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STOP PRESS!!

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

BIBLE VERSE

"Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!"
~Proverbs 6:6 (NIV).

m-MIST Project brings Hope to Pregnant Women in Hinterlands

Medical intervention via mobile phone to pregnant women who attend peripheral health facilities is now a possibility in Cameroon. Stakeholders of the Mobile Information Service via Telephone (MIST) project made this revelation on October 21, 2022 during an evaluation meeting of the pilot phase conducted in Ndop Health District and Nkwen Baptist Hospital in the past one year.

The meeting that held at the Director of Health Services Conference Hall at the Baptist Center in Bamenda brought together stakeholders at the

point of care to pregnant women. These included: Dr. Ambe, representing the NW Regional Delegate of Health who was unavoidably absent, District Medical Officers across the region with their maternity ward head nurses, experts from the CBC Health Services led by the Director, Prof. Tih Pius Muffih and experts from the University of Alabama (UAB) USA led by Prof. Allan Tita who participated via zoom.

Opening the workshop, Prof. Tih said the m-MIST project is a welcome initiative that has its place in Cameroon's public health system given that the

country still tops the list of maternal and child deaths in the sub Saharan region. He thanked the University of Alabama for pioneering and sponsoring the project so far. The public health expert pledged to collaborate with the Ministry of Health through her NW Delegation to foster the project beyond the pilot phase. Prof. Tih challenged participants to contribute significantly through their discussions in the meeting towards building the capacities of nurses and midwives to better serve pregnant women in the hinterlands.



Sitting for the Regional Delegate of Health, the project focal point at the Delegation, Dr. Ambe rejoiced that the pilot phase of the m-MIST project in Ndop District proved a strong point to give credit to the thought of expanding the project to all the 20 districts in the NW region.

In a brilliant presentation via zoom, the project initiator, Prof. Allan Tita and his team from the UAB disclosed that the n-MIST project is a novelty, not only in Cameroon, but also in Alabama USA where the response is even more rapid. According to the experts, the project has successfully gone through the first two phases; to adapt, develop and introduce the n-MIST initiative to Cameroonians and to test

the project in a district in Cameroon, which was in Ndop. The third phase, Prof. Allan revealed, was to evaluate the pilot phase and take a decision alongside all the stakeholders to replicate the project to the 20 health districts in the NW region.

The purpose of the study is to assess barriers, develop and evaluate an integrated mobile phone-based m-MIST provider support system to improve pregnancy care and outcomes in Cameroon, Africa. The m-MIST intervention include a clinical support-hotline presently based at Nkwen Baptist Hospital, where a pregnant woman that visits a peripheral facility receives direct consultation via the hotline staffed by maternity care workers backed-up by ob-

stetrics and pediatric experts.

Prof. Allan joined his voice to the opinion of other stakeholders that this project could subsequently extend to other health conditions. He hailed the collaboration of the NW Delegation of Health and congratulated the local team for a job well done.

It should be noted that m-MIST is a collaboration between the University of Alabama led by Prof. Allan Tita, the CBC Health Services led by Prof. Tih Pius, the University of Buea having as leader, Prof. Halle Ekane and the Delegation of Public Health for the NW region.

Pioneer Executive Official from Hope and Healing International visits CBCHS

Stratis Vomvas has gone down in history as the first-ever executive official from the Hope and Healing International (HHI) Canada to visit the CBC Health Services. The HHI Chief Financial Officer sojourned to Cameroon from October 9-14, 2022 for two objectives: Perform a Desk Review of the financial PPR for fiscal year 2022 and to establish a stronger understanding of CBCHS.

In a meeting with the Program and Finance team in the CBCHS headquarters in Bamenda on October 10, the HHI visiting official was exposed to an overview of the CBCHS whose history spans from 1936 in a small village in Mbem in Donga Mantung Division while the beginning of services to persons with disability, specifically leprosy, started in 1952 in Mbingo Baptist Hospital. In 1982, services to persons with disabili-

ties took a new dimension with the creation of the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) program. This would later lead to the beginning of the Socio-Economic Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SEEPD) program in 2009, which momentum is clearly visible in the creation of awareness about disabilities in specific and specialized domains such as eye, ear, nose and throat, physiotherapy and orthopedics, and CBR among others. The SEEPD program has also evolved to stand out as a leading advocacy platform on inclusive development to Government Ministries and decentralized local authorities.

According to Stratis, it is the inclusive vision of the CBCHS that attracted HHI to seek partnership in 2013 beginning with the Non-Cash Resource project. Stratis was related to see some of their donated

equipment in the wards and departments during his tour of Nkwen Baptist Hospital. The items included among others: hospital beds, bed-side cupboards, wheelchairs, walkers, braces and shoes for the treatment of clubfoot in children.

The HHI Chief Finance Officer also had ample proof and evidence of the judicious use of donated funds and equipment. The assurances were given during his working sessions with Mrs. Ndong Irene, Finance and Administrative Officer of the SEEPD program, Mr. Ntam Ephraim, Director of Finance and Development Board of the Cameroon Baptist Convention, Mr. Awa Jacques Chirac, SEEPD Program Manager, Mr. Kangong Joce, Administrator of Nkwen Baptist Hospital and Prof. Tih Pius Muffih, Director of CBCHS.



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From one project at the beginning of the partnership in 2013, the Hope and Healing International (HHI) organization now supports six projects in the CBCHS under the SEEPD program. These include: Non-Cash Resource (providing hospital equipment), Healing Hugs Profiling and Resource Gathering (over 2000 children with disabilities already profiled), Expanding Access to River Blindness in the West region, Human Resource for Eye Care (one ophthalmologist now in training in Tanzania), Socio Economic Empowerment of Females with Fistula (over 40 fistula repairs made so far), an Integrated Approach to Management of Musculoskeletal Deformities (construction of a standard pediatric ward in Baptist Hospital Mutengene).

Quizzed about the future of this partnership, Stratis Vomvas assured that HHI is committed to stand by the CBCHS in its drive towards the inclusion of persons with disabilities, especially children.

Kangong Joce, Administrator of Nkwen Baptist Hospital said the needs of his hospital are representative of those of the other CBCHS hospitals. The hospital needs more beds for expansion, bed-side cupboards, standard shelves in the drug store and in the medical record unit, WHO recommended refrigerator in the drug store, theatre equipment and others.

In a debriefing session, the HHI visiting official confessed that he came and saw nice and welcoming people in a huge organization with a lot of potential areas to continue with the partnership. Stratis Vomvas returned to Canada on October 14, 2022 with a full plate of appreciation and demand for additional support from Hope and Healing International to the CBCHS.

It should be noted that Hope and Healing International organization is an offshoot of the defunct CBM Canada.

HHI Workshop strengthens Pathways for PWDs to access Healthcare

More Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) are needed in the West and Adamawa regions of Cameroon to access hospital-based care and benefit from support from the Hope and Healing International (HHI) projects pegged under the CBC Health Services' Socio-Economic Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SEEPD) program. A three-day workshop held in Bafoussam from October 24-26, 2022 to empower stakeholders to redouble efforts in searching and identifying PWDs who are eligible to be supported by HHI within the one-year campaign period.

Declaring the workshop open, the HHI Projects Coordinator, Rev. Ekwo Emmanuel outlined the objectives of the workshop being to provide hope and healing to persons with disability especially children, brainstorm on strategies to meet the project targets and develop a realistic referral

pathway among others. He called on the participants, mainly PT and CBR workers on day one, Community Based Organizations (CBOs) on day two and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), religious and traditional authorities on day three to redefine their messages to communities and families with PWDs by engaging them to partner with the program in ameliorating the health challenges of their children with disabilities.

Rev. Ekwo explained that HHI supports five projects within the SEEPD program for a period of one year running from July 2022 to June 2023. He challenged the stakeholders to take advantage of this initiative by working hard to meet the project targets of identifying 65 or more women and girls 18 years and below and 200 children with musculoskeletal (bone) diseases who can benefit

from 'free' surgical intervention within the project duration.

"It is better for us to identify more cases and we lack the funds to treat them than identifying less than the target number and we are required to return the funds to the sponsors," Rev. Ekwo encouraged. He clarified that the support is not 100 free but a partnership which the family of the PWD is required to make an effort to borne at least the transport and feeding expenses during the period in hospital.

Mr. Fabombi Dickson, Administrator of Bafoussam Baptist Hospital added his voice to that of the HHI Coordinator by admonishing stakeholders to take their responsibilities seriously. He charged them to help their community members by referring them early to hospital where they can receive appropriate care.



Stakeholders pose in commitment to identify more PWDs to access healthcare

Day one of the workshop focused on the Integrated approach to Managing Disabilities from Musculoskeletal Deformities in Children 0-18 years in the West and Adamawa regions. Mr. Fanfon Timothy, CBCHS Physiotherapy Supervisor and Mr. Che Manasseh, Coordinator of the Musculoskeletal Project educated the stakeholders on the various deformities that can be treated through surgery.

Dr. Ntungwe Ekwelle of Bafoussam Baptist Hospital and Mrs. Kenchi Hope, senior midwife and CBCHS MCH Coordinator presented on obstetric fistula, which they defined as a child birth injury that leaves women incontinent (passing) out urine and or stool uncontrollable) through the vagina due mainly to difficult and prolonged labour. They named other factors to include: child and forced marriages, home births, late access to obstetric care, rape and sexual violence among

others. The consequences are shame, social isolation and stigmatization etc.

The following Treatment Centers of obstetric fistula are: Nkwen Baptist Hospital, Mbingo Baptist Hospital, Baptist Hospital Banyo, Ngounso Baptist Health Center and Bafoussam Baptist Hospital.

Boyo Maurine, Child Protection Officer of the Socio-Economic Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SEEPD) program roundouted that children especially those with disabilities have rights just like adults do. "Rights of children must be protected because it is a crime punishable by law," Mrs. Boyo stressed.

Maurine posited that a minor according to Cameroon law, is anybody below the age of 18 and below the age of 25 for those with disability in

the context of the CBC Health Services. She pointed out that these children go through physical, psychological and sexual abuse including rape. The West and Adamawa regions, she highlighted, have a culture of early marriages, which is a major cause of child abuse. Our attitude towards children such as calling them names like 'my wife' when they have no notion about marriage is a driver for abuse when the perpetrator has the opportunity.

The OPD leaders, traditional and religious authorities were particularly concerned with the rampant cases of child abuse in their regions resulting from early child marriage. For this reason, they pledged to redouble their community influence in bringing the ill to the barest minimum through sensitization and taking positive actions to stop it.

WHO donates Assistive Devices to PWDs



Distribution of assistive devices to beneficiaries

World Health Organisation (WHO) officials in the two English speaking regions have put smiles on the faces of persons with disabilities (PWDs) from different communities in the North West Region with the donation of more than 100 assistive devices to facilitate their wellbeing.

The CBC Health Services Disability Inclusive Humanitarian Action (DIHA) Project facilitated the distribution exercise at the Baptist Center, Nkwen on October 13, 2022.

The CBC Health Services has a long-standing history in disability work and she is championing disability inclusive humanitarian response within the context of the crisis in the region through the DIHA project. The project has trained national and international humanitarian organisations, a platform that attracted officials of WHO to contact them to mobilise per-

sons with disabilities in need of assistive devices to turn out for the event.

Speaking during the distribution ceremony, the WHO Field and Health Cluster Coordinator for the North-west and Southwest Regions, Dr. Aliyou Moustapha Chandini said the aim of the distribution was to improve the quality of their lives as part of the mandate of WHO.

Speaking on behalf of the CBC Health Services Coordinator for Services for Persons with Disabilities, the CBC Health Services Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Supervisor, Mr. Kenchi Joseph welcomed and thanked the WHO team for the devices. He said the importance of these devices for the wellbeing and safety and security of persons with disabilities within the context of the ongoing crisis cannot be

over emphasized.

Also present during the donation event was the OCHA Humanitarian Affairs Officer, Loveline Ameck who thanked the CBC Health Services for enabling WHO support persons with disabilities. She noted that without this support, WHO would not have been able to identify and have space to bring persons with disabilities together for the event.

The devices included 65 crutches, 20 wheel chairs, and more than 40 white canes.

It should be noted that the DIHA Project is funded by the German Federal Foreign Office through CBM and is co implemented in the North West Region by the CBC Health Services and the CBM Country Office Humanitarian team.

DIHA Midterm Review showcases Impact of Project on Beneficiaries

The Disability Inclusive Humanitarian Action (DIHA) Project has within a period of 9 months reached out with health and rehabilitation services to 13, 504 people in hard to reach areas in the North West Region. DIHA Project Manager, Awa Jacques Chirac made the disclosure on October 7, 2022 during a midterm review workshop of the project that took place at the Main Conference Hall of the Baptist Center.

According to the Project Manager, the DIHA project, implemented by the CBC Health Services in the North West Region with funding from CBM, was designed to respond to the needs of people affected by the socio-political crisis with special attention on the rights and needs of persons with disabilities. After 15 months, of implementing activities, the review, according to the Project Manager, was done to take stock and assess the extent to which the project has accomplished planned activities, met specific objectives and attained set targets.

The evaluation was coordinated by the CBM Country Director, Fon Julius who thanked the CBC Health Services for making CBM to respond to the crisis in the NW Region as they are the ones who identify

and share the needs of beneficiaries to share with funders. He thanked the German Federal Foreign Office for funding the DIHA Project.

Participants at the workshop included persons with disabilities, service providers, humanitarian actors, local development actors and the project team. The CBM Country Director guided the participants, who in groups, discussed the successes and strengths recorded, challenges encountered, threats and opportunities identified in course of implementing the project activities for the past 15 months.

It came out clear from the discussions that persons with disabilities are increasingly being consulted and included in the response activities of humanitarian organisations in the North West Region, thanks to training of Humanitarian Organisations in disability inclusive humanitarian response. Persons with disabilities are now able to effectively advocate for their inclusion and participate in the cluster meetings of humanitarian organisations.

Another key achievement highlighted during the review is the fact that 3,207 persons have benefitted

from unconditional cash transfer initiative above the 1,500 target. The project in collaboration with some Councils has also provided 502 free birth certificates while 338 persons have received gender-based violence interventions above the 300 target.

The workshop participants pointed out the fact that implementation did not go without challenges key among which are the unpredictable nature of insecurity and the needs of affected populations far exceeding project resources. To this end, they recommended more technical support by the Project to Humanitarian organisations and safety and security measures including access permits to enable field teams access all health districts without interference.

Following recommendations, the project will be taking immediate measures to ensure that activities for the next 9 months are carried out more effectively. The midterm review workshop was also witnessed by the CBM Country Humanitarian Coordinator, Isaac Bahanac and the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Officer, Mokom Njang.

EYE Screening to improve at Nkwen Baptist Hospital with new Equipment from DIHA Project

Eye screening services at the Nkwen Baptist Hospital (NBH) are expected to improve significantly following the donation of new screening machines to the eye department of the hospital by the Disability Inclusive Humanitarian Action (DIHA) Project. The equipment were handed over to the hospital's administration on October 21, 2022 during morning devotions by the Director of CBC Health Services, Prof. Tih Pius Muffih.

The equipment comprised a slit lamp with applanation tonometer and a motorized electric table bought by the DIHA project with funds from the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO) through CBM.

DIHA Project Manager, Mr. Awa Jacques Chirac explained that the purchase of the screening machines is part of the project's goal to meet the needs of needy and vulnerable persons affected by the ongoing crisis in the North West Region. He clarified that besides medications that the department has as support from the project which can be waived from the cost of treatment, it is expected that screening using the equipment is also subsidized for needy persons who meet the vulnerability criteria of the project. The DIHA Project Manager, disclosed that the purchase of the equipment was informed by an assessment done in three CBC Health Services hospitals participating in the project to provide health care to people

affected by the crisis.

Speaking before handing over the equipment, the Director of CBC Health Services told the eye department staff to make effective use of the equipment so that the entire population benefits from improved services. He told them that the equipment are for services for humanity and for the prevention of blindness of those at risk of getting blind. He thanked the DIHA Project Management for always supporting the acquisition of equipment for the organisation.



Nkwen Baptist Hospital DMO and eye staff are all smiles as they receive new screening equipment from the DHS

The Chief Medical Officer of the Hospital, Dr. Nana Christopher after receiving the equipment, expressed the happiness and gratitude of the hospital to the DIHA Project and its donors for such a kind gesture. He promised to ensure the equipment are used for the purpose for which they were intended.

For his part, the Head of the NBH Eye Department, Mr. Lucha Johnson, on a very happy note, said the equipment are very key to the department given

the functions. He disclosed that with the attachment of the tonometer to the slit lamp, they now have the internationally accepted gold standard machine for measuring intra ocular pressure. He noted that the lack of this machine in the past was a big limitation to the NBH eye department as there were conditions they used their natural eyes to diagnose which made the diagnosis questionable. But with this high standard equipment which magnifies the structures of the eyes and gives a better view, their diagnoses will signifi-

cantly improve and make their services more effective.

Mr. Lucha expressed his hearty gratitude to the German Federal Foreign Office for funding the acquisition of this machine, saying it is going to ease their work. "In fact, words cannot express the joy in our hearts. If they were here we would have conducted a dance to appreciate them. We are just so grateful," Mr. Lucha concluded.

NW Inclusive Resource Center receives new Brail Embosser

An Index Braille DV-5 Embosser and a sound acoustic hood worth over 7 million FCFA has been donated to the Northwest Regional Inclusive Education Resource Centre (RIERC) situated in Government Bilingual High School (GBHS) Bamenda. Prof. Tih Pius Muffih, Director of CBC Health Services, on October 11, 2022, handed the equipment to the NW Regional Delegate of Secondary Education who doubles as the Board chair for the Management and stakeholder Committees of the Resource Centre.

The handing over ceremony, which took place in Campus B of GBHS Bamenda held under the watchful eyes of the Commissioner for Education at the NW Regional Assembly, Prof. Anjoh Rose, stakeholders of the center, staff of GBHS Bamenda and CBC Health Services, and some students with impairments in GBHS Bamenda.

Speaking during the event, the Acting Coordinator of the RIERC, Mbah Elenor traced the construction

of the center to 2012 by the Dordrecht Bamenda Foundation in partnership with the Socio-Economic Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SEEPD) Program and the Parents Teachers Association (PTA). The center was officially handed over to the NW Regional Delegations of Basic and Secondary Education in 2015. She noted that the purpose of the center is to support inclusive education policy and implementation through the promotion of inclusive education activities in the entire NW region.

Elenor underlined that since the breakdown of an embosser in the center five years ago, the brailing of notes for the students with visual impairment has been a great challenge. The provision of a modern technology brail embosser to the center is thus a stitch in time. On behalf of the users of the center, she appreciated the CBC Health Services through its Socio-Economic Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SEEPD) Program for the donation and like Oliver twist, noted other needs

like creation of an audio library and recruitment of personnel to meet the learning needs of learners with impairments.

Prof. Tih Puis in his handing over address noted that the donation of an Index Braille DV-5 Embosser (most recent Braille Technology) and a sound acoustic hood is a sign of commitment on the part of the CBC Health Services in supporting the center to continuously meet its goal. The Director of CBC Health Services has put in place a technical service at the disposal of the center to ensure the training of staff for effective usage and maintenance on an ongoing basis. Prof Tih commended the leadership of the Delegations of Basic and Secondary Education and other stakeholders for relentlessly ensuring that the center is exceptional. He disclosed that in her efforts to promote inclusive education, the CBC Health Services has similar centers at the University of Bamenda, Baptist Comprehensive Collage Nkwen, and Lycée Classique Bafoussam and the results have been outstanding.

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NW Secondary Education Delegate implores beneficiaries to use the embosser judiciously, flanked by Prof. Rose & Prof. Tih

Receiving the donation, the Delegate of Secondary Education, Mr. Yven Roland described the CBC Health Services as a leading organization in Health and Inclusive Education in Cameroon. He appreciated the CBC Health Services and its funders for not only constructing the center but continuously providing equipment that will go a long way to facilitate learning and teaching for teachers and students. Mr. Yven used the occasion to commend the efforts of stakeholders of the center like the NW Regional Assembly, Councils, PTA, and others who have been intentional in supporting the running of the center. His wish is that the center will grow and give birth to other centers in the region to

meet the growing needs of learners with disabilities seeking education.

The Representative of the NWR Assembly President, Prof. Anjoh Rose joined her voice to the education family in the region to hail the CBC Health Services for promoting inclusive education in the region. Acknowledging the needs of the centre as presented by the Acting Coordinator, Prof. Anjoh noted that in collaboration with the Regional Delegate, they will work continuously in promoting the growth of the center.

As host institution of the centre, the principal



Prof Tih (in white) handing over new Brail embosser to Secondary Education Regional Delegate in the presence of some beneficiaries

of GBHS Bamenda, Mr. Ngwa David commissioned the staff and users of the center to use the gift judiciously. According to one of the learners, Mungyeh Champlin, a lower sixth student with visual impairments, the brailing of his notes for the past years has been very challenging. He expressed that the brail machine will facilitate learning for him, especially at a time when he is preparing for his Advanced Level exams next year.

The donation of the brail embosser to the Resource center was made, thanks to funding from CBM via Socio-Economic Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SEEPD) Program.

Kouhouat Baptist Health Center

COC applauds staff for championing Health Awareness Campaigns

Activities marking Mental Health Week from October 3-10 and World Sight Day on October 12, 2022 in Kouhouat Baptist Health Center (KBHC) have been well appreciated by the Chief of Center (COC). The COC said the active participation of the staff of these programs are not only creating awareness and sensitization for the health conditions in Kouhouat and its environs, but also giving visibility to the health center.

Speaking during the Mental Health Week, the focal person, Mrs. Ngek Grace Kelang advised both staff and clients to desist from factors that

are prone to mental health. She pointed out that these factors are common in and around Kouhouat namely: smoking, excessive alcohol intake, drug substance abuse, depression from family issues, and epilepsy from birth trauma and drug abuse. According to the mental health focal person, every human being exhibits an episode of mental health for five minutes each day, thus, the need to create awareness to seek counseling and medical management. She revealed that out of over 5000 clients received at the health center annually, about 144 are mental health cases.

Presenting during the World Sight Day on October 12, the lone eye department staff, Mrs. Nyinchia Judith epse Yongka created awareness on this year's theme, "Love your eyes". She advocated for the wearing of glasses to protect the eyes, especially when riding a bike and for regular eye check in the hospital.

Our Kouhouat based reporter, Nfor Gilbert notes that the eye department sees an average of 30 consultations per month and carries out community screening for river blindness and other eye conditions in Bangourain and Fouban Health Districts.

Village Chief hails Kouhouat Baptist Health Centre

The Village Head of Kouhouat, Nji Fifen Njouendou Ibrahim has recognized the importance of the Kouhouat Baptist Health Centre in his village. In his remark during an event that brought together the indigenes of Kouhouat, he lauded that his village has become popular in the Noun Division because of the hospital and its services to the people. The village head acknowledged that staff of the hospital are united, maintain social cohesion, and are developmentally oriented towards the people of Kouhouat. "I recognize the staff of the hospital as my citizens," the village head added.

The retired pedagogue appreciated the bond and peaceful coexistence between the people of Kouhouat and the staff. According to our Kouhouat based correspondent, Nfor Gilbert, the village head frequently visits the hospital to greet the patients, staff and the internally displaced persons who are staying with some of the staff and fellowshipping in Faith Baptist Church Kouhouat.

The Chief of Centre for Kouhouat Baptist Health Centre, Mr. Yongka Wilfred and staff of the hospital have been supporting the village head in his peaceful and developmental en-

deavors. The entire staff body implement the CBCHS mission statement both to the clients and the community regardless of their differences in religion and cultures. Reports say, the staff pay frequent visits and pray for the village head. One of such is when the administrator of the hospital and some management committee members accompanied the people of Kouhouat to Fouban palace to pray for and encourage His Majesty Sultan Mforifum Mbouombuo Njaya Mouhammed Nabil during the commemoration of the First Anniversary of the new Sultan at the helm of the Bamoum Kingdom.

World Mental Health Day – CBC Health Services Reflects on way forward

The CBC Health Services has joined the international community to commemorate World Mental Health Day on October 10, 2022 under the theme, "Make Mental Health and Well-Being for All a Global Priority". This year's commemoration observed in all CBC Health Services facilities was marked by massive sensitization campaigns and mental health screening.

This year's event was observed under the backdrop of the country's devastating effects of health challenges ranging from NCDs to pandemics, as well as the sociopolitical crisis, effects of war, displacement, and terrorist attacks, all of which have marked consequences on the mental health and well-being of the population. Experts say the crisis has left far-reaching consequences on the mental health of people in these regions.

The event provided opportunity for the CBC Health Services to reflect on those things that hinder them from prioritizing their mental health and well-being, as well as those of our families and our staff. This is because people with lived experiences of Mental Health, their families and other populations continue to complain that their Mental Health and well-being is not always at the forefront of decision making by leaders, those who pay for services or the society at large. Stigma and discrimination continue to be a barrier to social inclusion and access to the right care. If this doesn't change, we will not be able to meet the current Mental Health demand which already has a widegap.

In a communique to all CBC Health Services institutions, the Director of CBCHS, Prof. Tih Pius pointed out thus:

"There is increasing evidence that the prevention of mental ill health is possible by using both general and targeted evidence-based interventions. We need to support wellbeing interventions across the life course from preg-

nancy, birth, early childhood, early teens, and adulthood to older adulthood. We need to improve the social determinants of health and address Mental Health stigma and discrimination. Targeting vulnerable groups, we need to make a meaningful investment in improving mental well-being for all to be able to attain the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations'.

Workplace culture needs to support the Mental Health and well-being of the workforce, so that we are better prepared to support Mental Health well-being in our staff. Staff on their part must see that they have a lifestyle that encourages exercise, widening access to good nutrition and food, all of which will have a positive impact on Mental Health and well-being.

The CBC Health services currently has Mental Health staff for an intensive on-site orientation to enhance their skills in providing quality mental health care. They are expected to gain this knowledge and join the existing team to close Mental Health gaps and enhance the opportunity for a comprehensive approach to care", the DHS elaborated.

These efforts should equally be supported and given priority. We all have roles to play and should be thinking of a systemic approach to support mental healthcare.

Government spending on mental health is low in countries of the world particularly in developing countries. The WHO's fact sheet states that 33% of countries allocate less than 1% of their total health budgets to mental health, with others spending just 1% of their budgets. This, indeed, further worsens the already gloomy situation of mental health worldwide. The mental health domain in Cameroon suffers a series of challenges. Only a few specialized centers mostly in major cities like Douala and Yaounde have mental health specialists.

As key partner and leading health care provider in Cameroon, the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC) Health Services has been paying great attention to mental illnesses. The organisation has set up mental health clinics in Bango Baptist Hospital (where the main clinic called the Family Care Centre is found), Mbingo Baptist Hospital, and Mboppi Baptist Hospital Douala. People can equally seek help with their mental disorders beyond the CBC Health Services, mainly at the Douala General Hospital, L'Hôpital Laquintinie de Douala, and L'Hôpital Jamot in Yaounde.

Some of the commonest mental illnesses in Cameroon include generalized anxiety disorders, specific anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorders, depression, dementia, and psychotic disorders.

Despite the difficult mental health situation in the country, key stakeholders like the CBC Health Services continue to advocate for more robust health policies that will ensure quality care of persons with mental illnesses at all levels.

The Director appreciated the efforts of the Ministry of Public Health and Partner Organizations including, Local Councils, CBM International, who through the SEEPD Program have supported the CBC Health Services' Mental Health services, facilitating access to Mental healthcare for all in need, including Persons with Disabilities. The CBCHS is also looking forward to more of these partnerships to ensure that mental healthcare is adaptively included into her package of services including Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID) that strengthens stakeholders at the level of Local Councils. Other programs are encouraged to ensure they are working to integrate Mental healthcare into their services. Mental Health and well-being should be a priority for all!

EDID coaches Partner Organisations of West, Littoral Regions

Partner Organizations (POs) of the EDID (Empowerment Disability Inclusive Development) Program in the West and Littoral regions have commended the constant support provided them to better care for children with disabilities.

Mua-Neng Theodore, Program Officer said, the coaching visit by the EDID team from September 14-29, 2022 was time to meet the Partners face to face, know their challenges, collect experiences and share what has been working from other partners they had already visited. The Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and the Finance Officer of the Program were present to ensure financial and programmatic compliances.

According to Mr. Njie Fidelis, West Regional Delegation

of Social Affairs, such visits are important for experience sharing and also to get first-hand information from both partners. Sr. Bantar Juliana of Tertiary Sisters of St. Francis in Bangang remarked that the on spot coaching we received during this visit will enable us better meet the demands of the funder.

During the visit, the parents of children with disabilities were also brought around the table to talk about their challenges, successes as a group and the way forward for their children. The parents and field workers were also trained on how to implement the STEP approach so as to reduce the cost of interventions while increasing the quality of care. Issues impeding the functioning of the parent support groups were also addressed.

At the end of the working sessions, parents overwhelmingly expressed their gratitude to the CBC Health Services and the Liliane Foundation for the support they have been receiving for the care of their children: "Without the CBC Health Services and the Liliane Foundation my daughter will not be having an the GCE (General Certificate of Education) Advance Level today. Thank you, CBC (Cameroon Baptist Convention), thank you Liliane Foundation, May God bless you," said one of the parents.

The Partner Organizations visited were Tertiary Sisters of St. Francis, Bafoussam Baptist Hospital, Emmanuel Sisterhood Fombot, Filles de la Charité Fouban, West Regional Delegation, Bandjoun while in Littoral the team visited Spiritain Douala

Etoug-Ebe Baptist Hospital Yaounde

EBHY records first set of Triplets

If there is anything to go for in terms of *raison d'être* for setting up a maternity at Etoug-Ebe Baptist Hospital Yaoundé then the birth of triplets at the unit will be one. Born on October 2, 2022, the triplets were the first to be delivered in the facility barely a year after it went operational.

Bakri Edwin, Assistant Supervisor of Nursing Services says the triplets only come to add to the number of babies that the facility has delivered thus far. "The maternity is meeting the need for which it was established here at EBHY. From June 21 when we began, our monthly number of births have been on the steady increase each passing day – from 50

births, and today we are talking of 107 as of September 2022".

According to the seasoned nurse, the outpouring of mothers to the maternity to have their babies is a testament to a need met in time, he said. "This was a wise and timely investment," added Mr. Bakari.

Besides the reputation of the EBHY in offering obstetric-related care, the presence of a theatre next to the maternity has bolstered the trust of mothers – to them in case of any delay to having their babies through the unassisted/assisted delivery method, a Caesarian section will do, thanks to the

theatre.

Since its implementation on August 19, 2022, we no longer refer mothers to sister institutions. Operating double-setting maternity unlike the case in the past has made the maternity at EBHY become a reference. We project to have an average of 200 births per month in no distant time, said Mr. Bakari.

The obstetric theatre is one of the new service units that had added to the avalanche of services EBHY is offering to the public.

'Visit an eye clinic once a year' – That is how to love your eyes

In the bill up to the 2022 World Sight Day, the Ophthalmology Department of Etoug-Ebe Baptist Hospital Yaoundé (EBHY) has reiterated the need for all to love their eyes. Mr. Viban Alidu, Ophthalmic Technician and Head of the Department for Eye Care says a visit to the eye clinic at least once a year is important. "Regular eye check can prevent lots of blinding conditions in the community," he says.

Besides visiting a clinic for an eye check, Mr. Alidu says simple practices like – looking away from your screen for 20 seconds after watching anything for 20 minutes, wearing sun or prescribed glasses, regular physical exercise, and healthy diets can greatly improve and maintain eye health.

At the time of putting together this report, the Eye Department was prepping to celebrate this year's

World Sight Day. Mr. Alidu says the day is a unique opportunity to press on all governments to prioritize eye health – making services available in underserved communities.

Eye health equals opportunities – enabling children to learn and adults to earn, thereby reducing poverty and inequality, says Sightsavers.

EBHY calls for uptake of Contraceptive Methods

The Women's Health Programme (WHP) of Etoug-Ebe Baptist Hospital (EBHY) has called for the uptake of contraceptive methods. This was the substance of celebrations marking the 2022 World Contraception Day at the hospital.

Awoh Godness, Nurse at the Unit noted that contraception is the way to go in an era where everywhere pregnancy is wanted. "Contraception – being

the use of medicines, devices or surgery to prevent pregnancies," she said. The program staff paid particular attention to health talks and awareness raising on contraception in the chapel for staff and waiting areas in the hospital for clients, as part of the commemoration.

Marius Nwufor, a Women's Health Nurse corroborated that contraception allows for healthy timing and

spacing of pregnancies. "Healthy timing and spacing leads to healthy mothers, babies and communities. Therefore, we encourage people to sign up any method of their choice," he said.

World contraception day is marked every September 26, 2022, with a mission to improve knowledge on contraception – enabling people to make informed decisions on their sexual and reproductive health.

Ekoumdoum Baptist Hospital Yaounde

Eye care at Ekoumdoum witnesses a major boost

Ekoumdoum Baptist Hospital has made major adjustments in the Eye Department in order to accommodate more clients seeking eye care services at the unit. Fai Felix, Ophthalmic Medical Assistant (OMA) says the unit now has three consultation rooms to receive clients at-a-go.

"This additional consultation room has eased patient flow in the department, unlike in the past when they had to queue for long hours to be attended to," he said.

The consultation rooms have been furnished with slit lamps and an apparition tonometer which aids in the diagnosis. "With the add-ons to the slit lamps, we are able to examine both the external and interior parts of the eyes," Mr. Fai explained.

Ekoumdoum takes reproductive services to persons with disabilities

The Women's Health Programme (WHP) of Ekoumdoum Baptist Hospital has extended its services to persons with disabilities in the centre region. The WHP team on October 4, 2022, visited CEJAC (Centre de Réhabilitation des Jeunes Aveugle du Cameroun) for a health talk.

Fongwa Mary-Immaculate, said they are particularly targeting persons with disabilities because they are vulnerable and most often, taken advantage of as far as sex and reproductive health rights are concerned. "During our time with them, we dwelled on cervical and breast cancer prevention, family planning and sex education," she said.

Mrs. Fongwa further noted that their approach is aggressive because with the right information persons with disabilities will make an informed choice about sex and reproductive health. "I am aggrieved when I hear that a person with a disability is sexually abused or exploited," she lamented.

Nkoabang Baptist Health Center

PT Department drills Nkoabang staff on preventing lower back pain

Maintaining an upright sitting position in your offices, taking the right stooping position when lifting loads, and resting adequately are some of the healthy practices staff of Nkoabang Baptist Health Centre have been enjoined to uphold in their daily work, in order to prevent lower pain in the long run. The call was made during morning devotions following a presentation by the physiotherapy department of the health centre on the condition of lower back

pain.

Tofibam Secunda, Physiotherapy Assistant said lower back pain is a common condition. "Over 80 percent of people will suffer back pain in their lives at some point. Faced with such I thought I should sensitize staff on that because the pain doesn't come in a day – it's a result of long misuse of body mechanics (posture)," Secunda explained.

Quizzed on what can be done not to develop lower back pain, Secunda said a good body posture at any point is paramount. Besides that, having intermittent exercises and rest while working is good. It's worth noting that lower back pain can lead to a permanent disability.



UNFPA in working session with Bonaberi Baptist Hospital Administration

The UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) and the Administration of Bonaberi Baptist Hospital Douala (BBHD) have evaluated the impact of medical assistance to the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) living in Bonaberi and beyond. The evaluation was carried out during two separate visits by UNFPA officials to BBHD recently.

Dr. Lauratine, UNFPA Coordinator led the first visit on September 29. The team visited BBHD units that receive support from UNFPA including: Mother and Child Care, Family Planning, and Gender Based Violence leading to cases of Miscarriage. These units receive medical gadgets that go a long way to help the destitute IDPs.

In a guided tour of the Women's Health Program and Antenatal Clinic, Mr. Yong Alain, Head of Maternity provided first hand information that mar-

veled the august visitors. According to Mr. Yong, no maternal death has been registered since the beginning of the year which is one of the main objectives of the maternity in 2022, thanks to an outstanding team made up of 18 midwives and 5 nurses; the Maternity has average monthly delivery of 113, WHP services offered at very low cost and prodigious number of women who attend ANC in the hospital.

In the second visit on October 10, 22, the UNFPA team came this time with their funders, ECOS to see how to better support the hospital in the areas of concern. According to our Bonaberi based correspondent, Elvis Nyuyseni, the intercourse with these two entities over the years is blessed with the fact that BBHD is an Anglophone and Christian based institution and it is the largest hospital within Bonaberi that attends to IDPs.

Reacting to the visits, BBHD Administrator, Fon Rose Nyimeh assured that there would be much improvement if our services are taken to the doorsteps of the IDPs. The assessment revealed that the hospital receives many needy patients who are not even IDPs; most of them manage in some private clinics and only find their way into our Hospital already in a bad phase without a penny for the basic things to be done. The maternity at times receives patients who are in critical condition and can't even afford for an echography. To this end, the head of the Maternity called on the UNFPA to extend their assistance to these categories of clients.

The UNFPA team and ECOS were satisfied with the wonderful work the hospital is doing, leaving words of encouragement as well.



UNFPA team in working session in Bonaberi Baptist Hospital

BBHD prospects a Picturesque View in Ten Years



Working session with Grant Writers

A ten years development plan for Bonaberi Baptist Hospital Douala (BBHD) has been rolled out in a working session with the CBCHS Grants Department from October 10-11, 2022. The team that comprised of Mr. Abanda Alphonse and Lamnyam Rene was welcomed by the Administrator, Mme Fon Rose Nyimeh in the presence of heads of department and management committee at the conference hall where the two days meeting took place.

In his presentation, the head of the Grants Department, Mr. Abanda Alphonse showcased Grants Writing as a unit of the Technical Services Department working closely with the Director of Health Services' Office in sourcing funds for infrastructural development of its institutions. Thus, the aim of the meeting, he explained, was to create an innovative mindset where staff can think system in terms of income, financial man-

agement, services rendered, maintenance and running of equipment etc for a better tomorrow. For this to happen, Mr. Abanda explained that it requires an inclusive approach with everyone getting involved in order to reduce expenses and encourage team spirit.

Mr. Mbanye Lucas, Supervisor of Nursing Services (SNS) presented the current statistics of BBHD, its strengths and challenges that helped the team to lead the working session in designing strategies using the SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats). Located in the Bonassama health district with population of over a million people BBHD sees an average of 6000 patients monthly at the OPD with a general work force of 210 staff. This is a good indicator to strategically plan into the future and stay relevant. Understanding the current situation, Mr. Lam-

nyam Rene guided BBHD to bring forth 18 prospective ground breaking strategic points for a future Resources Management and Planning for the period 2023-2033. An arduous task now left for BBHD to accomplish in line with these strategies, is to carefully study and identify a domain(s) of specialty as their trademark within the locality and beyond as well the acquisition of a permanent site for the construction of a facility which suits the WHO standards.

The two-day brainstorming session saw words of appreciation from the Administrator who was very grateful for the impact and values the Grants Writing unit has left in Bonaberi Baptist Hospital Douala. The proposed strategies were tabled before God for implementation in the nearest future.

Culture Lab goes Operational in BBHD

The Laboratory staff of Bonaberi Baptist Hospital Douala together with the hospital chaplain, Nfor Melody on Tuesday, October 25, 22 dedicated a culture machine that has gone operational. Our Bonaberi based reporter, Elvis Nyuyseni noted that the coming of this incubator and its autoclave is a square peg in a square hole as over the past years it had been a great challenge with patients when it came to laboratory investigations that involved the culture of samples.

"It has not been easy for our patients going to Mboppi Baptist Hospital for laboratory cultures, some go to other health facilities outside the hospital, it's even more stressful for internal patients and staff whose samples have to be tested in MBHD; there are challenges at times with transportation and this may cause faulty results," recounted Alphonse, HOD of Laboratory. He explained further that the technicians know how to handle this machine and it is already in place The lab will from now do all sorts

of cultures of high capacities at a time.

Reports say, this new equipment will see the extension of the laboratory services offered within Bonaberi and its environs. The lab staff attributes this great achievement to the hospital administration and the Administrator with her mantra of Development, Extension and Progress.

BBHD dedicates Newly Acquired Building for Extension of Services

BBHD which has been struggling with the issue of space recently acquired a three floor rented building for extension of services. The building was dedicated on October 13, 2022 after undergoing some technical and innovative works around and within the building to make it fit for patient use. The dedication took place after the hospital administration and heads of department took turns to pray for the newly acquired structure.

This structure, situated between Block 3 and the building hosting the OPD and medical ward will be called Block 4 while the present medical ward will be Block 5. Reports say, the naming will go a long way

to help in the orientation and movement of patients within the hospital. This indicates that a lot of changes will be taking place in the hospital milieu as some departments will have to move to the new building.

Presently going on in this building is day care program that is hosting over six children of staff. This motivative initiative is to create a stress free working environment for staff who are breastfeeding mothers who are not finding it easy keeping children back home for fear of the unknown. The day care is a stone throw from any department within the hospital, making it possible for a mother to check on her baby at any given time.

At the time of this report, the anticipated departments and units to move in will be the Eye, Ultrasound, Private wards, TB Coordinator's office, Physiotherapy, Care and Treatment Centre, and the Reliever and Doctor on call room. Recently the staff from the RAISE-4 (Reaching, Adapting Immunization Services Effectively) and quality laboratory control programs moved in to occupy the last floor of this new building. Generally, the building will help decongest some areas in the hospital while creating more space for others.

Obituary

Nkwen Baptist Hospital mourns experienced Lab Technician

Mrs. Apongnde Elizabeth Massa's ill health leading to her demise came as a storm, taking everyone by surprise including her husband, Rev. Apongnde Richard who is Bamenda Field Pastor. The hard-working and experienced lab technician took ill in June this year and within four months, she succumbed to the cold hands of death on October 19 in Nkwen Baptist Hospital (NBH) after frantic medical interventions in Mbingo Baptist Hospital (MBH) and NBH.

Mrs. Apngnde Elizabeth was laid to rest on Saturday, October 29 in her native Awing village in the NW region after funeral services in Nkwen Baptist Church Bamenda and Mbenten Baptist Church Awing.

The eulogies that ensued from family members, col-

leagues, the church and the CBC Executive President, described Elizabeth as soft-spoken, ever smiling, quiet spirit and an exemplary pastor's wife.

In his tribute, Prof. Tih Pius Muffih, Director of Health Services (DHS) described Mrs. Apongnde Elizabeth as a dear colleague, devoted, hardworking and passionate laboratory technician. "As the CBC Health Services, we are all heartbroken and devastated by this loss, coming at a time when there is need for committed staff to provide quality services to the needy population... We have lost a God fearing, caring, committed, devoted and co-worker well loved by her colleagues and her entire Christian community where she belonged," Prof. Tih bemoaned.

The husband, Rev. Apongnde Richard described his departed wife as a tough woman who remained resilient in her ill health to the last minute. Drawing inspiration from Scriptures, Rev. Apongnde encouraged mourners to surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ because God still hears and answers prayers even in dark moments.

Mrs. Apongnde Elizabeth Massa served with the CBC Health Services for 17 years within the rank and file of the laboratory at NBH. She completed her first degree in lab science and was pending graduation this December 2022. She leaves behind an extend Christian community, colleagues, relatives, husband and four children to remember her.

Bafoussam Baptist Hospital

The Operating Room Gets a New Surgeon

This department receives about 70 cases every month, most of which are for Caesarian Sections (CS), Hernias, Myomectomies, Total Abdominal Hysterectomies, Appendectomies, and less complicated cases. Cases that cannot be managed in this hospital are referred to hospitals well equipped with materials for proper management. Visiting ENT, Eye and Orthopedic Surgeons also undertake surgeries in these specialties when they visit the hospital.

As a fast-growing hospital, the Bafoussam Baptist Hospital is receiving more patients than anticipated. With the increase in patient turnout, there is a need for additional suction machines, speedometers for blood pressure and pulse, and lighting for additional tables in the operating room.

The department recently acquired an Autoclave that is effectively doing the work for which it is intended. The department is also in need of a cutting machine.

All these will go a long way towards improving the already great services rendered at the hospital as well as reducing patient waiting time.

Mr. Shiri Festus, a Surgical Technician in the department, appreciates the collaboration of all OR staff and the Administration for providing them with a Surgeon whose presence has boosted service delivery.

The Bafoussam Physiotherapy Department gets progressively busier

According to Pastor Suh Promise Tim, Senior Physiotherapy (PT) Assistant, the Physiotherapy Department has received a new staff during the recent Postings and Transfers. This additional staff makes up 4 staff in this very busy department, whose patient numbers continue to increase. In the month of August alone, the department received 251 new patients and 231 old patients, to make a total of 489. A good percentage of these patients, according to Pastor Suh, are as a result of accidents caused by motorbikes, resulting in fractures. Other patients suffer from lower back pain, especially as many of the inhabitants are involved in farming and other strenuous outdoor activities.

The department, Pastor Suh adds, is currently struggling to manage the number of patients in the limited space allocated for use. He thanks the Adminis-

trator for creating additional space for consultations, but like Oliver Twist, he notes that the department still yearns for more space that can accommodate additional treatment beds.

It is noteworthy that the department also handles issues of clubfoot that are received every week. The department uses the ponseti method of treatment and schedules surgeries for those in need of surgery. Cases that the department cannot manage are referred to Nkwen, and complicated clubfoot cases are referred to Dr. Ndasi Henry, lead orthopedist at the Trauma Center at Baptist Hospital Mutengene.

The department is in need of an infrared lamp, a good cast cutter, good scissors, and a good knife. Some of these needs, he adds, can be acquired through the hospital, and those that they can send to the Central

Administration are channeled there. He appreciates the Hospital Administration and the Central Administration for always listening to their challenges and ensuring that their demands are met for better service delivery. The staff in this department, like all departments that deliver services to humanity, reveal that they are usually fulfilled and happy when their patients are effectively treated. Some of the patients express their appreciation for the services received.

Transferred from Mbingo in 2021, Pastor Suh Promise is happy to be in a busy Hospital like Bafoussam. One of the major challenges he adds is the fact that people in this community prioritize other activities above their health and mostly visit the hospital when their health conditions are in an advanced state.

Bafoussam ENT Department witnessing significant increase in patient turnout

The Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) Department has become one of the departments in Bafoussam Baptist Hospital with increasing patient turnout. The clinic consults, screens, and treats cases at their level. They refer those they cannot treat to Nkwen Baptist Hospital in Bamenda. The department, which suffers from limited space, according to Mr. Meli Severin, a State

Registered Nurse at the ENT, is also in need of specialized equipment.

Additional space and equipment like an audiometer, an audiometric technician, and an endoscopy will help the increasing number of patients, some of whom are sent from neighboring health facilities.

This department receives between 170-200 patients every month. At the time of this report, Dr. Acha Evaristus, ENT visiting surgeon from Mbingo Baptist Hospital, corroborated the dire need for additional space for the department.

"Additional Nurses to Bafoussam Baptist Hospital will boost service delivery" - ASNS

Some relief has been witnessed in Bafoussam Baptist Hospital, thanks to the addition of some nurses during the recent postings and transfers across the board. Talking to the Communication Unit of the CBC Health Services, the Assistant Supervisor of Nursing Services (ASNS), Mrs. Ntala Forence Tamu rejoiced that the addition of nurses in the maternity, the surgical ward, and the men's medical ward has helped in having nurses equitably distributed during day and night duties. She claims that this has increased patient satisfaction while also allowing staff to complete their tasks on time.

The ASNS outlined that the day of a nurse in this hospital comprises of taking vital signs, administering medica-

tion, transcribing doctor's orders, serving patients, making their beds, taking them to different service points as needed, cleaning the discharge unit, and documenting their activities to ensure effective continuity of care from their colleagues. In the maternity section, a nurse takes care of pregnant women, undertakes the delivery of the baby, and attends to those who are sick. To her staff, Mrs. Ntala says, "Kudos, keep up with the good work." "They should understand that rendering services to mankind is serving God," she adds.

Mrs. Ntala who doubles as the head of the maternity section, prides her department as "where life begins" with the goal of having mothers deliver well, go home hap-

pily with their babies, stay well, and have a happy family. They also educate families on family planning. Ahead of World Contraception Day on September 26, Mrs. Ntala says when people receive the right information about family planning, they utilize it.

The maternity home currently has a maternity capacity of 24 beds. The need in this department is also growing as far as additional space and beds are concerned. The head of this department is working to ensure that materials needed in the department are acquired, such as the suction tube and pediatric face masks.

The Bafoussam Eye Department acquires a Visual Field Analyzer

The Eye Department of Bafoussam Baptist Hospital can now effectively examine patients with glaucoma. This is thanks to the acquisition of a Visual Field Analyzer that was installed in the hospital in July, 2022. This machine measures how far the eye sees in any direction without moving, and how sensitive the vision is in different parts of the visual field. This helps doctors find certain types of injuries and diseases like glaucoma. The purchase of this machine was necessitated by the high number of glaucoma patients in the hospital.

According to the department's State Registered Nurse and Ophthalmic Clinical Officer, Muyang Olivia Munju Epe Ngah, the purchase of the machine will go a long way towards diagnosing these glaucoma cases and, by extension, other related cases like di-

abetic retinopathies and hypertensive retinopathies. Ascertaining the level of advancement of the glaucoma will help clinicians control the glaucoma and also provide information on the drugs to be administered to avert irreversible blindness.

Reports say glaucoma incidences are reportedly very high in the Western Region. Many of the clients, according to Mrs. Ngah, are irreversibly blind. The new machine will help diagnose the level of damage in the retina's nerves. The hospital receives approximately 100 patients for glaucoma per month, which stands out with the highest percentage of cases visiting the Eye department in this hospital. In all, other eye-related clients bring a total of 800-1000 patients every month. Like most departments in this hospital, the eye department also complains of a lack of space

for their services.

It is worth noting that the Bafoussam Baptist Hospital eye department is hosted in an extended new building that went operational in April 2018. All departments soliciting for space with reports of an increased number of clients received is testimony of the quality healthcare delivered to the population of the West Region and Cameroon at large. This is evident in the fact that CBC Health Services is a nonprofit, faith-based, inclusive, and humanitarian organization, fully dedicated to its mission of "Quality Healthcare to all who need it as an expression of Christian love."

STAY SAFE



1. Thank God for the relative calm that is gradually returning to the restive regions in Cameroon namely; Far North, East, Northwest and Southwest.
2. Continue to thank God for sustaining us as individuals and as an institution.
3. Pray for all our leaders and staff, especially those in crisis-stricken zones.
4. Pray for those who are mourning their loved ones. Pray especially for the Bamenda Field Pastor and children who are in grief.

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