



**CAMEROON BAPTIST CONVENTION
HEALTH BOARD**

Director of Health Services

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**DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES CHRISTMAS 2007
AND NEW YEAR 2008 GREETINGS**

My dear fellow servants of the Lord,

Greetings to you and your families in Jesus name. The Christmas bells are ringing. Carols are being sung and decorations are found everywhere. There is a mad rush for Christmas shopping. Families are tense because finances are limited to prepare well for Christmas. Some people are renewing their commitment to the true message of Christmas and some are just indifferent to all of these. You are certainly witnessing one or all of these happenings in your home or around you now. God advises us to be still and know that He is God. Your Christmas this year will be wonderful. As a family, please plan on what you have. Little is much when God is in it. Life does not depend on the abundance of things we have. Have a new song on your lips to sing on to the Lord at Christmas. He spared your life through out 2007. Other good and God fearing colleagues passed on to the Lord but He left us to see this Christmas. It is not because we are better than those who went ahead to be with God. It is by His grace which is sufficient for us. Therefore rejoice in the Lord. Life is worth much more than clothes and food. Good health is the best gift from God. If you were in bed, you will not be able to wear good clothes and eat good food. I encourage you to visit a sick person or a poor person during this Christmas and share the love of Christ with him/her. Above all, be with your family at Christmas. Merry Christmas to you all.

I trust that you had a productive year 2007. As a Board we had a very productive year. We achieved most of the goals we set for ourselves. We worked hard together to improve on the quality of care given to our patients. We did this using service improvement tools like COPE, Facilitative supervision, infection control and prevention, MAP, etc. All our institutions received or organized at least one in service training for the staff. If your institution did not do so then plan on doing so next year. It is important that we continue to offer continuing education to our staff. Quality services come from quality staff, well qualified for the tasks they perform.

Our doctor staffing has improved in quantity though it dropped from 37 to 35 and many of them work exceptionally hard. We need to pray for them as they do this noble and difficult job. Our nurse and midwives remain the back bone of our services. They carry the bulk of the work. Many of them worked hard but some are visibly not performing. We encourage the hard working ones to continue with the good work so that the rest can copy their good example.

Our dental services received a major face lift through the procurement and installation of new equipment and staff training. All our dental clinics are performing above local standards. More innovative ways of meeting the dental needs of the population were sought and are gradually being implemented. More services are planned for next year in this department. The eye services equally moved ahead with significant additions of qualified staff recently trained. Our diagnostic services such as the X-ray, the Ultra-sound, and the Laboratory trained more staff and acquired new equipment. The physio-therapy department, the Leprosy department and the Orthopedic department excelled in their care to patients with physical/medical problems.

We also strengthened our services to people living with various disabilities. Seminars were organized with external support to strengthen staff capacities in this area. We redoubled our strength in HIV and AIDS care and prevention services. Three new HIV/AIDS Treatment Centers were opened and PMTCT services were significantly extended to new sites. More support Groups were formed to empower people living with HIV and AIDS. Two TB Control Treatment Centers were also approved for our services.

Our pharmacy department worked extremely hard to reduce the out of stock syndrome. As I visited institutions, I was happy to hear that the drug situation has improved dramatically. This is due, mostly, to the creation of the drug revolving fund and also to the hard work of the Central pharmacy staff. They took all your suggestions and criticisms cheerfully and used them to improve on the pharmacy services of the Board.

Many of you have seen the excellent performance of the Technical Services Department (TSD) at various levels. The TSD has developed innovative ways of delivering services to our institutions. Its apprenticeship program is a key point to note. The quality of services from the department stands out tall in the country.

I wish to give very special recognition to our Training School for Health Personnel. It has continued to prepare staff for our institutions. The staff and tutors are devoted to service. They work extremely hard even when they are few in number. Please continue with the good work you are doing. We thank our finance staff for the good stewardship of our funds. We appreciate all our clerical staff, all administrators and supervisors. You are wonderful team people. Please continue with this spirit in 2008.

As I moved round our institutions this year I noticed that our cleaners are particularly hard working. Our floors are neat and work environment safe. I thank them for their hard work. I thank our carpenters, yardmen, and all maintenance staff for their hard work. There are no leaking roofs, no broken doors, etc. Our drivers and mechanics have been diligent and hard working. They do a wonderful job. My special thanks also go to our canteen and rest house staff. They are special. They receive our visitors well and have shown a lot of interest in their work. I have seen some improvement in the quality of their services. Please continue.

I do not know what we will do without our Security Guards. They are wonderful and I need to congratulate them for tracking down bill defaulters and protecting our property day and night. Please go ahead and do more. Our Chaplains, Social workers and counselors have lived up to expectation. The challenges have been great but you did not hold back your care and prayers. I know I have not listed all our services or groups of people here. Please to all of you not cited I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the good work you have been doing. Continue with it in 2008.

We witnessed a visible improvement in the spiritual life of the Board through consistent attendance at Bible studies, morning devotions, TEE, and outreach activities such as Gospel teams and other groups. At individual level, there was a lot of effort to minister to unbelievers and to do personal evangelism. Some staff went to new areas to start prayer groups with personal funds using personal time. Some staff started intensive Bible studies for more personal spiritual development. All these contributed to the stability noticed in our Board.

The overall financial position of the Board remained stable through out the year. In 2006, I informed you that we will delay your generous donation of two months salary indefinitely but asked that you contribute towards the drug revolving fund. You did so and contributed 16 million francs towards the fund. Thank you very much for that action. We have no reason to talk of the two months salary donation now. We will continue with stringent management of the resources at our disposal. The convention took a major decision to decentralize our finances to improve on accountability at the Board level. This is a good move not only for the Health Board but also for the whole CBC. If this continues for the years ahead, the CBC will emerge as a real strong local Church in Cameroon. This has happened thanks to your prayers and hard work. Thank you very much. Please continue to pray for this to succeed.

I promised to continue to visit our institutions in 2007 unannounced. I visited some but not all. I will continue in 2008. I plan to do inspections personally so that we can award a prize to the neatest institution and also the neatest house in our institutions. I am asking you to inform your wives that I may visit your home any time in 2008 for inspection to see the state of your house. This is limited to staff who live in HB houses. We need to keep the houses neat and properly maintained for our comfort and for the sake of preserving them. The premises need to be clean at all times to avoid insects and snakes entering into the house.

For 2008, we plan to continue with the following main areas of focus:

1. Spiritual growth of the staff
2. Improving on staff performance, patient reception and care
3. Ensuring a steady supply of drugs to all our institutions,
4. Ensuring that salaries and taxes are paid on time
5. Improving on our infrastructure including the living apartments
6. Careful evaluation and retaining of staff who are performing well and releasing those who are not performing well to go.
7. Maintenance of high levels of discipline in our institutions.
8. Ensuring greater stewardship in financial and human resources management.

Our theme song for 2008 shall be "Brighten the corner where you are". This will go well with the focus areas we have selected for the year. Please make more copies of the song and make sure you learn it and sing it once a week. I noticed that some institutions do not sing the theme song within the year because they do not study it. You can take one morning devotion a week to learn it. There is a message in the song. That is part of praise and worship. Sing and enjoy the melody as well. We have prepared a devotional guide for 2008. Please follow it.

I pray that God will truly unite the Health Board family to forge ahead successfully in 2008. I pray that God will unite our families to live together in love for one another as husband, wife and children. I pray that God will protect you from all evil and from all harm. I pray that God's face will shine upon you as you enter 2008.

Sincerely,

Your servant,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tih Pius Muffih', written in a cursive style.

Prof. Tih Pius Muffih, MPH, Ph.D.,
Director of Health Services
Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Board