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STOP PRESS!!

Read the HS Chronicle and pass it on to the next person

BIBLE VERSE

"Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces". Matthew 7:6 (NIV).

World Humanitarian Day:

CBC Health Services Assesses Breadth of Aid Services in Hard-hit Communities

The Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC) Health Services has retraced the path covered thus far in rendering humanitarian services to Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and vulnerable communities, whose lives have been upended by the overstretched armed conflict in Cameroon's Northwest and Southwest Regions.

During this year's World Humanitarian Day, the CBC Health Services revealed that over 100,184 IDPs, as well as the affected in host communities, have received aid through her humanitarian programme dubbed 'Rapid Response Mechanism' (RRM).

According to Mrs. Ful Maurine, RRM Coordinator, the programme had five areas of interest; Health, Nutrition, Child Protection, Accountability, and WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene). While presenting an on-ground report to the Director, Prof Tih Pius Muffih and the staff of the CBC Health Services, Mrs. Ful said the CBC Health Services has gone a long way to restore the dignity of many IDPs and the affected, whose hope of survival had been dashed.

The World Health Organization (WHO) used the 2020 World Humanitarian Day to pay tribute to aid workers and humanitarians, who go "extraordinary lengths, in extraordinary times" to help women, men, unaccompanied and or-

phaned children living in crisis-stricken zones, often hard-to-reach.

Talking about hard-to-reach areas, the RRM Team knows this too well. Kumbo West and East in the Bui Division of Cameroon's Northwest Region is a no-go zone since the escalation of the Anglophone Crisis in late 2017. Mr. Kongnyu Emmanuel, RRM Site Coordinator has braved most of the odds throughout the stay of RRM's intervention in this area. He says "offering humanitarian services in armed conflicts is life-threatening." "You find your life hanging on a balance especially when you are caught in a crossfire. The bullet doesn't know if are you a humanitarian worker and or not," he added.



CBC Health Services takes humanitarian aid to the affected

The diligence, bravery, perseverance, and self-sacrifice of Mr. Kongnyu and the entire RRM Team to serve and save lives in crisis-plagued zones is salutary. It is this kind of service that makes the world to qualify them as "real-heroes" on World Humanitarian Day.

The CBC Health Services' RRM for over one year of its implementation provided newborn kits to nursing mothers for the first 28-days of life, Immunization to children who had not received even a single vaccine at birth, dignity

kits to girls and women, psychosocial support to extreme vulnerable unaccompanied and separated children, WASH kits and non-food items.

Quizzed on the impact of RRM's intervention on affected communities, Mr. Kongnyu said it is a general sense of needs met in time. "According to third-party monitoring, RRM scored a 72% success implementation rate," revealed Mr. Kongnyu.

"This success is thanks to our impartiality as far as distribution of items is concerned. We offer humanitarian aid based on the degree of vulnerability in the affected communities. Once you were in need, we attended to you with no prejudice," he stated.

Worthy of note is the CBC Health Services' humanitarian programme is implemented in partnership with other organizations like UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund).

COVID-19: CBC Health Services adapts service delivery alongside the novel virus

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in China in December 2019, and subsequently in Cameroon in March 2020, the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC) Health Services has continued to ensure that its leaders get all updates

that will enable effective implementation of health services while incorporating all aspects of COVID-19.

In line with this policy of keeping its leaders

abreast with COVID-19, the institution organized a 1-day workshop on August 8, 2020 to enlighten leaders on several aspects on managing the pandemic side-by-side the delivery of quality health care to clients.



Prof Tih Urges CBC Health Service's Leaders to adapt services with the changing times

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The workshop examined the following aspects: What is working, what is not working and the barriers of COVID-19; COVID-19 Special Orientation for Health Care Workers (HCWs), caregivers and healthy patients; the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) by caregivers and patients in the facility; Setting up COVID-19 Testing Booths in Health Facilities; COVID-19 special care for People Living with HIV (PLHIV) and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs); Identifying clinical features of COVID-19 early in the workplace; COVID-19 treatment availability in the CBC Health facilities, COVID-19 and Psychological First Aid; and COVID-19 and people living with disability. Through the workshop, the CBCHS intends to build innovative sustainable strategies of integrating the management of COVID-19 in all aspects of service provision.

Opening the workshop, the Director of the CBC Health Services Professor Tih Pius Muffih reiterated the importance for everyone to take COVID-19 seriously just like all other killer diseases. He emphasized that the best strategies must be employed to prevent such diseases. He said the come-together to strategize on how to fight this deadly disease is evidence that all hands must be put on deck to conquer the common universal enemy.

In his updates to the leaders, Dr. Edouard Katayi, Coordinator of the CBC Health Services Task Force against COVID-19 noted that after the outbreak of the epidemic since March 2020, there were restriction measures which were recently lifted leading to the resumption of activities such as the re-opening of borders to enable people to enter Cameroon upon the presentation of proof of a negative COVID-19 test result. Dr. Edouard said there has also been a development regarding the management of COVID-19 among pregnant women. A guideline has also been developed in Cameroon to ensure that children who resume school to sit for examinations do get infected or spread the disease and how to manage them in case of any infection.

As at the moment, Cameroon is still following the treatment protocol using chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine, azithromycin, and vitamin C despite some of the controversies. With regards to case identification, the CBCHS COVID-19 Task Force Coordinator added that the decentralization of Treatment Centers has rendered testing more accessible. This, he opined, has led to more cases being identified though the number of cases are not as high as it was during the peak week.

In order to render personalized healthcare, the CBC Health Services has also ensured that different programs with different health needs are cared for appropriately during the COVID-19 period. Examples of such programs include but not limited to the Socio-Economic Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SEEPD) program which has developed strategies to ensure that services reach out to all persons with disabilities. According to the SEEPD Program Manager, Mr. Awa Jacques Chirac, actions to ensure inclusion in the National Response against COVID-19 have included the development of prevention messages in accessible formats for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). The program has also written an official letter to the Ministries of Health and Communication to draw attention on the necessity for an accessible and inclusive health promotion and prevention campaign.

With respect to the People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLHIV), who are already living with pre-morbid conditions and compromised immune systems, the CBC Health Services has also put measures in place to ensure that they receive the best care, given their vulnerability to the severe forms of the infection. Because PLHIV are more prone to the severe forms of COVID-19, their needs are effectively met to prevent infection.

Dr. Chiabi Eugene, site physician for the HIV Free Project of the CBC Health Services used the occasion to elaborate on the measures put

in place to serve PLHIV during this pandemic. To achieve this, there has been the reduction of contact between PLHIV and the hospital settings especially those that can expose clients. In the care of PLHIV, these measures also include differentiating the care for the patients and rendering multi-months dispensation to avoid coming to the hospital regularly. Follow-up is also done remotely via phone calls, coupled with psychosocial support and adherence counselling. However, unstable clients and those in need of clinical attention visit the hospitals.

The program also engages in home visits for viral load sample collection for further transmission and analysis in the laboratory. Services to protect this group also extend to community dispensation to limit the number of clients coming to the facilities, with those who come to the facilities following all necessary preventive measures from wearing of PPE, social distancing, regular hand washing, and intentional staggering of appointments.

It is worth noting that in facilities, the HIV Care and Treatment Centers are in dedicated places and patients are reduced from seeing multiple healthcare workers when they visit the facilities. Healthcare workers have been empowered to render services from counselling, index testing and sometimes dispensation. This reduces circulation and prevention of infection. Healthcare workers, according to Dr. Chiabi, need to take extra measures to prevent unnecessary exposure of PLHIV and other Non-Communicable Diseases to COVID-19.

COVID-19 has come with several consequences including psychological trauma. This is a result of the anxiety, fear, worry etc associated with the disease. This has given rise to Psychological First Aid which is a non-intrusive psychological means used by first responders to help people passing through traumatic situations to go through without a psychological breakdown.

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According to Ngwen Frankline Siekiwoh, the Mental Health Supervisor of the CBC Health Services stated that the pressure in people now is higher and people can likely breakdown with psychological trauma, hence the necessity for the First Responders Therapy that allows them cope with the situation. Frankline said, given the WHO guidelines, the CBC Health Ser-

VICES has trained frontline staff to incorporate Psychological First Aid to the care they render. He explained that the Mental Health Department of the CBC Health Services has also established a working mechanism to ensure that psychosocial support is incorporated in their daily activities during the pandemic. They also render remote Psychological First Aid (PFA), a

free telephone line that enables people to call and give comprehensive PFA by phone.

Like all other novel viruses, COVID-19 has come with its peculiarities and the CBC Health Services has consistently developed healthcare approved strategies to render quality healthcare as always in spite of the challenges.

Workshop Resolutions and Recommendations

- Intensify case finding using a proper triage system which entails use of quality infrared thermometers, contact tracing and allowing a single entrance into the facility.
- Continuous health education to patients raising awareness to the level of consciousness such that everyone shall in turn have high index of suspicion of all people presenting with signs and symptoms.
- Continuously organize capacity building workshops to include institutions that are not so active in the implementation of COVID-19 activities.
- Avoid assigning health care workers, especially Doctors and Nurses with co-morbidities to work at the COVID-19 isolation units.
- Health Care workers should avoid bringing lots of bags and hand luggage to work.
- Upon returning home from work, avoid embracing family members and children.
- Staff should also observe all safety measures which they preach to patients and caregivers.
- When staff are suspected and asked to isolate at home, they should practice physical distancing at home even among spouses.
- No staff presenting with signs and symptoms should be allowed to work and interact with colleagues.
- All suspects should put on a surgical mask not cloth mask, not even the one produced by CP.
- Recommended tests to be used is the Antigen test for early diagnosis. PCR is for confirmation in some particular cases and for control after treatment.
- The authorized treatment protocol to be followed is that of the MoH.
- After 14 days, staff on treatment and on isolation should return to work even if the test is still reading positive. Traces of the virus may still be there but not potent enough to infect anyone.
- No one is to be left behind, both people with impairment and disability are all inclusive in the care and support services.
- All institutions shall institute Provider Initiated Testing and Counseling (PITC) to increase COVID-19 case identification.
- All admitted patients in the wards should be tested for COVID-19.
- Institutions running out of test kits should contact their health districts office.
- All staff working in contact with patients such as OPD, wards, Dental, Eye departments should undergo test once a month
- Staff members with co-morbidities such as NCDs are encouraged to do a test once a month.
- Face shield is absolutely for medical use only not for street and home use.
- There shall be a hotline for remote consultation which could probably be kept at the OPD during the day and in the calls room at night.
- All institutions shall identify at least two contact tracers who shall undergo training on rapid testing and get to work immediately.
- All clients shall be encouraged to wear their face masks while seeking medical assistance.
- Treatment shall be available in all institutions even if they are not a recognized Treatment Centre.

Ministry of Tourism and Leisure makes Appraisal Visit to CBC Health Services

The National Director in charge of Training in Tourism Hospitality and Leisure, accompanied by the Northwest Regional Delegate for Tourism and Hospitality made a technical evaluation visit to the Baptist Vocational Training School of the CBC Health Services on August 6, 2020, at the Nkwen Baptist Center in Bamenda.

According to the National Director, Mr. Nji Joseph Adu, the visit was to assess the training facilities put in place by the CBC Health Services to effectively run the newly created Hotel Management and Catering Services Program of the Baptist Vocational Training School (BVTS).

impressed with the infrastructure in place. He revealed thus, "I was curious when I received a file in Yaounde from the CBC Health Services requesting to run a program in Hotel Management and Catering Services. I was excited because of their reputation for the quality health care they offer to the people of Cameroon. So I said let me come and see".

After a tour to these facilities, Mr. Nji was very

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National Director of Tourism on an appraisal tour to CBCHS facilities

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"I found that the infrastructure is amazing. The workshops and practical centers like the Rest houses, the Kitchen in the canteen are well equipped, and even beyond my expectation. To confess, I haven't seen an equipped kitchen in this country like what we have here except in Yaounde," the National Director in charge of Training in Tourism Hospitality and Leisure noted.

There are very few professional Hotel Management and Catering Service schools in the Northwest Region of Cameroon. The Director revealed that his Ministry desires to see the school becomes a reference school for Hotel Management and Catering Services. "We also envisage the school to be an examination center, and offer Higher National Diplomas and even Degree programs in the years ahead", he added.

The Administrator of the CBC Health Services Technical Services Department (TSD), Mr. Nyuongho Kenneth told the Delegation that BVTS has been running for over 16 years and has trained many professional technicians who are now trainers in other big companies in the domain of Motor Mechanics, Building Construction, Welding and many other vocational training fields.

The TSD Administrator appraised the delegation for such a visit even in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. "This has been a long-awaited visit from the Ministry of Tourism and Leisure. We had sent our files to the Ministry about the program, and have been longing for this day of assessment and approval, he said".

As of now, Mr. Nyuongho revealed, "We have

about 25 students in the Catering and Hotel Management program with qualified teaching staff. Presently, the students have gone for practicum in one of our Centers in Muntengene, Southwest Region of Cameroon". He further said, "Our vision is to diversify the training to meet the aspirations of national and international standards not just within CBC but even beyond the borders of the country".

"We count this visit a success. National Director has expressed his satisfaction and assured us that we will have positive feedback from Yaounde in some weeks ahead. We assure him we shall put into effect his recommendations such as constructing more classrooms and buying more standard equipment to ensure a smooth and standard running of the school," the TSD Administrator affirmed.

CECPES Graduates COVID-19 Batch of Social Workers, CPE Students

The Center for Clinical Pastoral Education and Social Services (CECPES) under the umbrella of the Cameroon Baptist Health Services (CBCHS) has trained and graduated her 14th batch of 9 students in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and the 7th batch of 26 social workers. These two batches have been code-named, "The COVID-19 batch" by the Director of the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services (CBCHS), Prof. Tih Pius Muffih, given the prevailing and challenging circumstances in which the training took place.

In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic that is almost putting the world on its knees, Prof. Tih said the CECPES program braved the odds by training these students to deal with the existentiality questions which people keep asking.

Before graduation, the CPE students were required to undergo intense practicum sessions and the social workers writing and defending long essays on their experiences in the field.

The fleeting but flamboyant graduation took place on August 6, 2020 at the Nkwen Baptist Children's Church in Nkwen, Bamenda in the presence of friends, family members and the personages who included among others: the Director of CBCHS, Prof. Tih Pius Muffih, Rev. Ngalla Godlove who represented the CBC Executive President, Rev. Dr. Ncham Godwill, the CBCHS Chief of Administration and Finance, Mr. Warri Denis, and the Director of Cooperating Missions, Mr. Cal Hohn.



CECPES COVID-19 Batch of Social Workers ready to meet community needs

The glee with which the class representatives presented their speeches was evident to the fact that the graduating students had been trained for the heart and not only for the head. They took their pledges of confidentiality after receiving their end of course certificates from the hands of the DHS, Prof. Tih who further challenged them to bring more solutions to the COVID-19 pandemic that is ravaging the community and the society as a whole.

Adding his voice to the same appeal, Rev. Dr. Ndongnde Godlove, Director of CECPES encouraged the graduates to go out and eradicate the stigma and fear instilled in some of

the affected patients and even those who are prone to the infection.

Mrs. Mokake Theresia, one of the graduating students of CPE, expressed her gratitude and vision by saying, "I came into the school wounded and got healed, and I am going out there to heal the wounds of the wounded".

Minyeng Cynthia, the distinct student of the COVID-19 batch also affirmed that with the knowledge she acquired from the school, as a practicing counselor, she will be able to disseminate the knowledge and skill to her students immediately she gets back to her station.

It is worth noting that CECPES has gained more grounds in training Social Workers and Clinical Pastors as it is now a requirement for students of social work in other institutions of higher learning to come and grab the theories and practicum before graduating.

The representative of the CBC Executive President crowned it all by describing CECPES as, "Mission Driven Leadership and Creativity". Rev. Ngalla acknowledged in conclusion that "CBCHS CECPES Center is a necessary place to train social workers".

Prof. Tih bags Another Award

“Gold fish has no hiding place!” This common assertion aptly describes Prof. Tih Pius Muffih, CBC Director of Health Services (DHS) whose walk and works to advance the betterment of humanity have caught the scrutiny of the media and other reputable organizations in recent times.

In the past five years, Prof. Tih Pius has received over 40 awards from various organizations; government, the media and civil society. The awards are given for reasons as numerous as the number of them namely: pacesetter in combatting HIV and AIDS, championing the course of persons with disability, best practice in the provision of quality healthcare to all who need it among many other reasons.

The latest award came on August 4, 2020 from the Cameroon Performance Awards (CPA

2020), a brain child of a group of Cameroonians dedicated to the promotion of performance and hard work as the gateway to both individual and collective success.

Francis Ekongang Nzante, journalist and one of the organizers who presented the award to the recipient said, the raison d’être of the annual event is to assemble nation builders and driving forces behind initiatives in Cameroon and the diaspora to serve as role models to younger Cameroonians who have dominantly lost faith in the fact that the route to success lies in performance and hard work.

Quizzed on why his organization chose to award Prof. Tih, the organizer, Mr. Nzante said the works of Prof. Tih, DHS over the years is quite visible to everyone who cares about humanity. Mr. Nzante said the choice of Prof. Tih

was done through a screening exercise carried out by CPA Organizing Committee. According to Mr. Nzante, the works of Prof. Tih are witnessed in his expansion into the French speaking parts of Cameroon, building of befitting structures to provide services in conducive milieu, organization of capacity workshops and his partnership with like-minded organizations, all in a bid to improve on the livelihood of his society.

Receiving the award on behalf of the DHS, the Head of Communication of the CBC Health Services, Clementina Njang Yong thanked the CPA 2020 for recognizing the contributions to the betterment of humanity made by the CBCHS under the able leadership of Prof. Tih Pius Muffih.

CBM/CBCHS Fostering Inclusive Education to gain Steam across the National Territory

The challenges faced in the collection of data for pupils with disabilities will soon be a thing of the past following the donation of some equipment to the Delegation of Basic Education, North West Region of Cameroon. These equipment were donated by Christopher Blind Mission (CBM) through the CBC Health Services’ Socio Economic Empowerment of Persons with Disability (SEEPD) Program worth over a million CFA Frs. The equipment were handed recently to the Delegate of Basic Education, Ndong Wilfred in the presence of his close collaborators.

Handing the equipment, the SEEPD Program Manager, Mr. Jacques Chirac noted that “For Inclusive Education (IE) to be fully implemented in the region, there is a dire need to have adequate data that will be used for advocacy and inform decision making. This equipment we have donated is intended to be used to facilitate the collection of data on children with disabilities in the region. The CBC Health Services (CBCHS) is also ready to provide the delegation

with the technical assistance needed to foster inclusive education in the region,” explained the Program Manager.

Elated with the gesture, the Regional Delegate of Basic Education noted that the action by the CBC Health Services is in line with the government’s vision to have data on pupils and students with disabilities in the country. Ndong Wilfred submitted that the CBC Health Services is a key contributor to inclusive education in the country. On behalf of the Minister of Basic Education, the Regional Delegate congratulated the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC) Health Services for the strong push to inclusion. He promised the judicious use of the equipment which will have an impact on the beneficiaries. “I have put in place a team made up of the Regional Pedagogic Inspector for Primary Education, and the Chief of Statistics amongst others to ensure the effective use of the equipment which we have received today comprising a computer, copier, printer, voltage regulator, modem, amongst others,” said the

Delegate.

The SEEPD Education Advisor, Mrs. Forbuze Bridgitte shared her experience on the short Washington questions for accessing children with disabilities which is successfully used in other countries. She said, the expectation is that the Delegation will use the questions to facilitate the assessment of pupils with disabilities during admission to be able to understand their level of disability and what will be required to help them effectively study alongside their peers without disability.

After signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Northwest Regional Delegation of Basic Education, the SEEPD Program is keen at ensuring that it fulfills its responsibilities specified on the MoU, reason why series of actions like donation of equipment, training of teachers in inclusive education is on course. All these intentional actions are aimed at making inclusive education gain steam in the region and beyond.

HOW TO USE HAND SANITIZER



CBC Health Services Commences Training of Physiotherapy Assistants

Over ten trainees have begun Physiotherapy Assistants (PTA) training at the Nkwen Baptist center Bamenda. The 10-month training program will run from August 4, 2020, to June 18, 2021.

Physiotherapy specialist and trainer, Timothy Fanfon who doubles as Supervisor of the CBC Health Services' Physiotherapy Department told CBCHS Communication Unit that the main objective of this training program is to train physiotherapists who will better implement

treatment plans and do effective evaluations on patients.

"There's scarcity of physiotherapists generally in the country and particularly in the CBC Health Services.



New intake of PT Assistants begin training

DHS Admonishes Staff to Hard Work, Be Accountable

Prof. Tih Pius Muffih, Director of Health Services (DHS) has called the staff of the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC) Health Services to work hard, be accountable, and honest in their various tasks, as they render health care in challenging times. "I call on you to work harder, be accountable, honest with little things," Prof. Tih said.

The DHS' call is contained in a circular letter dated July 24, 2020 and addressed to all institutions titled, "Greetings and Encouragement".

In the circular, Prof. Tih reiterated his willingness to stand by staff in and out of season. "I think of you warmly and I know that you are happy in the Lord. Keep serving Him and staying safe," he advised.

"I had plans to visit and fellowship with all of you this year," the circular stated. However, the Anglophone Crisis and the Coronavirus are standing in the way. "We are forcefully separated, but, united in our [organization's] mission and vision, cemented by Prayers," assured Prof. Tih.

In the face of the litany of challenges and the contemporary pandemic the world is facing, Prof. Tih urged CBC Health Services staff to act in wisdom. "Please be as wise as serpents and gentle as doves. Do not do or say things that will expose you to danger or risk." Acknowledging that God has been on the side of the staff, Prof. Tih encouraged them to stand firm in Christ Jesus, the rock in whom they [we] trust.

The DHS used the circular to announce the introduction of a new "Song of the year". "I have decided to change our 'Song of the year' in the middle of the year. From August 1, 2020, sing "A Shelter in the time of Storm' twice a week," Prof. Tih said.

Speaking to CBCHS Communication Unit shortly after the circular went into effect, Pastor Toh Samson, Chaplain at Bonanberi Baptist Health Centre Douala (BBHCD) noted that the move is an indication that CBC Health Services' leadership leads with the times. "This is an administration that is not stock to routines but leads while taking the plight and welfare of staff into consideration," stated Chaplain Toh. According to the prelate, the new song of the year reveals Christ as the source of hope and refuge for CBC Health Services staff.

BBH Maternity: 20-Year-Old Delivers Triplets

Verena Yufola, 20, has put to bed a set of triplets at Bansa Baptist Hospital (BBH). The 20-year-old student hails from Nseh in the Nkum Subdivision. She dropped out of school in the fifth form due to the socio-political crisis rocking the English Speaking parts of Cameroon and got pregnant.

Verena started her antenatal clinic (ANC) at a local Health Centre at Nseh where she was told that it was a single pregnancy. At the outset

of labour, she went to the same health centre and delivered the first baby. It was only then that the midwife noticed another child was still pending delivery. She was then rushed to BBH where the second child was delivered normally and the third through Caesarian Section.

"We prepared for one baby but God gave three, we praise him for the multiple blessings," Verena said with a toothy smile. Speaking to Health Services Press, Verena launched a

call to people of goodwill to come to their aid to raise the children.

Mrs. Baijong Anestine, BBH Head of Maternity Department said out of the 49-deliveries in July alone, they had five sets of twin and a set of triplets. These deliveries, she said, pose many problems as most of the mothers are teenagers and are unable to breastfeed their babies after birth.

Mboppi Baptist Hospital Douala

MBHD Steps-up Awareness on Clubfoot Deformity

The Physiotherapy Department of Mboppi Baptist Hospital Douala (MBHD) is leaving nothing to chance as far as the elimination of congenital clubfoot deformity in the Littoral Region is concern. Nfor Wilfred, Assistant Physiotherapist at MBHD says as one of the major sites treating clubfoot in the region under the Cameroon Clubfoot Care Project (CCP), the department in the month of July 2020 embarked on raising awareness about the deformity in selected health facilities.

"Once in two days throughout July, we were in one of the 10-selected health facilities to raise awareness. Our primary objective was to enable care providers to step up the identification

and proper referral of clubfoot," stressed Nfor. "During the awareness-raising, we noticed that there was still widespread ignorance of clubfoot even amongst health care providers. Hence the initiative of the CCP was indeed a stitch in time," he said.

The prevalence of clubfoot in Cameroon is one (1) in 800 births which means if initiatives like that of the CCP are not sustained by all, many children will end up with a disability that could have been avoided.

Crossed questioned about the success rate of treating and correcting clubfoot, Nfor Wilfred noted with satisfaction that MBHD is on top of

the game. "By the first quarter of 2020 the CCP gave us a target to treat 33-cases of clubfoot, and as at now, we have handled 21-cases already," he added.

The CCP has three major sites in the Littoral Region treating clubfoot; MBHD, Nylon District Hospital, and Deido District Hospital.

According to Nfor, the awareness-raising on identification and referral of clubfoot is already yielding fruits. "Almost every day, we receive patients referred from one the earmarked health facilities. We hope to extend this other neighboring towns soon," he stressed.

"Do not Offer Substandard Care for Fear of COVID-19."- Alain Kouamou

Mr. Alain Kouamou, Assistant Administrator in-charge of Personnel at Mboppi Baptist Hospital (MBHD) has enjoined [his] staff to offer nothing less than quality health care to clients amidst the contemporary COVID-19 pandemic.

"Regardless of the challenges, still render the best care to patients. Do not offer substandard care because of fear. Note that only God protects you." These were the words of encouragement the Assistant Administrator dished out to staff who are braving the odds to offer care to clients at MBHD.

Quizzed on what MBHD has put in place to ensure the smooth running of affairs amidst COVID-19, Mr. Kouamou said they [we] have instituted the mandatory wearing of masks by all within the hospital premises. "At first it was an uphill task to tell someone who's not in direct contact with patients to wear a mask on permanent basis. Nonetheless, when we denied access to those not wearing a mask into the hospital, it began to dawn on them to do so.

And today, we have greatly reduced the spread of the pandemic amongst staff".

In the past, we used to report about 7-positive cases amongst staff in a week, but today the incidence is zero. Implying that adherence to the barrier measures can greatly reduce the spread of COVID-19. "Therefore I call on [you] staff to continue wearing face coverings, Personal Protective (PPE) gear for those in direct contact with patients and wash hands regularly," advised Mr. Kouamou.

Despite the resounding success at reducing the spread of COVID-19 in MBHD, Mr. Kouamou emphasized that staff must be on their guard at all times, given that the battle against the pandemic is not won yet. "COVID-19 is not over," he stated categorically.

Worthy of note is the fact that MBHD attends to all clients whether with COVID-19 or not. According to Mr. Kouamou, the hospital has all the drugs that have proven effective in cush-

ioning the effects of COVID-19 on the infected. "We always ensure that we have stock of chloroquine, zinc, azithromycin as prescribed by the national protocol," the Assistant Administrator emphasised.

He seized the opportunity to thank partners like of Christian Blind Mission (CBM) for the donation of PPEs and handwashing water stations that has enabled the hospital to reduce the spread of the coronavirus amongst staff and patients.

Still, in line with the fight against COVID-19, Survie Cameroon Survival Initiative (SCSI) has donated a great number of prevention kits to MBHD. According to Mr. Kouamou, the donation on August 2, 2020, came to intensify the fight against COVID-19 as well as step-up patient care in the hospital. He used the opportunity to salute SCSI and partners for such an invaluable donation and promised to put the donated items into judicious use.

Bonaberi Baptist Health Center Douala

BBHCD Dental Staff Acquired Autoclave Put to Use

The dental staff at Bonaberi Baptist Health Centre Douala (BBHCD) say the challenges of having to wait for long hours to have equipment sterilized is now a thing of the past, following the acquisition of an autoclave.

Dr. Tchouamu Laura, Dentist says the new autoclave has made the sterilization of equipment easier. "With well-sterilized equipment, thanks to this autoclave, post-treatment infections on patients will greatly reduce." The acquired autoclave with a capacity of 21-liters can sterilize

dental hand-pieces, nylons, and rubber.

At the time of this report, the resident dentist at BBHCD was working her last days in the Dental Department. She is moving to Mboppi Baptist Hospital Douala on transfer.

Speaking to Health Services Press, Dr. Tchouamu said she would have loved to see the BBHCD's Dental Department standing on its feet before leaving but, that is not the case. "I feel like I started the department and just when the

foundation is still being laid, I have to move. Nonetheless, I am going to where my services and potentials are needed most to serve humanity," she reassured.

Dr. Tchouamu has served as a dentist at BBHCD for close to two years. "I am going to miss new friends and a team of dental staff who have become almost like a family to me," she said. At the time of this report, she was due to begin work in her new station on September 7, 2020.

BBHCD Starts Tenth Department

When the Health Services Chronicles in one of its publications [issue] termed Bonaberi Baptist Health Centre Douala (BBHCD) as "a baby that is threatening to walk without creeping" due to the exponential growth of services in the new health centre, anyone in the right

frame of mind would have said it was a gross exaggeration.

However, barely months to her second birth, BBHCD is not only proving to be a baby that is walking but a one that has matured and giving

birth to more services. The health centre currently runs ten departments, the youngest being a restaurant. The restaurant flung its doors open to the public on August 3, 2020.

Mr. Mbanye Lucas, Chief of Center (COC) says the restaurant has come to solve the problem of lack of food staff and clients have been experiencing since the health centre went operational. "In the past, you only had to bring food from home or eat low quality food sold without the premises of the health centre," the COC

outlined with a beam of satisfaction.

The well-furnished restaurant will henceforth offer quality food to both staff and clients. The coming of the restaurant as the tenth department puts the health centre just a department away to being a hospital.

According to Mr. Mbanye, BBHCD will in no distant time begin a mini theatre bringing the number of services [departments] to eleven. "With this number of departments we will be on a fast lane towards becoming a full-fledged hospital," wished Mr. Mbanye.

Exclusive Breastfeeding: CBC Health Services Implores Support for Mothers

The Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC) Health Services has implored families and governments to support mothers to breastfeed their babies optimally. The call was the central message of the Nutrition Improvement Program (NIP) staff at Baptist Hospital Mutengene (BHM) as part of activities marking the 2020 World Breastfeeding Week.

The World Health Organization (WHO) says "though breastfeeding is a natural process, it is not always easy. Hence, mothers need support-both to get started and sustain breastfeeding. In line with support, Florence Tamfu, Nutrition Counselor says just the simple act of fathers and guardians ensuring that mothers feed well can go a long way to sustain breastfeeding. "Exclusive breastfeeding can stop malnutrition and provide every child with the best possible start in life," emphasized Flor-

ence.

The NIP staff at BHM used this year's World Breastfeeding Week to sensitize the population on the importance of breastfeeding in churches and all waiting areas in the hospital.

The importance of breastfeeding cannot be overemphasized; "It delivers health, nutritional, and emotional benefits to both children and mothers. It forms the part of sustainable food systems," underpins WHO.

Though exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months in a baby's life has been championed by WHO and local partners like the CBC Health Services, adherence in Cameroon is not something to write home about. According to a 2018 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), only 40% of mothers practiced exclusive

breastfeeding implying that a whopping 60% practice mixed feeding, which not healthy for the overall growth of the baby.

This year's World Breastfeeding Week was commemorated under the theme, "Support breastfeeding for a healthier planet". The weeklong event reiterated the call for governments and policymakers to protect and promote women's access to skilled breastfeeding counseling.

According to WHO and UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund), skilled counseling is a critical component of breastfeeding, which ensures that mothers and families receive support alongside information, advice, and reassurance to nourish their babies exclusively.

Care and Treatment Site Nurses Enhance Skills

Some nurses from Care and Treatment Sites across the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC) Health Service converged recently on Health Services Complex Mutengene for a 6-day refresher workshop. Mrs. Manjuh Florence, Women's Health Programme Supervisor says the refresher was aimed at empowering site nurses with skills to better implement family planning amongst Persons Living with HIV.

"The effective implementation of family plan-

ning services amongst Persons living with HIV will meet the second prong in HIV prevention. The workshop was funded by the Fixed Obligation Grant. The grant has the integration of family planning services in HIV care as a goal," said Mrs. Manjuh.

Babila Stanley, Family Planning supervisor says by the end of the refresher, the site nurses are expected to be updated on current trends in family planning as well as come up with a road

map in scaling up the adoption of family planning methods for Persons Living with HIV. "We want to limit unwanted pregnancies amongst this group as much as possible," he said.

The workshop, which ran from August 3-9, 2020 handled the following core modules: menstrual cycle, conception, sexual and reproductive health rights of Persons living with HIV among others.

Bafoussam Baptist Health Centre

Panorama of Bafoussam Baptist Health Center in wake of COVID-19

Bafoussam, chief town of the West region quickly became one of the epicenters of the novel Coronavirus outbreak in Cameroon after Yaounde and Douala. Clementina Njang Yong,

Head of Communication Unit of the CBC Health Services took interest to know how Bafoussam Baptist Health Center (BBHC) is faring in the management of the crisis. She engages Mr.

Fabombi Dickson, Administrator of the health facility in the following interview. Excerpts...

Can you tell us more about the Bafoussam Baptist Health Center?

BBHC Administrator: Bafoussam Baptist Health Center is located in the West region at Nouvelle Route Evêché in the new structure which we began using in April 2018. Before

the coming of COVID-19, we had bed capacity of 70 and 209 staff. We can see an average of 6000 patients per month. These figures have dwindled down due to COVID-19 fright but it's

gradually picking up again because of the prevention measures in place.

Talking about the clients that have reduced, what are some of the reasons for this? Is it only because of COVID-19?

BBHC Administrator: COVID-19 has surprised the world as well as Bafoussam Baptist Health Center and the clients that come there. Many people are afraid going to the hospitals especially as Bafoussam was the second most affected region in Cameroon after Douala and

Yaounde, so many patients who were coming to the hospital got scared about contracting the disease including some workers. But as I said before, people are becoming more aware; education has been given, sensitization made at the level of the facility as well as through ra-

dio stations to improve on prevention and the possible management of COVID-19. For this reason, the numbers of patients coming to the hospital have gradually improved.

What has happened within this facility that you will like to update us on, staffing, infrastructure as well as equipment?

BBHC Administrator: A lot of things have happened from April 2018 till date. Let me begin with the negative part. The health center moved from a smaller structure to a far bigger structure but within the space of 6 months the bigger structure again became smaller to be able to accommodate services because the number of clientele improved, the number of staffing and the number of services equally increased with time. The number of services that were handled in the previous site has changed. We have new services such as the

Can you be specific on what is needed?

BBHC Administrator: Beginning with infrastructural needs, we need to expand our building to be able to accommodate some of the services that have more clients yet the space is small for them. For example, the eye department and the ANC area is small.

In terms of personnel and human resources, the 7 doctors I have mentioned are all General Practitioners and as one of the leading health facilities in Bafousam, the need for specialists is

You mentioned that COVID-19 has rendered things difficult for clientele and even with some of the staff, can you elaborate on this and also highlight the importance for everyone to be tested as you earmarked during morning devotions today?

BBHC Administrator: When COVID-19 began in March, it was so scary because many people including the staff equated COVID-19 to death. They were all afraid, all scared especially for people who may have catarrh and cough which were normal conditions that we were having before. Secondly, we were one of the main hospitals that was having the highest number of suspects in the West region and that attracted the attention of most of our workers and patients that were most scared about it.

With time we have got significant support from the Central Administration of the CBC Health Services through the leadership of the Director, Prof. Tih Pius with consistent supply and encouragement, educational information

So far, how do clients appreciate the services rendered in this facility?

BBHC Administrator: As I said earlier, in March many clients were scared coming here but with time they saw the precautions we take, the difference from other institutions, the way we were managing the COVID-19 cases in terms of physiological, support and counseling, in terms of general cleaning of the environment with disinfectants, the educational packages we give to our clients on a daily basis at the OPD and in the wards, the support we got from many NGOs who came in with PPEs

What general message can you give to the staff of this facility?

NBHC Administrator: We continue to encourage all our staff. We have trained a good number of staff on how to counsel others in the face of COVID-19 and other challenges. We continue to encourage them to do their screening, to report any signs and symptoms in relation

mental health unit that has come to widen the spectrum, the WHP, the dental and the eye services and the theatre was not originally in the old site. Now, we have a theatre and it is operating 24/7.

The number of staffing has significantly increased. In the previous site, we had 2 doctors but now we have 7 doctors who are running the hospital alongside 9 screeners.

In terms of machines, we have added one chemistry analyzer and many sub machines in

condition sine qua non for us to meet the quality care our clients expect from us. When many of the clients come here, they know that they are coming to Mbingo. You know the status that Mbingo has in Cameroon and when they came here and at the end of day you are referring them to any other place because of the lack of specialists in the area of internal medicine, pediatrics, and gynecology etc, they are concerned about that and they go reluctantly. The moment we start embracing and having

on how to manage COVID-19 especially the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) sent to us on a daily basis to ensure that the staff were adequately equipped, mentally stable to be able to fight and manage the cases. Through this collaboration with the Central Administration, we have got seminars and workshops to drill the workers to understand the environment of COVID-19 and how to manage it, how to educate and to sensitive the population and also to be able to take care themselves even as they take care of the suspects.

With very good collaboration with the District of Mifi, which is the supervisory Health District supervising us and the Regional Delegation of Public Health, they have given us enough test

and how we offer them to most of our staff who were not having access to face masks, at least, changed the face of things. When they come to the hospital and find us insisting and find us consistently wearing our face masks and ensuring that all working areas have hand sanitizers, they see some confidence and trust in our facility and find it interesting. That's why the number of patients coming in has been changing and growing up on a daily basis.

to COVID-19 so that we can immediately take care on time. When COVID-19 began we were not seeing a brighter future ahead so we made some provisions for staff, in case of staff being isolated, admitted, and where we were going to admit them if need arises. Some of those

the laboratory, we have equally decentralized the laboratory and created a second laboratory for diabetes and ANC at the third floor, we got a dental x-ray, we recently bought some machines for the eye department to improve on quality of care to our clients, we equally have bought a ultrasound machine which has a better quality in terms of examination of our clients. The number of operators or technicians that we now have has increased and like "Oliver Twist" we are still asking for more to meet the capacity of the numbers of patients that are coming to us and their needs.

some of those specialists, we will be able to improve on our quality of care. Nevertheless, the building might not be able to accommodate all these specialists in terms of service areas. So, as we look forward to improving on the building we will be soliciting the Director of Health Services who is always ever listening to see how we can improve on our staffing so as to improve on the health care of our patients.

kits beginning sometime in June to be able to do general screening to all our staff and as of now I am sure we have had about 80-85% of our staff screened. Screening is part of prevention and possible treatment but it was slightly challenging because to convince some of the staff to do screening was quite a tough time. Interestingly, the results we have now are slightly encouraging and the few that are still remaining, we continue to encourage them to take the test because it is a recommendation from the district and the region to have everyone goes through that screening process. We know it is not a guarantee for not having COVID-19 but it gives us a kind of a confidence background on the status of the staff and how we can better manage those who come to us.

So presently, when we find some suspected cases, a good number of them will prefer to remain here even when the government regulation states that we will have to move them to the regional hospital. There are some of them who have resisted vehemently not to move out. We have done our possible best to give the care they deserve even while here we are collaborating so well with our clients and the Regional Delegation of Public Health.

provisions were put in place and we have used them for some of our staff who became victims of COVID-19 and those who became victims are more likely the counselors of our patients and some of our staff today. Work is slightly progressing and moving well.

cont....pg11

What is your final word?

BBHC Administrator: My final word will be that the staff, the patients of Bafoussam Baptist Health Center, and the people of the West region who seem to be head strong in terms of putting on face masks on a daily basis, should understand that COVID-19 is real, it exists and it will take a joint effort for us to be able to overcome the pandemic. Everybody should put

their hands on deck, join the government and the NGOs for this fight. I want to appreciate the efforts of the CBC Health Services in their package and support to institutions especially in Bafoussam to fight against COVID-19. The CBM package to erect a water system to back up the water system that we currently have and the make-shift to decongest waiting areas for pa-

tients in order to ensure and maintain effective social distancing - required by WHO and Government guidelines - are currently going on progressively and we hope that by the end of August we will have new model area to receive our patients and treat them as necessarily.

Role of Nutrition in Health Care

Knowing which dietary habits are associated with overall health and improvement of the quality of life has proven to be very vital in the long term health outcome of individuals and their families. Poor feeding has in the past decades been on the spot light as one of the primordial predisposing risk factors for Non-Communicable Diseases and many other life threatening diseases which have been ravaging our communities leading to the premature deaths of millions of people worldwide, including patients and clients visiting CBC Health Services facilities.

In line with the SDG 3 which is aimed at achieving global good health and well-being, the CBC Health Services (CBCHS) developed a Nutrition Improvement Program (NIP) in 2007 as an essential component of the AIDS Care and Prevention Program; the overall goal being to improve the nutritional status of patients and clients receiving services in CBC health facilities in Cameroon.

With the burning desire to provide quality care to all in need, the CBC Health Services trained nutrition counsellors who have been working with patients (obese, diabetic, hypertensive, HIV etc) and clients in her health facilities providing nutrition education, counselling, community sensitization and diet prescriptions, taking into consideration consumption of healthy, readily available and affordable local food sources.

The NIP started in 2013 at Bafoussam Baptist Health Center (BBHC) when a NIP counsellor visited the Health center. At the moment, this department sees an range of 100 to 250 clients every month.

Mrs. Fon Doris, Nutrition Improvement Program staff for the Bafoussam Baptist Health Center, in a recent interview with Health Services Press, gives a succinct description of activities carried out by the NIP department

of the Bafoussam Baptist health Centre. She said patients suffering from Non communicable disease (NCDs) like diabetes, hypertension, and obesity are being tracked down at the Out Patient Department (OPD) in order to educate and sensitize them on the importance of healthy diet hence boosting up their health. The program staff also move from ward to ward in order to assess the patients and put them on healthy diets which may help minimize the ailments they are suffering from. In addition, the program also works with malnourished children and pregnant women.

Mrs. Fon said they opted to re-strategize by meeting clients at the OPD and in the wards as a means of overcoming one of their principal challenges which is the obscure location of the office, which is not visible for easy access to clients. She is, however, grateful to the CBCHS for bringing the program to serve the inhabitants of Bafoussam.

"Good nutrition makes you feel at your best at all times; Good nutrition can save your life. To eat is a necessity but to eat intelligently is an art"

Commercial Sex Workers at Auberge Bafoussam on Spotlight for HPV/STI Screening

Bafoussam Baptist Health Center braves the odds by meeting commercial sex workers at the "Auberge quarter" with the aid of community mobilizers to help control the surge for Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STI) that is wrecking the community of Bafoussam. Reports say about 2,350 new cases of cervical cancer and 1000 deaths from the disease occurred in Cameroon in the year 2019. This reveals that about 42% of women infected with cervical cancer in Cameroon die from the disease if not diagnosed and treated early enough.

Considering the alarming number of cases diagnosed in the capital city of the West region of Cameroon, the Women's Health Department of the Bafoussam Baptist Health

Center embarked on a massive sensitization campaign at the Auberge neighborhood of Bafoussam which hosts a flock of commercial sex workers. Mrs. Ndzi Malah, Women's Health Coordinator for the Bafoussam Baptist Health Center (BBHC) confessed that it has not been an easy task getting to the commercial sex workers' circle, as none of them is willing to be identified as one.

None the less, Mrs. Ndzi Malah affirmed that from July 15, 2020 till date, over 144 commercial sex workers have been screened. Most of them have been diagnosed with HPV and other STIs (Mycoplasma, Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea, Trichomoniasis, Syphilis), and are currently taking treatment at the Bafoussam Baptist Health Center. She further clarified that the commer-

cial sex workers were targeted because due to the nature of their jobs, they are more exposed and are at a higher risk of contracting this disease than other groups of women of different walks of life.

These sex workers are offered free treatment and those identified to have engaged into commercial sex work out of frustration counselled and encouraged to enroll into the New Life Club of the CBC Health Services where they are supported into more decent life.

The Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services continues to offer quality care to all in need at her health facilities and in the communities without discrimination as an expression of Christian love.

Bafoussam Baptist Health Center opts for more staff in PT Department

The Assistant physiotherapist of Bafousam Baptist Health Center, Chamcham Isaac Bong says he and his co-worker, Mrs. Gladys work together to see into the effective running of the department. He acknowledges the infrastructural improvement of the department and lauds its initiative of engaging in outreach ac-

tivities like the "City Children". Reports say, this has contributed to the increase in the numbers of children who receive PT services.

The PT Assistant said with this growth, the work load is increasingly demanding for the two staff. He noted that there are procedures that a

single person can't do alone like, cloak folders and cast applications, so he recommends the recruiting of at least 4 staff in the department. "I as well as my patients have great regards for this department and cherish everything about it" he concluded.

Program General Supervisor visits Bafoussam to appraise NCD Services

The General Supervisor of Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs), Dr. Epie Njume has visited Bafoussam Baptist Health Center to supervise the activities of the "pilot model" to integrate the NCD activities with those of the HIV and AIDs in the CBC Health Services. The pilot started in April 2020 geared towards jointly making services accessible to people living with NCDs and People Living with HIV (PLHIV). The supervision trip has as goal to note the challenges and try bringing up solutions of prevention and control.

Talking to CBCHS Communication Unit, Dr. Njume noted that in the prevention of COVID-19 among patients with these underlying health issues, the NCDs program is respecting all the recommendations and guidelines and constantly reminding clients to use face masks, respect hand hygiene and social distancing. He said they have also regulated the number of clients who visit the facility at once.

In response to how COVID-19 has affected clients with NCDs, Dr. Njume had this to say, "We have recorded an increase in the number

of deaths among clients accessing our services, whether they are hypertensive or diabetic patients. We have also noticed a decrease in the turnout of patients coming regularly for checks and refills. I think it is because people are generally afraid of coming to the hospitals for check-up due to fear of being tested positive of COVID-19". This negatively affects uptake of services at this time. As NCDs staff, the General Supervisor said they aim at meeting every patient at point of need, trying to maximize platforms that have been created to screen, treat and bring them up to care.

BBHC Mental Health Department on Right Footing

Psychiatric nurse, Koyo Fotso says the Mental Health Department of Bafoussam Baptist Health Center (BBHC) is meeting the needs of clients since its inception on December 17, 2018. She observes that the department consults patients with all problems related to mental health, which among the common diagnosis are epilepsy, depression, stress disorder, anxiety disorder, psychotic disorder and acute stress.

During this COVID-19 crisis, the department conducts health education during Chapel services and at the O.P.D. The program staff also run radio programs on COVID-19 and its effects on Mental Health, thanks to a partnership agreement with a local radio and the depart-

ment.

The department also provides Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Psychological Support face to face with clients. With the remote PFA, a free telephone line that enables people to call and receive comprehensive PFA by phone. At the time of this report, the department had made 97 calls in relation to PFA and has also received so many calls from the population. The psychiatric nurse says, "It has been difficult in documenting the calls because some calls come in when we are out of the office".

The department attends to all the suspected cases of COVID-19 and the department is in-

formed through an SMS with the entire client's information. "When the SMS is received, we call to find out if the Psychological Support is needed or not and the number of calls vary from one patient to another. Some patients are traumatized and in this case we work with them till when their results are out. When it is positive, we keep working with them till when another test is done and it is negative," Fotso explained.

The department also provides psychological support to family members who have lost a relative to COVID-19 or because the victim was suspected. The program staff also offer education to the staff and intervene in the aspect of pre and post counseling for COVID-19 test.



1. Continue to pray for peace to return to the restive Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon.
2. Pray for utmost security in our institutions. Scriptures say if God does not watch over the house, the watchman watches in vain.
3. Thank God for stabilizing the Coronavirus situation in Cameroon. Pray that the citizens would remain committed to adhering to the prevention measures.

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