



# BWINDI COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

## NEWSLETTER

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## Intensive care service for the rural poor



*The ICU building under construction*

Bwindi Community Hospital is set to pioneer Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Services in the rural southwestern Uganda effective 2021. The timing cannot have been better moreover, at a time COVID-19 infections are on the rise.

The Kellerman Foundation has sponsored this building, which will accommodate four ICU beds, four isolation rooms for patients with infectious illnesses and will provide additional space for 22 adults with medical conditions.

With the disease pattern in the region changing from infectious disease to more non-communicable and chronic diseases, addition of ICU services will help to manage severe complications that have previously been referred out to distant facilities for management. Uganda has 12 functional ICUs with a total of 55 beds. Eighty percent of the ICU beds are in the capital, Kampala, which is more than 400km away. There are approximately 1.3 ICU beds per one million populace. Therefore,

a functional ICU at Bwindi Community Hospital will improve access to critical care by a population of over three million people in the surrounding districts in line with our ethos of equitable healthcare for equal health needs.

While we appeal to well-wishers to support purchase of more equipment to fully functionalize this unit, we are grateful to the Ministry of Health sponsorship of our staff training in critical care and the support we have had from Mulago specialized hospital in care for critically patients.

Bwindi community Hospital is indebted to The Kellermann Foundation and her partners for this donation to the tune of \$ 242,479; and the AKP for the earlier shipment of ICU equipment donated by project C.U.R.E. These combined efforts contribute to our vision of becoming a specialist hospital leading in health training and research, with excellent health services accessible to all.

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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 2025

A regional centre of excellence offering tertiary health care, training top notch healthcare professionals and leading in Innovations through research.

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## UNSB re-opens amidst Covid-19 challenges



*Mr Robert Kamugisha, the Principal, giving a lecture to students wearing masks as one of the guidelines to prevent COVID-19*

After six months closure of schools and institutions, the Uganda Nursing School Bwindi (UNSB) final year students reported back on 28th September 2020.

President Yoweri Museveni gave the green light to final-year students. “We have decided to reopen schools for finalists in tertiary colleges and universities because the cost of waiting any further is quite high,” he said, “If the batch of 2020 do not move on, what will happen to the batch of 2021? Can we afford to have two batches in 2021? The answer is a clear ‘No.’”

UNSB has prioritized the safety of students and staff. On arrival, all the students were subjected to screening and adherence to standard operating procedures to prevent

spread of COVID-19 virus. The students and staff have been taken through COVID-19 prevention and control training to minimise infection risk. The school has an established COVID-19 - management team, and isolation rooms in case of a suspect.

Robert Kamugisha, the principal UNSB says “Out of 409 students, 220 are finalists. Though, our lecture rooms are big enough and have big windows to allow proper ventilation as recommended in prevention of COVID-19, our biggest challenge is accommodation.

With only a limited number of students allowed per dormitory because of social distancing, arranging for more accommodation space, and the cost of buying hand sanitisers and Personal

protective equipment (PPE) is disproportionately huge burden to the school.”

The pandemic has also brought about some challenges to the school with regard to payment of fees, as parents struggle to pay on time.

From the student’s point of view, they felt supported via online instruction for the long period they stayed at home but are happier with face to face lectures with a sense of finally completing their courses of study.



## BCH and AKP collaborate on skilling mothers in our waiting home



*Some of the waiting mothers weaving baskets during their stay at the hostel*

Over 200 expecting mothers have benefited from “Skill the mother” project. The project aims at empowering waiting mothers with skills, such as; tailoring, knitting, and crocheting and making crafts.

This prevents redundancy of mothers while waiting for delivery and earns the women some income.

### Success Story

Kekiconco Jennifer, a beneficiary is so grateful for the project. “I stayed at the hostel for three weeks, this was an immiscible time. During my stay, I made clothes for my baby, which tremendously reduced the costs of buying baby clothes. I was able to learn how to knit sweaters and baby hats which I brought home with me.”

Jennifer like other beneficiaries hopes to continue utilizing these acquired skills, and teaching other women in

her community how to make baby huts.

The waiting mother’s hostel was established in 2007 by BCH, with an aim of improving maternal and

perinatal outcomes in our region, by minimizing the three delays on the road to maternal death: delay at home, delay on the road and delay at the unprepared health facility.



*Jennifer showcases some products waiting mothers have made*

While women wait at the hostel, pregnant women receive health education, and, focused daily prenatal checkups for timely intervention.

This community benefiting initiative is a result of the collaboration between Bwindi Community Hospital and Abercrombie and Kent Philanthropies.



## Midwives' accommodation to be ready by end of December 2020



### *The midwives' house under construction*

The midwives' house is set to be ready come end of December this year. The building will accommodate eight staff, bringing a number of staff accommodated in the hospital staff premises to 29 (23.8%) out of 122 employees.

Medical staff are attracted to BCH by our good reputation, the chance to work with other top-notch doctors and clinicians, and belief in the hospital's mission to help the people who need it the most in rural Uganda. These factors have allowed us to hire great people, despite not having such descent accommodation as may be found elsewhere in Uganda.

Lack of decent accommodation for senior staff contributes significantly to their high attrition rate and this in turn affects not only healthcare but also training departments of clinical medicine, nursing & midwifery offered at Uganda College of health Sciences, Bwindi, and Uganda Nursing School Bwindi respectively.

Now, most staff stay in rented premises whose configuration and amenities such as running water are far below standard because they are built as shops. Moreover, house rent keeps escalating amidst scarcity and mounting pressure from town agents who would like to see such houses put to their original purpose and boost economic activity in the township.

Therefore, providing decent staff accommodation is a top priority objective to retain key staff for sustainable high quality healthcare in this remote part of the country. Thankfully, the hospital has adequate land for medium term developments.

Our hearty thanks go to REACH Bwindi charity UK for their generosity in supporting this cause. Oh, what a Christmas gift for the eight lucky midwives that will find a new home!