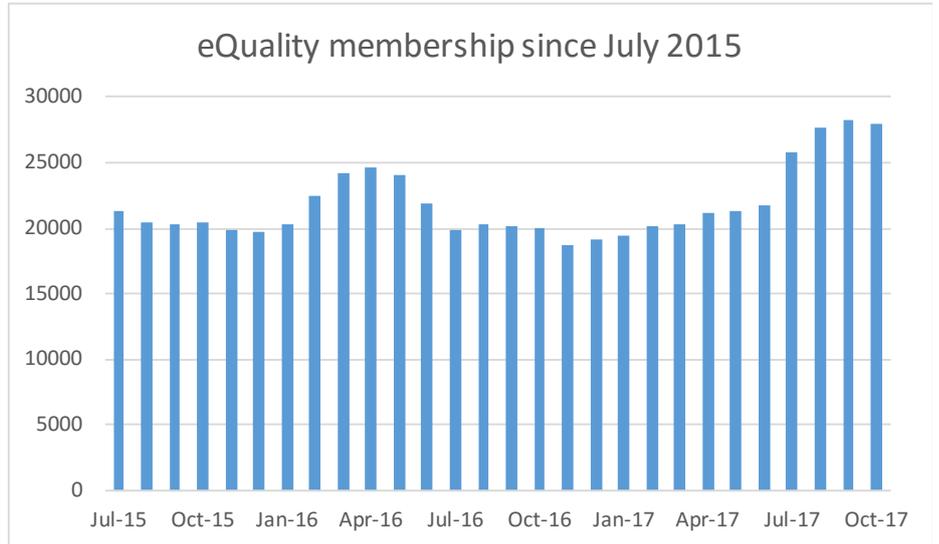
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## The growing trend of eQuality Bwindi Health insurance

Health insurance is a relatively new concept in Uganda, with only about 3% of Ugandans, countrywide, enrolled in such plans. Nationally, few individuals take out health insurance because the costs are perceived to be very high. The trend is growing, though, especially as a benefit package in most corporate companies.

With foresight of the importance of preventative care, Bwindi Community Hospital (BCH) began its insurance plan, eQuality Health Bwindi, in March 2010. It is a local insurance program unique in its approach to providing high-quality healthcare for a minimal investment.

Currently, a subscriber to eQuality Health Bwindi pays a yearly premium of 15,000 Ugandan shillings (about \$4.00) to enroll. This allows each subscriber to access all basic medical care at the hospital at low cost. For children under five years old, the rates are even lower and cover more services. The eQuality Health program has changed peoples' lives and their attitude towards



healthcare and its accessibility. Without the insurance, Bwindi residents were previously forced to consider whether they could afford treatment or even sell their property before transporting a sick family member to hospital.

BCH uses already established village "Bataka" groups to enroll consumers. Currently, about 30% of BCH's target population is enrolled in the insurance plan, ten times the national average! This has helped raise the hospital's income, making it less dependent on donations. Our target is to have 40% of our target population registered in the plan by 2020.

The eQuality team has made over 350 outreaches in the last year and since January 2017, has seen enrollment in the plan increase 44%, from 19,457 to 28,008 members. 202 Bataka groups from 11 sub-counties are current members in good standing. When the program began, many expected to receive back what they had paid for insurance if they hadn't used the medical services. With further experience, and community outreach, subscribers understand that if they don't use the medical services, their contributions enable someone else in the community to access health services.

## BCH and Partners strengthen ties towards her vision

In September 2017, Dr. Birungi Mutahunga, the Executive Director of Bwindi Community Hospital (BCH), and Mrs. Jane Anyango, the Principal of the Uganda Nursing School-Bwindi (UNSB), traveled to the USA to meet with partners to consolidate relationships to help in achieving our goals.

Dr. Birungi had good moments in Utah and Texas where he spent over a week participating in fundraising events organized by the Kellermann Foundation (KF). The visit also presented an opportunity to harmonize the hospital's medium and long term ambitions with the KF and strengthened the hospital's relationship

with The Hope Alliance to develop a vision and eye care program at BCH.

Following this visit, BCH has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), with John Peter Smith Medical School Department of Family Medicine that will allow the continued placement of medical students at BCH. He also initiated a partnership with University of North Texas, Health Science Center, for collaboration in research and placement of students.

"We are in the process of developing an MoU and appointing BCH specialists as honorary lecturers at the University of North Texas", says Dr. Birungi.

Jane too had a wonderful and

interactive visit at the University of Scranton in Pennsylvania. She was able to build more contacts and strengthen the relationship between the university, the nursing school, and other partners towards building future options in health care in relation to the school's Vision 2025.

She held several discussions with the university administration in Scranton's nursing department and an agreement was made that a team will be coming this January, where an MoU between UNSB and the University of Scranton will be reviewed. During the visit, she also met with one of the benefactors of UNSB, Steve Wolf, and discuss the future of UNSB.

BCH is privileged to have such strategic partnerships, that will help the hospital realize her vision.



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## Patients embrace chronic care services at BCH

Having already taken incredible steps in the fight against communicable diseases in the area, Bwindi Community Hospital (BCH) is now also focusing on the growing problem of non-communicable diseases with its new Chronic Care Clinic.

Though only open once a week, the clinic has seen a 40% increase in attendance since its inception in December 2016.

Shamirah Nakayondo the nurse in charge, coordinates appointments, provides health education on clinic days, assists with assessments, and follows up with patients. If investigations are needed they are scheduled.

A generous grant of \$500.00 USD a month from our Swiss partner, Africomed, subsidizes the cost of investigations and medications for those too poor to afford them. Now even the poorest of the poor have access to essential treatment and monitoring.

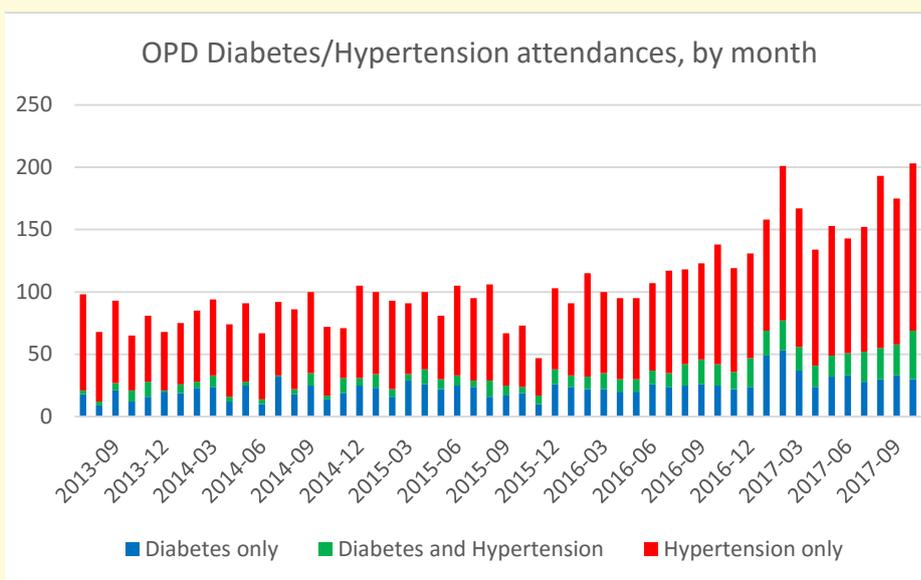
Research is showing the growing disease burden in the developing world from non-communicable diseases, including hypertension, diabetes, lung disorders, epilepsy, and cancers.

*Though only open once a week, the clinic has seen a 40% increase in attendance since its inception in December 2016*

The 2009-2010 Uganda National Household Survey revealed that non-communicable diseases and their risk factors are an emerging problem in Uganda and more attention needs to be paid to these diseases in addition to infectious diseases.

As noted by the Global Health magazine, chronic diseases are even disabling and killing many young people in the developing world, since cholesterol reducing pills and screening for pre-diabetes are rarely available a situation that is true about Uganda.

BCH's Chronic Care Clinic is the only one of its kind in the area. Prior to the opening of the clinic, some



patients suffering from diabetes and hypertension would have to travel over 100Km to surrounding hospitals for their weekly appointments and medications, an insurmountable burden for many people who could not afford the transport costs. Consequently, the clinic has had three-fold increase of patients to more than 400 registered clients over the past one year. The hospital has encouraged people to attend the clinic by conducting free screening sessions in the community for early diagnosis.

In October 2017, 242 patients attended the clinic. Of these, 25 were either newly diagnosed or attending the clinic for the first time. Subsidies from our partner, Africomed, benefited 92 adult and 11 pediatric patients.

Currently, there are about twenty Type-1 diabetes patients receiving regular care and treatment at the clinic. Additional hypertension screenings in villages surrounding the hospital will be offered in the coming months.

Although we have achieved a lot, the clinic still faces challenges because some patients are not enrolled on our eQuality health insurance program and find it expensive to pay for the hospital co-payments which are not covered by Africomed. Others fail to keep their appointments even when aware of their date to return to hospital because they can't

meet transport costs. Amidst these challenges, the hospital is committed to establishing a healthy community.

## Twelve nursing students graduate

October 27, 2017 saw the joyful graduation of twelve Uganda Nursing School Bwindi (UNSB) students from Uganda Christian University-Mukono (UCU).

The twelve students were awarded Diplomas in Nursing Sciences and were among the 1,177 students graduating that day.

Degrees and diplomas were awarded in 38 specialties, as the University held its 20th graduation ceremony at the main campus in Mukono, outside of Kampala.

This is the second time our students have graduated from UCU-Mukono and we are confident in their abilities to succeed, many having already found employment.

You can follow UNSB progress on [www.unsbwindi.ac.ug](http://www.unsbwindi.ac.ug)



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*Bright, teaches waiting mothers about nutrition at the hostel*

## Bwindi Community Hospital honored by Social Innovation in Health Initiative

**B**windi Community Hospital (BCH), has been honored by the Social Innovation in Health Initiative (SIHI) for its Mothers' Waiting Hostel as a community-based solution that is improving maternal and child health.

Early this year, SIHI announced a call for innovative health solutions that support maternal and child health in Uganda. BCH submitted its Mothers' Waiting Hostel as a simple, sustainable, and cost effective solution addressing the multiple issues associated with unsafe birthing practices.

The Bwindi Mothers' Waiting Hostel was chosen as one of five solutions to be honored in Uganda.

Launched in 2014, the Social Innovation in Health Initiative is a joint program between the World Health Organization's Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) and implementing partners, including Makerere University and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. SIHI focuses on identifying innovative health care delivery solutions in low and middle income countries.

In existence since 2008, The Bwindi Mothers' Waiting Hostel has already been replicated at Kanungu Health Center IV and Kisiizi Hospital.

Independent research has shown the BCH hostel contributed to a fourfold increase in the utilization of delivery services at BCH and has reduced complications such as asphyxia. As one mother from Mpungu says,

"Mothers from far communities such as Mpungu, we find it very difficult to give birth from local health clinics for we are not sure of being supported there. Thus we choose to come to Bwindi and wait in the hostel to deliver from here. The hostel has really helped us because it is very difficult to access the hospital when labor has set in".

Specific case study research on the solutions began in the last quarter of 2017.

Representatives of the Social Innovation Hub at Makerere University visited the hospital in December, to learn more about the operations of the hostel.

BCH has also been asked to submit a brief to the Ministry of Health on how the Mothers' Waiting Hostel could be "scaled up" nationally.

Selected solutions will also be featured in a film on social innovation in Uganda and honorees will be invited to Makerere University to share their solutions and to present to the Ugandan Ministry of Health.

How you can support our work by making a tax deductible donation through our charities;

The Kellermann Foundation  
P.O. Box 832809  
Richardson, TX 75083-2809  
[www.kellermannfoundation.org](http://www.kellermannfoundation.org)

Abercrombie & Kent Philanthropy  
<http://www.akphilanthropy.org>

Health For All Uganda e.V.  
Tukustr.39e, 50825 Koln, Germany  
[www.health-for-all-uganda.com](http://www.health-for-all-uganda.com)

A charity is being set up in the UK,  
REACH BWINDI  
<https://reachbwindi.com>

*Please earmark the donations for use at Bwindi Community Hospital.*

**OR** make a direct transfer to our bank accounts in Uganda with the following details:

Account Name:  
**Bwindi Community Hospital**  
Bank: Stanbic  
Branch: Kihikihi  
Account Number: 9030008175194  
Sort Code: 045360  
Swift Code: SBICUGKX