



BWINDI COMMUNITY HOSPITAL NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 8

September 2011



Message from the Medical Superintendent

Dear Partners and Friends,

It is an honor to share with you this latest news from Bwindi Community Hospital. Our gratitude, more than we can express here, goes to you all for the immense support and encouragement.

Bwindi Community Hospital has remained steadfast in providing quality health care focusing on improving access and utilization.

Our commitment to high quality health services

and effective management practices has been underlined by the 2011 STARS Impact Award in the category of health that we have just won for Africa and Middle East region. This award has come with 100,000 USD of unrestricted funding that we intend to use improving child healthcare in the area.

We are therefore indebted to all of you who have supported us to this end and proudly associate with you all!

Thank you for improving lives of many in the Bwindi environs.

Dr Birungi Mutahunga R- Medical Superintendent, Bwindi Community Hospital

Inside this Issue:

- Message from the MS
- Fighting a disease which has no cure
- Incubators to save lives of many infants in Bwindi
- Hospital deliveries increase at BCH
- Medshare container shipment to BCH
- Sharing experience at BCH

Fighting a disease which has 'no cure'

Like many countries worldwide, Uganda is still grappling with the HIV pandemic that has lasted almost three decades now. But according to a recently released report from the HIV lab testing at BCH, the rate of people testing positive for HIV in the Bwindi area has dropped from 14% to 4% in the past four years. This drop is due to both a decrease in HIV prevalence and an increase in the hospital's outreach efforts allowing more people to receive testing.

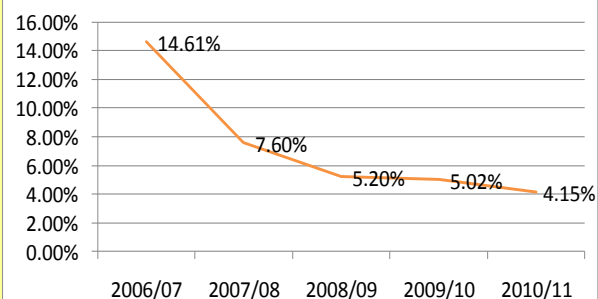
BCH was the first hospital to bring routine voluntary HIV counseling and testing to the Bwindi area. The hospital also was first to initiate CD4 testing in the wider Kanungu district.

We are succeeding in increasing community knowledge about HIV and HIV testing, as well as increasing Tuberculosis detection and access to treatment. We also continue to help all HIV positive pregnant women to give birth to HIV negative babies (PMTCT). Our recent PMTCT audit of children born at the hospital in 2010 indicates that 91% of babies who were discharged during the audit period tested negative for HIV after 18 months (DNA PCR testing) – evidence that we are

succeeding in blocking mother-child transition of HIV. As research scientists continue searching for a cure for HIV/AIDS, pessimists predict futility in this venture - arguing that the disease is growing stronger and more complex by the day. However, we continue to make progress by attacking the disease at the community level putting emphasis on prevention approaches. Additionally, our remote outreach clinics are now testing and treating 75% of our clients.

Our sincerest thanks go to all supporters of this program.

HIV Prevalence among Testing Participants



Keep up to date with our work

You can now follow us on twitter @bwinditweets, watch recent videos at our youtube site www.youtube.com/user/bchuganda, follow major events in pictures at www.flickr.com/photos/bwindihospital/ and if you are on facebook, join our cause at www.causes.com/causes/bwindi. You can access all these sites from our website at www.bwindihospital.com.



Incubators to save lives of many infants in the Bwindi area!

Our neonatal unit specializes in the care of ill and premature newborns. For years we've relied on wall-mounted electric heaters to provide warmth to an entire room filled with infants.

At times these heaters broke down and we would improvise by wrapping premature babies in cotton or filling rubber gloves with hot water to generate warmth in their cribs. So we always dreamed of getting incubators to help take better care of these newborns.

With great support from the Kellermann Foundation and Medshare shipping charity we received a container loaded with various medical supplies among which were 3 incubators for our neonatal unit, donated by Dr. Stark and his wife Laurie Hodian, and Touch Uganda.

The incubators were immediately put to use upon arrival. The first beneficiary was Jackline – a premature baby weighing only 1.1 kilograms. She had an extremely low temperature of 34 degrees Celsius (107 F). But after being placed in an incubator, her temperature was brought up and maintained in the normal range and her life was saved. We are closely monitoring Jackline in our neonatal unit and are delighted to see her improving.

In the past three years we managed to reduce the neonatal mortality rate from 14.3% to 8.9%, and that was in the days of regulating baby temperatures using wall-mounted heaters, cotton wraps, and hot water filled gloves.

91.1% of newborn babies admitted to our neonatal unit survive. It is the only unit for a population of 300,000 people in the whole district of Kanungu.

With the donation of these new incubators, we hope to reduce deaths among these newborns even further.

Many thanks to TOUCH Uganda, Dr. Stark and his wife Laurie Hodian who contributed to the purchase of these incubators.

We are also particularly thankful to Sustain For Life Charity and TOUCH Uganda who have supported our Child health program area through the years.



Jane, a nurse attends to baby Jackline using the new incubator.

Hospital deliveries increase at BCH

Statistics from the Ministry of Health and World Health Organization (WHO) indicate that 16 women die while giving birth every day in Uganda.

This daily tragedy is preventable and BCH is working towards putting an end to it in Bwindi. The hospital has implemented a variety of interventional techniques that have succeeded in reducing maternal mortality in the area.

Over the past three years our hospital has made great progress in reducing maternal mortality, contributing towards the Millennium Development goals. In the same time frame, hospital deliveries in the area have increased to 45% and the hospital's objective is to raise this proportion to 80% over the next three years.

Over 100 babies were delivered at BCH in each month of the past quarter, all without a single loss of a mother.

The many would-be maternal and neonatal deaths in this area have been reduced by the Waiting Mothers' Hostel and the support we have been getting from Marie Stopes



Nelly, a midwife discharging mothers

international whose Voucher scheme program has been concluded.

We recently integrated maternal health care into our eQuality health insurance program to enable mothers also pay for their health care collectively in advance. We are desperately searching for a donor to support our maternal health program for the next years.

Medshare Container Shipment to Bwindi

Friday, the 28th of July, was a memorable day. A long-awaited 40-foot container of donated medical supplies and equipment finally arrived in Bwindi. The shipment left the Port of Oakland, California on April 22 and was expected to arrive at the Hospital in mid-June. Unfortunately it was held up at customs for almost two months.

After an almost 12 hour drive from Kampala it finally arrived at the Bwindi Community Hospital. It was a challenge for the two drivers, who deftly maneuvered the huge load through a maze of deep potholes and narrow bridges along the dirt roads to Bwindi.

Upon arrival at BCH, there was still another challenge. The container was too large and heavy for a forklift, and arranging a crane to come out to Bwindi would be both slow and costly.

Therefore BCH requested the Uganda People's Defense Force (UPDF) for help. And they granted it. On Saturday the 29th they showed up with an Amphibious Infantry Fighting Vehicle. . With this tank the UPDF would pull the container from the trailer, after unloading the medical equipment.



The 40-foot container arrives at BCH.

The tank proceeded to pull the container off the truck that had failed to reach the prepared pad due to the slippery and soft ground. From time to time the container had to be pushed back into alignment to prevent it from rolling sideways off the truck, each time the tank pulled. The growing crowd of observers held their breath with each shift in balance. Finally the container dropped into place on the ground, resulting in a giant cheer from the crowd and applause for the UPDF tank driver.

The equipment which was gently removed from the container before the arrival of the tank included two anesthesia machines, orthopedic implants, ultrasounds, three overhead operating room lights, a portable suction machine, an infant warmer, two infant incubators, and other major surgical and patient-care equipment.

The remainder of the container was filled with 1,045 cartons of medical supplies, ranging from bandages to surgical tools, which will help every department in the hospital. The entire shipment of donated goods was valued at \$195,580 and container itself has remained on site at the hospital, where it will be retrofitted to serve as a workshop.



A UPDF tank pulls the container.

Special thanks go to MedShare and The Kellermann Foundation for organizing the shipment and to all the donors who helped make this remarkable project a reality, including TOUCH Uganda, the 49er Rotary Club (Nevada City, CA), the Rotary Club of Piedmont Montclair (Oakland, CA), the UPS Foundation and the Community Foundation of Western Nevada.

We are especially grateful to Richard Cunningham, who oversaw the project.

CORRECTION:

Under the headlines: Message from the medical Superintendent and Malaria Threat Decreases, (BCH Newsletter Volume 2, Issue7), we erroneously reported that Malaria diagnoses among the under fives had decreased from 51% to 2%. That should have been "..... from **23.2% to 13.5%**". We have since made this correction on the online version on our website.

We regret the error- Editor.

Sharing experience at BCH

Volunteering at Bwindi Community Hospital is quite an enriching experience to both the hospital staff and volunteers too.

In the past few months we are happy to have worked with a team of volunteers sharing skills and experiences. These include Cheryl Kiddoo and her daughter Sarah, Prof. Ellen Percy Kraly, Danny Buijssen, and Justin Denney – just to mention a few.

They have selflessly given their time, energy, and talent to enrich our health care program particularly through enhancing community research, data management and communication, all of which are high priority in realization of the hospital's vision.

We also were happy to receive several medical interns. Suleika Rohd and Cynthia Ockecho both from the Hull York Medical School, UK, and Tumwakire Emily from Makerere University, Kampala.

Cynthia stated that the experience of being an intern at BCH was "rewarding, educational and eye opening." Currently we are hosting Anne Schøler and Anna Sörsjö from the University of Copenhagen as well as Kabasomi Harriet, from Uganda Christian University, Mukono.

All these volunteers and students bring in new insights to our knowledge and practice and it is our pleasure working with them all.

We welcome volunteers and students from both Uganda and other parts of the world to come and share their skills and knowledge with our staff. If you are interested please email us at bchcvolunteering@gmail.com. You can also visit the volunteering section of our website at www.bwindihospital.com for more information.



Prof. Ellen and Justin together with the hospital team reviewing the annual household survey questionnaire

All donation details and links can be found on our website: www.bwindihospital.com.

You can make a gift aided donation through our UK charity:

Friends of Bwindi Community Health Centre

Details are at:

www.BwindiFriends.co.uk/bwindi/how-to-donate.html

You can also make a tax deductible donation through our US charity:

The Kellermann Foundation

P.O. Box 832809

Richardson, TX 75083-2809

Office phone: 214-519-9279

Email: info@kellermannfoundation.org

www.KellermannFoundation.org/donate.htm

In Canada, you can mail in cheques/money orders, made out to Buy-A-Net, directly to:

Buy-A-Net Malaria Prevention Group

P.O. Box 1063

Kingston, ON

K7L 4Y5

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: Kihihi

Account Number: 0140092515801

Sort Code: 040147

Please let us know by email if you have made a donation: bwindicommunityhospital@gmail.com