Inclusive Education in Cameroon:
Progressive Increase in Stakeholder Involvement ...pg2

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BIBLE VERSE
“My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don’t show favouritism”.
~James 2:1 (NIV).
Inclusive Education in Cameroon: Progressive Increase in Stakeholder Involvement

The launching of the We Ring the Bell (WRTB) 2023 Campaign is gaining the massive participation of major stakeholders in Cameroon. Holding under the patronage of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Her Excellency Mme Pauline Irene Ngwene, the event equally witnessed the presence of the Minister of Women’s Empowerment and the Family, Marie-Therese Abena Onoada. Other Ministries present included Basic, Secondary and Higher Education, as well as the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training. Also present were representatives from other government structures, the Mayor of Yaounde Six Council (host municipality of the event), and representatives of National and International Non-Governmental Organizations.

We Ring the Bell 2023 Campaign launched on May 4, was celebrated under the theme, “Moving from Policy to Practice: Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in Cameroon”.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very happy to highlight to you what the CBC Health Services in Partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs, Basic Education, Secondary Education and some institutions of Higher Learning in Cameroon have been able to achieve in the domain of Inclusive Education. These achievements are categorized in the domains of Capacity Building and recruitment of inclusive education teachers, Provision of Scholarships and Assistive Devices; Sensitization and Awareness Raising.

1) Capacity Building: The CBCHS in partnership with the Regional Delegations for Basic and Secondary Education in the Northwest and West regions of the country has built the capacities of 288 teachers to be able to teach learners with impairments and those without impairment in the same classroom.

2) Recruitment of Inclusive teachers: We have recruited and are supporting the payment of the salary of 15 special needs teachers in schools in the Northwest, West, Center, East and Far North Regions. They support the regular teachers to better teach children with disabilities in mainstream classrooms.

3) Provision of Scholarships and Assistive Devices: With Support from the Liliane Foundation, we provide scholarships to 2500 learners with disabilities on yearly basis that cover their school fees in private schools, didactic materials and assistive devices like braille, crutches, slates, stylos, talking clocks, talking calculators, etc, to enable learners with disabilities study comfortably in the same classrooms like their peers without an impairment.

4) Inclusive School Clubs: We have created 10 inclusive school clubs with student ambassadors who are championing Inclusive Education in their schools.

5) Parent Support Groups: We have created 200 parent support groups in 9 regions of Cameroon grouping more than 2000 parents of learners with disabilities who share experiences and solutions to inclusive education in Cameroon.

6) Successful Pilot of Inclusive Education in Government Schools: In collaboration with the Delegations of Secondary Education and Social Affairs in the West Region, we have successfully piloted inclusive education in two of the largest government schools in the West Region: Lycee Classique and Lycee Bilingue. This was done by modifying some infrastructure by creating ramps, providing resource room with computers, braille machines, embossers, tape recorders, talking software, etc.

7) Technical and Material Support to GCE Board: We have supported the GCE Board with braille Machines and embossers to ensure that exams are always accessible to students with disabilities, built the capacity of staff on inclusive examination practices and provided continuous technical support.

With key stakeholders actively involved in the campaign, there is assurance for a continuous bright future for children, youths and adults with disabilities acquiring quality education and meeting their full potentials in Cameroon.

Significant strides by the Government were detailed in a presentation by Mme Angelica Ambe Mundi, Director for the Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly at the Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS), Cameroon. She noted that 70 pilot public schools are already developing an integrated and inclusive education approach in Cameroon. Mme Ambe equally gave a litany of the successes realized in Cameroon in the Education of Children with Disabilities since the WRTB campaign started in 2016. She revealed that thanks to partnership with the CBC Health Services, a lot has been achieved in the domain of protecting and promoting the rights of children with disabilities in the country.

The discourse of the Director of CBC Health Services Prof. Tih was rich in content and detailed the work of the CBC Health Services through its Services for Persons with Disabilities Programs. (Published below in its entirety).

“It is a great pleasure for the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services to join hands with the Government of Cameroon once more to launch the 2023 Edition of the Annual “We Ring the Bell Campaign”. We are very happy with the theme of this event chosen by MINAS: From Policy to Practice; Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities. This shows that we need to pause and take stock of what our talking and campaigning for the past years have enabled us to achieve.

We have re-examined our policies to ensure we are focusing on new areas of work and engaging new stakeholders, and our efforts are paying off. This year’s campaign has seen an increase in the number of people who have pledged to support inclusive education. We have also seen a shift in attitudes towards people with disabilities, with more people understanding the importance of inclusion and the benefits it brings.

The We Ring the Bell 2023 Campaign brought children from different schools to champion Inclusive Education in their schools.

8) Provision of School Buses: Through our Partnership with MIVA, we have applied, received and donated school buses to PROMHANDICAM, Foundation Edu-Rehab, CUIB Buea, Ecole de Sourd Bertoua, Tertiary Sister in Bamenda and SAJOCAH Bafut to enable them transport children with disabilities to schools and back.

9) Research: In Partnership with Radboud University in the Netherlands, we carry out research on an annual basis to inform us on gaps in inclusive education and recommendations on how to close these gaps. Our recent research informed us that pre-schooling for children with disabilities is very important to enable them to have the necessary skills so that they can be well included in mainstream schools.

All of these interventions have been possible thanks to the partnership and Enabling Environment we receive from her Excellency, the Minister of Social Affairs, the Minister of Basic education and the Minister of Secondary Education. We extend our sincere appreciation to all of you and pledge to continue to collaborate with you in assisting children living with impairment.

Prof. Tih was rich in content and detailed the work of the CBC Health Services through its Services for Persons with Disabilities Programs. (Published below in its entirety).

“...
Inspite of all these successes there are still challenges which prevent the CBCHS from completely attaining its objective and contributing to the government achievements of the SDG 4. These challenges include but not limited to the following:

1. Almost all education infrastructure are not adapted to learners with disabilities, especially learners on wheelchairs.
2. The Cameroon Education Curriculum is not adapted to the needs of learners with disabilities.
3. There is a generalized negative attitude towards children with disabilities.
4. There are a limited number of inclusive schools and teachers in Cameroon.
5. There is ignorance of the 2010 law by some school authorities leading to the refusal to admit children with disabilities in some public schools.

Your Excellencies, distinguish Ladies and Gentlemen, For us to accelerate the movement from policy to practice, I recommend that:

1) The Ministries of Social Affairs, Secondary Education, Basic Education, Higher Education and other key Ministries, together with the national and international partners of inclusive education in Cameroon, should form a community of practice for Inclusive Education and hold quarterly reflection meetings on how to continuously move from policy to practice.

2) The government should put in place a system of reward and sanction for Head Teachers and Delegates who dispise or fail to apply the 2010 law.

3) We pray the government to work with financial and technical partners to plan and provide capacity building to key teachers of the basic, secondary and tertiary education sectors to effectively function as trainers and teachers of children with disabilities in mainstream public schools.

4) The government should engage technical and financial partners to Support the relevant Ministries in revising the Training curricula used to train teachers and lecturers in disability inclusive education.

5) The government should provide and equip resource rooms in all public schools to facilitate the teaching and learning of children with impairment. These resource rooms should have the basic assistive devices needed by children with disabilities.

6) We encourage the government to conduct an accessibility audit in all government schools to determine the feasibility of inclusive education in all schools in Cameroon.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, The CBC Health Services is committed to working with the Government of Cameroon through its relevant ministries to ensure that inclusive education is not only existing as a policy and being talked about, but that it is actually being practiced.

I greatly appreciate Her Excellency, Madam Paulene Irene Ngeune for organizing the 2023 edition of We Ring the Bell Campaign. This is very commendable.

I wish to end this brief address by expressing my sincere appreciation to the Liliane Foundation for the continuous support given to children with disabilities in Cameroon. I wish to thank everyone who signed up to participate in the 2023 edition of the We Ring the Bell campaign. My appreciation goes also to the organizing committee for a job well done.

God bless Her Excellency the Minister of Social Affairs,

God bless the Ministers of Basic, Secondary and Higher Education as well as other Ministries working in Collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs for the realization of Inclusiv Education in cameroon

God bless the CBC Health Services and her partners,

God bless the President of the Republic of Cameroon

God bless Cameroon.

Sincerely,

Prof. Tih Pius Muffi, MPH, PhD
Director of CBC Health Services*

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**Construction of First Campus for Baptist University Institute to Commence Soon**

The CBC Health Services has selected the construction company for the construction of the Rehabilitation Training Center for Excellence. The selection process took place at the Resource Center Mvan, Yaounde on May 19, 2023, a process that involved the review of applications submitted by different companies after an open tender. Three companies applied for the call for tenders and their files were carefully studied.

Kendeley Construction Company was awarded the contract to construct the Rehabilitation Training Center of Excellence, Mutengene. This training center of Excellence will host all the training programs of the Rehabilitation Compass for Inclusion project at Mutengene. The representative from Kendeley appreciated CBC Health Services for the confidence they have in them and promised to do their best to meet up with the deadline.

Prof. Tih Pius Muffi, Director of CBCHS chaired the Tender Committee meeting with members including: Mr. Wari Deris, Mr. Ntam Ephraim, Mr. Nkuoh Godlove, Mrs. Agho Glory, Dr. Nyounguo Kenneth, Mr. Chiambah Abraham, Mr. Toh Orlando and representatives from the Kendeley Company.

The Rehabilitation Training Center for Excellence is training professionals to promote the rights of children with disabilities in Cameroon, thanks to support from the #AFASFoundation through the #LilianeFoundation.

It is worth noting that the Rehabilitation Center for Excellence is the first campus of the Baptist University Institute which has already received approval from the Ministry of Higher Education. The project gained under the Empowerment and Disability Inclusive Development (EDID) program of the CBC Health Services is being realized, thanks to the leadership of the visionary project Principal Investigator, Professor Tih Pius Muffi.

Through his virtues of accountability, reliability, and dependability, Prof. Tih continuous to gain the trust of donors to improve the lives of people in Cameroon.

Prof Tih used the occasion to call on the contractor to always ensure that all infrastructure built by his company in Cameroon is accessible and inclusive.

The selection of the construction company already paves the way for construction work to commence as soon as possible.

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*Signing of documents for Kendely to begin construction works on first phase of BiHS*
Cameroon Nurses Association Chapter launched in CBC Health Services

The Director of the CHC Health Services accompanied by the President and Vice of the Cameroon Nurses Association (CNA) have together launched the CBC Health Services Nurses and Midwives Chapter of the Cameroon Nurses Association. The CBCHS Chapter of CNA was launched in the Nkwen Baptist Hospital chapel during the celebration of International Nurses Day commemorated on May 12, 2023, under the theme, “Our Nurses, Our Future”. The event brought together delegates from the different hospitals for the twin event.

In an address from the Director of the CHC Health Services, Nurses were called upon to bear in mind the six Cs of Nursing, which are care, compassion, courage, communication, commitment, and competence which form the basis of compassionate care.

Representing the Director of the CBC Health Services, the Chief Medical Officer of Nkwen Baptist Hospital, Dr. Nana Christopher, in an address, exhorted the Nurses to make a special effort to apply the six Cs in their work to ensure the safety and wellbeing of patients. He added that International Nurses Day is significant because it is the Birthday of Florence Nightingale, who is known as the mother of modern nursing. The Lady with the Lamb as she is fondly referred to set the premise around which nursing practice has been built. The Director beckoned the Nurses to draw inspiration around this great woman while encouraging them to register in the newly created association. He was proud of their leaders and appreciated them for championing the creation of the association given that the Nurses constitute the biggest professional team of the health services and cover the hospital 24 hours daily, throughout the year.

“Your are the heart of the hospital”. The DHS representave affirmed as he accompanied the other dignitaries from the Cameroon Nurses Association to cut the ribbon to signify its creation. The Director however challenged the Nurses to conduct research, read professional literature, and gather new knowledge so as to share with colleagues in the association meetings. Earlier before the launching, the Nurses received greetings and encouragement from Mr. Nkwan Jacob, Principal of the Baptist Training School for Health Personnel in Banso who has been very instrumental in the creation of the association since 2012. In his words, he reiterated the importance of identifying with their professional association noting that the CBC Health Services has taken the right decision in the right direction. Mr. Nkwan highlighted the importance of identifying with their professional association, especially for clinical professionals given that it is beneficial to the employer and the patients. To him, the 11 years of sensitization have not been easy but he is happy that the dream has come true. He called on the nurses to actively participate by registering in the association as how far they will go will be determined by their actions. On his part, the National President of the Cameroon Nurses Association (CNA), Mr. Nkwan Joseph reminded the nurses that the aim of the association is to contribute to the improvement of the health of citizens. He thanked the CBC Health Services for the laudable initiative because without belonging to an association, ideally, you are not expected to practice. To him, it is a wise decision to launch the association within the CBC Health Services and it was his prayer that the association will grow from strength to strength while pledging their support as the umbrella association will grow from strength to strength while meeting the rules and regulations as they all aim to foster good practice and to have good practice, you must carry out continuous professional development via in-service training, workshops, and conferences to increase the knowledge of the personnel.

The nurses were encouraged by the presence of Dr. Njini Rose, Senior Nurse and Lecturer at the University of Bamenda who used the words of different presidents to describe nurses as very significant people. She encouraged the nurses to invest in nursing and protect themselves given that nursing which was one of the most underestimated professions has become one of the most celebrated.

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Mrs. Chimi Emerencia is the Supervisor for nursing services at the Nkwen Baptist Hospital, the main organizer of the event. She used the opportunity to appreciate all those who supported the Nurses, especially the Exco of Nkwen Baptist Hospital who did their best to see that the day was a success. The launching, she said was indeed a dream come true since it was conceived some years back and the idea came up again in 2020 when the WHO made 2020 the year of Nurses and Midwives with the outbreak of the Corona Virus. This made the world see the importance of nursing and so they thought it astute for the CBC Nurses to come up as one and speak one language in order to groom the younger nurses and to have a strong resilient health workforce so as to strengthen the health system of the country and the world at large.

At the start of the event, the Chaplain of the CHC Health Services Central Administration, Rev. Fongoh Godwin drawing inspiration from 1 Kings chapter 19 called on the Nurses to provide care for themselves as they seek care for others so as to overcome burnout for burnouts negatively affects the nurses and the patients might end up being the victims. He prescribed rest and refreshments as keys to avoiding burnout. The nurses went back to their various stations satisfied after a great celebration and launch of their association. They grasped the occasion with a documentary presentation on how the nurses’ day came about and also via sensational singing capturing the theme and their core values.

Remember that:
“IT is a curse to be a Medical Doctor without a Nurse”
“A hospital without a Nurse is like a building without a Foundation”.
“Save one life and you are a hero, save 100 lives and you are a Nurse”
“Nursing is caring but it takes more than a caring person to be a nurse”
“Caring for one is love but caring for everyone is nursing”.

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MIDENO Partners with SEEPD Program, donates 3000 Chicks to Persons with Disabilities

Some 70 persons with diverse forms of disabilities, and 36 parents and care givers of some persons with disabilities in the Northwest Region have received 3000 chicks from the North West Development Authority with its French acronym, MIDENO. The distribution of the 3 weeks old chicks to these persons from Mbingo Baptist Hospital, SAJOCAH Bafut and Treasure Center Bamenda was an outcome of a partnership between the SEEPD Program and MIDENO to promote Inclusive Development in the mandate of the work they do.

The chicks were handed to the beneficiaries by the Director General (DG) of MIDENO on April 15, 2023 at the MIDENO premises in Bamenda. According to the DG of MIDENO, Anye Guter Matoya, the gesture is aimed at improving productivity in livestock. He added that within the context of MIDENO’s collaboration with the CBC Health Services SEEPD Program, he got motivated when he attended a workshop on disability inclusion organized by the CBC Health Services in 2021. “I discovered that we cannot talk development without taking everybody including people with disabilities. He implored them to use the chicks judiciously to ensure a sustainable livelihood.

The recipients of the chicks were selected in collaboration with the SEEPD Program after a needs assessment led by the Coordinating Unit of the Associations of Persons with Disabilities (CUAPWD) in the Northwest Region. The beneficiaries amongst whom were those who already own poultry farms were also given feed to enable them grow the chicks till when they are ready for the market. The distribution was motivated by the fact that as agents of development, persons with disabilities also deserve to be empowered like their peers without disabilities so that they can have an independent means of livelihood.

Speaking during the event, the Board chairperson of CUAPWD, Armelle Nogning applauded the CBC Health Services for always advocating with and for persons with disabilities and linking them up to helpful opportunities. She expressed gratitude to MIDENO for the gesture which she said will serve as start off capital for most of the recipients.

The supplier of the chicks, Hamza Danpullo assured the recipients that the chicks were the best breed, fully vaccinated and will be ready for consumption after one month.

Beneficiaries during the event showered praises to MIDENO and the SEEPD Program for always ensuring that persons with disabilities are not left behind in the development process. Kuna Galabe Henry, a beneficiary of 25 chicks described the gesture as empowerment to them. He said, “Do not only give someone fish but teach them how to fish so I think this is a net that has been given to us so we can fish.

If we have an independent life, we will no longer depend on others!”

The crisis in the two Anglophone regions has also rendered persons with disabilities more vulnerable. This is the story of Mr. Chi Joseph Atangam, an internally displaced person who was forced to leave his native home after being robbed of his table birds. He has been surviving from alms with his children but after receiving these 25 chicks, Mr. Joseph said he will no longer be asking for alms because he will now be able to take care of himself and his children.

It should be noted that Treasure Center Mile 2 Mendakwe received 400 chicks, SAJOCAH Bafut benefited from 350 chicks and Mbingo Baptist Hospital (MBH) received 350 chicks as a strategy to strengthen their existing systems to continue supporting the needs of children and adults with disabilities that receive services from these institutions. Shortly after the distribution, SAJOCAH Bafut and MBH were given 9 bags of feed each with Treasure Center receiving 12 bags to enable them grow the chicks.

In an interview with DG of MINDENO last year, he noted that they have allocated 25 million CFA for the social and economic empowerment of people with disabilities in the region. This chick distribution was carried out therefore, thanks to the budget that had been allocated.

Hotel Management and Catering Students Undertake Practical Sessions at Mvan Resource Center

Some 27 students of the Hotel Management and Catering program under the Baptist Vocational Training Centre (BVTC), Bamenda of the CBC Health Services are currently undertaking a four-month intensive practical session at the CBC Health Services Resource Centre of Excellence, Mvan Yaoundé.

The practical session which began in March shall last till July 2023. It is divided into four major areas of focus: Food and beverage production, Front office, Housekeeping and laundry, and Management of resources.

The objective of the practical session is to equip the students with hands-on skills and knowledge that will enable them to gain employment immediately after they graduate in areas related to hotel management and catering but could go on to work as front desk officers in any kind of company as well as being self-employed.

Speaking to reporters, The Administrator of the Resource Centre of Excellence, Yaoundé, Mr. Kadzem Claude revealed that the students on practical experience at the Resource Centre constitute the 4th badge of students emanating from the Hotel Management and Catering program of the Baptist Vocational Training Centre since the program was introduced in 2019.

He went further to state that this is the second time the students from the school are carrying out their practical training at the Resource Centre of Excellence.

To Mr. Kadzem, the quality of persons graduating from the training program has greatly impacted the services offered at the CBC Health Services Resource Centre of Excellence, Mvan Yaoundé “Last year, the two staff of the year we had at the Resource Centre of Excellence were both caterers and that tells you that the school is training people who go out there and create impact,” he said. According to him, graduates from the Hotel Management and Catering program have been very instrumental in providing in-patient catering services in CBC Health Facilities, Rest houses, and canteens.

The Coordinator of the Practical Component of BVTC emphasized that the program has invested a great deal in practical experience to ensure that it covers 30% theory and 70% practical as specified in the curriculum.

“I am thankful to the CBC Health Services for creating such an outstanding program under the BVTC because it has made some of us especially the youths know that we still have a place in Cameroon. So far, I have garnered enough skills in preparing African and continental dishes, baking cakes, cookies, pastries, pizza, and hamburgers among others,” said Tigweh Neline, trainee on practical experience.

It should be noted that the program provides a one-year diploma course in Hotel Management and Catering. In that light, the Administrator of the Technical Department of the CBC Health Services, Dr. Nyonguon Kenneth Nshom stated that the Certificates are awarded to trainees by the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training after an end-of-course diploma examination. He equally stated that the results for the past three badges of students under the Hotel Management and Catering program have registered a 100% pass score.

It’s worth mentioning that the Baptist Vocational Training Centre was created in 2004 in Bamenda. Some trades offered at the centre include Building Construction, Electricity, Carpentry, Painting and Tiling, Computer Aided Designs, Auto Mechanics, Metal Works, and Biomedical Technology among others.

Students under the group of food and Beverage setting up a hall at the Resource Centre
A 3 day capacity building workshop held recently with participants acquiring an enhanced understanding of activities implementation and compliance requirements. The workshop was organized by the Community Based Inclusive Development II (CBID) Project for some SEEPD Program staff and partners. It had as objective to build staff capacity on effective implementation of the project’s activities and to build team spirit amongst project staff and its stakeholders. The training took place from May 3-5, 2023 at the MARCSONS Hotel in the seaside resort town of Limbe in the Southwest region.

In his welcome remarks, the SEEPD Program Manager, Jacques Chirac Awa applauded staff for their commitment in contributing to the mission of the program. He expressed that over the years, the program has witnessed growth as a result of collective efforts. He noted that the workshop was an opportunity to put in place systems and processes to enable the effective implementation of projects in the SEEPD program. The Program Manager regretted the fact that international funding for community development is declining specifically in Africa, a situation which is disturbing. He said there is need for quality results to assure funding from funders.

Presenting the background of CBID II Project, the Coordinator, Lohshie Eugene noted that the project idea started in 2009 with the Socio Economic Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SEEPD) Program which ran in 3 phases till 2018. The first phase of CBID I started in 2020 with focus on strengthening systems to promote inclusion. The second phase of the project which started in October 2022 to October 2025 is titled, “A Comprehensive Program for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities and Inclusive Access to Basic Services of Health and Education in Cameroon”. He added that the project is focused on three result areas; Health, Education, and Livelihood.

The CBID Project Manager, Awa Jacques Chirac in his presentation on the CBID concept, defined CBID as a negotiated process of influencing social change to foster the inclusion of marginalized groups in the context of conflict of goals, values, and interests. He further explained that CBID concept was birthed in 2017 and is a strategy for development adopted with funding partners to achieve project goals. The Program Manager underlined the role of project staff which is that of capacity building, sensitization, resource mobilization, advocacy, and direct service delivery. He also presented the projects under the Services for Persons with Disabilities and the organogram put in place under the SEEPD Program.

On his part, the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Services Field Supervisor, Kenchi Joseph drilled participants on CBR services. He defined CBR as a strategy that facilitate community development to equalize, strategize, rehabilitate and foster social inclusion, and poverty reduction. He encouraged project staff to work in collaboration with CBR to provide valuable services for persons with disabilities. During the workshop, participants brainstormed in group work on monitoring and evaluation tools and alongside other tools which will be reviewed and adopted for use to ensure effective implementation and outcomes of activities. Staff were also drilled on reporting, organizational dynamics, and safeguarding Gender.

Participants at the end of the workshop attested that the workshop was timely and enriching given that they were exposed to innovations put in place in the program. Achataseh Godwill in his role as the Quality and Assurance Manager stated that the content of the workshop will enable him to pay attention to the quality of activity implementation. The Director of CDE, Oussematou Dameri expressed gratitude to the SEEPD Program and described the training as one of its kind. She acknowledged that she faced difficulties with compliance in activities implementation which were properly clarified in the training. “After this workshop I hope my organization will be able to contribute to the overall objective of the CBID Project” she noted.

At the close of the workshop, the CBID Project Coordinator, Lohshie Eugene said the workshop was an opportunity for staff to acquire skills that will enable them to see the program through a broader lens. He appreciated CBM and the SEEPD Program Senior Management Team for supporting the organization of the training. He hopes to see a paradigm shift that will impact the lives of the beneficiary population. This activity was implemented with support from CBM.

World Hypertension Day has been observed by CBC Health Services with a call for people to inculcate health-seeking behaviours. Celebrated every May 17, the 2023 edition focused on the theme, “Measure your blood pressure accurately, Control it, and Live Longer”. The day is set aside to create public awareness, prevention, and treatment of hypertension around the world.

The CBC Health Services through its Non-Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Programme used the occasion to encourage the public on the importance of “knowing your numbers” through the checking of vital signs.

It is from this backdrop that the Programme Manager, Mr. Takwe Boniface in his presentations at Nkwen Baptist Hospital and the Health Services Central Administration called on everyone to make it a point of duty to intentionally go to the hospital to check their health numbers and be sure everything is fine. This, he referred to as a health-seeking behavior. Mr. Takwe further stressed that there are many people living with hypertension and other non-communicable diseases that do not produce any warning signs and in order to reduce and prevent the number of people dying from these conditions, he encouraged everyone to periodically go to the hospital to check their health numbers, especially at CBC health facilities where there is the special unit of “Know Your Numbers”, to check their blood pressure and other important health numbers.

Mrs. Dora Kibong, the head of department for the Hypertension and Diabetes Unit of the Nkwen Baptist Hospital said working with the patients has not been an easy job. “Bringing the patients together was a very difficult initiative but when they came to understand and accept their health situations, they are now able to flow with the disease since time was taken to explain to them the consequences and complications of the disease. With that understanding, the patients can now adhere to treatment and the testimonies have been enormous as patients now anticipate for their clinic days. During clinic days, we give them fruits and we have told them to make their environments fruit friendly” she articulated.
During the celebrations at the Nkwen Baptist Hospital in Bamenda, the patients received a pat on their backs from the hospital administration beginning with the Assistant Supervisor for Nursing Services, Mr. Baiyong Gilbert who expressed the joy of receiving patients for follow-up on a monthly basis, a clear indication that they are following the advice from the nurses and doctors, given that health is wealth and they must do everything to stay healthy. Mr. Baiyong made the patients to understand that they don’t need to wait until they have a crisis before they come to the hospital as he demonstrated by example the importance of knowing your numbers by asking the nurses to do him a check to be sure his numbers are in order.

On her part, the Assistant Administrator in charge of Personnel, Ms Tangwa Faith was glad for the patients for prioritizing their health above everything else. “As you have put your hands on the plough, don’t look back. If you miss an appointment for clinic, come another day in order to stay healthy. Spread the news about the importance of checking your blood pressure at least once a month to your family members and neighbors.” She added that NCDs are silent killers just like a gun that kills you without a signal and so encouraged the patients to continue to make use of the opportunity to check their vital signs and to do the same for their children since the disease cuts across all ages. “Take your health seriously and be our ambassadors” she concluded.

The patients expressed satisfaction and gratitude to the health workers for the care and treatment they are receiving at the hospital and for the sporting exercise and fruits that they get every clinic day. According to them, they have received a lot of counseling and education from the nurses that have helped reduce the number of crises recorded and have improved their lifestyles. Low-intensity aerobic exercises characterized the event.

**SEEPD Program donates Laptop to Student with Visual Impairment**

The CBC Health Services through the SEEPD Program has donated a laptop to Silas a student with visual impairment in the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Bamenda (UBa). The laptop with installed JAW and NVDA software was handed to Mbuhi Silas recently during the morning devotion of the CBC Health Services Central Administration at Nkwen Baptist Center in Bamenda. The software facilitates reading for persons with visual impairment.

The laptop was handed by the Deputy Director of Administration and Finance of the CBC Health Services who expressed that the objective of the gesture by the SEEPD Program is to enable Silas to access learning activities in the University. Mr. Warri Denis congratulated Silas for breaking the barriers to his education to reach the University level. He assured him of the support of CBC Health Services in accomplishing his educational dreams. The DDFAF implored him to use the laptop judiciously and continue to excel in his education so that he will be a role model to other persons with impairments.

Speaking to the level 2 student in UBa, he said, “Studies at the University are challenging,” he expressed given that most lecturers are given in hard copies which is difficult for him to access. With the challenges faced, he decided to apply to the SEEPD Program to assist him with a laptop. Receiving the laptop is a dream come true for him because the laptop will greatly facilitate his studies at the University such as research and assignments. “I will no longer go to the documentation for typing of my assignments, I will conveniently do them at home,” he noted. He added that the laptop will enable him to be independent unlike at first when he used to depend on his friends to have notes and do his assignments. He described the SEEPD as a program that is intentional about the needs of persons with disabilities, working relentlessly in making life easy for them. His prayer is for the program to have more funding opportunities so that they can continue to improve the quality of life for persons with disabilities in the region and beyond.

Sharing his education dreams, he noted that he looks forward to graduating from his Degree program in 2024 after which he will further his studies. His ambition is to be a leader in any domain. From his experience, Silas advised his peers to accept their disability and consciously break the barriers that prevent them from accessing education and livelihood opportunities. It should be noted that this is not the first time Silas is benefiting from the services of the SEEPD Program.
CBID Project capacitates Journalists in NWR on Disability Reporting

Over 30 Journalists in the Northwest Region have been challenged to mainstream disability in their reporting as part of their efforts in promoting inclusion in development initiatives. This was during a 2 day workshop organized by the Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID) project of the CBC Health Services. The workshop, which took place from March 30–31, 2023 at the Baptist Center Nkwen Bamenda had as objective to continuously empower and encourage the media to implement programs and initiatives that positively portray persons with disabilities, promote the respect of their rights and challenge duty bearers to mainstream disability in development opportunities.

At the opening of the workshop, the CBID Project Manager Jacques Chirac Awa disclosed that the World Report on Disability estimated in 2011 that about 15% of the world’s population live with some form of disability. He added that these people face barriers in different aspects of life be it physical, social, economic, or attitudinal that negatively affect their access to and participation in education, employment, health and social participation, thus depriving their communities of their effective contribution to development efforts. Mr. Awa described journalists as those who form a key component in development efforts. According to the Project Manager, the media is best placed as the entry point to drive inclusion of persons with disabilities because of their proximity to community members through programs, news articles amongst others.

The CBID Project Coordinator, Lohshie Eugene corroborated the Project Manager’s remark on the role of journalists by stating that the workshop was borne from an assessment that the media is a strong arm in promoting development by bringing about paradigm shift on how community development actors factor development initiatives from an inclusive perspective. As one of the facilitators of the workshop, Lohshie Eugene drilled participants on the background of the CBID Project, the size of the disability problem, excising laws and international legal instruments on disability inclusion. He also stressed on social mobilization strategies which pointed out the role of the media in breaking barriers to disability inclusion.

The Communication Officer of the DIHA Project, Tina Ashiyio in an interactive presentation schooled participants on nine key principles of disability inclusive journalism. The workshop was characterized by work sessions during which participants developed a Standard Operating Procedure for disability inclusive reporting at a time when it is a topic underreported by the media. “We are committed to improve on content delivered on our website and social media platforms to make them inclusive as well so that everyone can have access to them”. Another participant, Stephen Ojong, a blogger noted that it was a learning opportunity for him. To him, it is time to continue ringing the bell so that development stakeholders do not leave persons with disabilities behind in their development initiative.

At the close of the workshop, the CBID Project Coordinator emphasized that the media is an important component in the inclusion journey. He implored the participants to pick up emerging practices and set the pace for others to follow.

It is expected that participants of the workshop will use the knowledge acquired to design and run radio/TV programs, write articles that promote the respect of disability rights, encourage and challenge duty bearers to mainstream disability development initiatives.

The workshop was organized with funding from CBM.

CBID Project Manager underlining the role of the media in promoting inclusion

The CBC Health Services in recent years has paid a lot of attention to disability inclusion. This has been in all spheres of society. The Services for Persons with Disabilities (SPDs) Programs have been working to improve the lives of children, youths, and adults in the domains of education, livelihood, social inclusion, health, and child protection.

This work of the Socio-Economic Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities and the Empowerment and Disability Inclusive Development (EDID) Programs has not been going unnoticed. Coupled with the appraisal of the communities for the services received, the media has also had a keen eye on this work and recognitions have been numerous. The most recent accolade has been from the Herald Tribune Newspaper and Magazine.

The CBC Health Services received this media award as the best health institution in spearheading “Inclusion” in Cameroon, with praises for their strive towards social development. The award was handed to leaders of the CBC Health Services during the Goals and Budgets review meeting that was held in Yaounde in May 2023.

Receiving the award on behalf of the institution, the Director of the CBC Health Service Prof. Tih Pius Muffin used the occasion to thank the staff through their leaders as the architects of all the work that attracts these accolades. It is a common practice within CBC Health Services to always promise and endeavor to do more even after they receive awards. This is in consonance with the Mission Statement of “Quality Care to all”.

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CBCHS celebrates Medical Laboratory Professional Week (MLPW)

Staff of the different facilities of the CBC Health Services have celebrated World Laboratory Day under the theme, “The Future is Lab”. World Laboratory Day takes place every April 23 to celebrate the place where great inventions emerge to make the World better. A Laboratory is a facility that provides controlled conditions in which scientific research, experiments and measurements may be performed. The Laboratory week usually runs from April 23-29 each year and the professionals are expected to carry out various educative and informative programmes.

In his message to the Laboratory Staff, the Director of the CBC Health Services rendered these motivational words, “I wish to appreciate those laboratory staff who have sustainably kept our laboratories ticking for several decades ..... To the younger generation of Laboratory staff within the Health Services, I wish to also say thank you for accepting to work with us. Please make it a habit to read and understand all laboratory procedures, get versed with the ever emerging and changing techniques, learn standard quality assurance processes and keep our laboratories growing”.

At Mboppi Baptist Hospital Douala, Staff of the Laboratory led by the head of department, Mr. Tonshie Walters took the challenge to sensitize patients and care givers at the waiting areas of the hospital about the duration of different lab results as some results take less time while others take more time to come out. According to Mr. Tonshie, the Lab is evolving and Staff need to focus on evidence based practices in order to give results that are verifiable under research. “The lab is the backbone of the hospital in the sense that medical diagnosis are confirmed in the lab before accurate prescription of treatment is given,” said the HOD. During the celebration, the Administrator handed a special gift to Madam Tamjong Irene as one of the most dedicated and oldest staff in the department. The Administrator used the avenue to appreciate and encourage all Staff to remain committed.

Meanwhile at Bonaberi Baptist Hospital Douala (BBHD), the Administrator, Madam Fon Rose Nyimeh while celebrating these diagnostic professionals said they have contributed and added more value to the quality of services as they continue to loom as one of the hospital’s spinal cords. Fon Rose Nyimeh was not indifferent to the objective of the week. She therefore used the opportunity to appreciate Shey Kiara who emerged laboratory staff of the year 2022, for her hard work, sacrifice and gritty performances at the Laboratory. She was handed a Certificate of Recognition from the administration by the Assistant Supervisor of Nursing Services, Mr. Yong Alain Yuh. The Administrator also thanked Ndzi Renate, a Lab Technician at BBHD who composed the theme song for the celebration which was sang in all laboratories of the CBCHS.

The Health Services Complex Laboratory Staff celebrated for the first time and according to Mr. Willy Brandt Lamnyam that was just the beginning. He called on professionals working in the quality control and quality assurance Lab to subsequently join in the commemoration as this also involves them. He reiterated that the medical Laboratory Professional week runs from April 23-29 each year and the professionals are expected to carry out activities like talks, debates and voluntary blood donation sensitizations. A visiting Laboratory staff from Baptist Hospital Mutengene, Mr. Gwasis Everett in the course of celebration gave a brief presentation about the laboratory during which he made it

known that the reason for the commemoration of this World Laboratory Day is to celebrate and appreciate laboratory personnel for their resilience, skillfulness as well as their innovative work with expertise. He noted some of their challenges such as work overload and high expectations which sometimes lead to burn out and fatigue. Other staff were encouraged to give feedback each time they use Laboratory services to help improve on their services.

Sabga Baptist Health Centre was not left out in the celebration. On April 27, the Lab Staff came out colorfully in their attire and graced the celebration with presentations. Mrs. Bonglim Cecilia, head of department presented to staff a quiz to answer noting that the best will go home with a prize. A brief biography of medical laboratory day, how it came about and the brains behind it was also presented by Mr. Awa Sylvester, the only male laboratory staff. Mr. Ek-fui Godlove, Chief of Center congratulated and appreciated the laboratory department, noting the fact that the department is “peaceful” and collaborating well with the administration. The COC also appreciated their relentless hard work in making sure that clients receive the best results as far as diagnosis is concerned. He ended up by encouraging other departments to emulate the good example.

It is important to note that the Laboratory is the backbone of a hospital given that medical diagnosis are confirmed in the Laboratory before accurate prescription for treatment is given. Various activities marked the celebration such as musical sonorities and rhymes, singing, poetic and dramatic displays, dancing, questions/answers/awards, and history of the laboratory characterized the daily happenings performed at the different hospitals.
It was on April 14, 2023 during the usual staff meeting at 2 pm that eleven staff in Ngounso Baptist Hospital (NBH) were awarded labour medals in diverse categories. The beneficiaries included: Tchemdah Emmanuel, Njoukouko Ismaila, Mbah Moses, Ndickmu Bosco, Mefang Agnes, Njouerap Jean, Ngahnsou Dominica, Jum Roland, Ngum Godlove, Gaye Robe, and Ndouyou Rogayatou. Mme Mefang Agnes received gold while the rest received either silver or silver-gilt.

It is worth mentioning that some of them were receiving it for their first time, others for the second while others received it for the third and last time like.

According to the Supervisor of Nursing Services (SNS) who officiated the program, the reason for awarding the labour medals in an informal setting was following instructions from hierarchy.

Security Measures reinforced In Ngounso Baptist Hospital (NBH)

A security post with a permanent gate aimed at reinforcing security measures has been established at Ngounso Baptist Hospital, thanks to the effort of the Chief of Center in place, Mr Lemloh Gerald Bantar.

Over 100 staff of Ngounso Baptist Hospital (NBH) have taken part in a three day intensive training on Client-Oriented Provider Efficiency (COPE) course organized by the hospital administration. The event ran from April 19-21, 2023. According to the Facilitator, Mr. Fombe Justine, the COPE training is an avenue to help staff to be customer focused. The training was also an opportunity for staff to develop their capacity at all levels and to build team spirit at work.

During the training, emphasis was made on the use of local resources to solve problems, to help community people easily accessed the hospital either in search of clients or trespassing to their farms. Today it is history.

Ngounso Baptist Hospital drill on Techniques to attract Clients into the Facility

Eleven Staff receive Labor Medals In Ngounso Baptist Hospital

Midwives of Bonaberi Baptist Hospital Douala have joined their counterparts worldwide on May 5, 2023 to celebrate the International Day of the Midwife (IDM 2023) which dates back to May 5, 1992. Ensuring a global recognition of the work of midwives and promoting the awareness of midwives importance in the provision of maternal and child care are the objectives of the yearly celebration.

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Mr. Ian Kinkoh, a midwife and President of the Nurses and Midwives Association of Cameroon, said: “On the international day of the midwife, we celebrate the exceptional contribution of the midwives to mankind emphasizing on accumulating statistics and evidence that midwifery is a crucial component to maternal and child care.”

According to WHO, maternal mortality is unacceptable high. About 287,000 women died during and following pregnancy and after childbirth in 2020 with about 70% occurring in low and middle-income countries. Mr. Ian Kinkoh in his exposé highlighted that evidence from re-search conducted in 2021 reports that, 67% of maternal deaths, 64% of neonatal deaths, and 65% of stillbirth can be prevented through increasing investment in the midwifery profession thus accounting to about 4.3 million lives that can be saved every year.

According to Mr. Alphonse warned. “If proper hand hygiene at the right time the particular/intended outcome wouldn’t be achieved and adverse events will be recorded, ”

Investing in Midwives and Nurses is a prerequisite to best performances, as they constitute 50% of all health care professionals; this will solve 50% of health care issues globally.

The IDM is celebrated this year under the theme, “Together again: from evidence to reality”. According to Mr. Ian, this theme calls on everyone (Government, Health Organizations, Stakeholders, NGOs...) to invest in midwives in order to unravel the disturbing maternal and infant mortality rates. It also charges the midwives, to remain committed and ensure evidence based practices in their work. He took time to expatiate on midwifery practice and the modulus operandi of midwives pointing out the different areas in BBHD where they exercise among others; the Maternity, Antenatal Clinic Unit, and the Infant Welfare Clinic.

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The take home message was that “Hand Hygiene at the right time using the right method gets rid of microbes even those resistant to antibiotics; this saves lives, together we can achieve and reduce the risk of infections in the hospitals and communities.”

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BBHD celebrates International Day of the Midwife

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BBHD alerted to remain Resilient on Hand Hygiene Day

World Hand Hygiene Day (WHHD) is an international day to raise awareness about hand hygiene commemorated every 5th of May. The campaign theme for this year is “Together, we can Accelerate Action to prevent infections and antimicrobial resistance in health care and build a culture of safety and quality in which hand hygiene improvement is given high priority.” This campaign theme is buttressed by the slogan “Accelerate action together: SAVE LIVES – Clean Your Hands.”

The “Save Lives: Clean Your Hands” campaign slogan launched by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2009 is to maintain global promotion, visibility and sustainability of hand hygiene in health care and bring people together in support of hand hygiene improvement around the world.

BBHD joined the International community on May 4 and 5, 2023 to sensitize the staff and patients on Hand Hygiene and its importance.

On May 4, during morning devotions, Mr. Ndze Akphone, member of the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) committee in a presentation noted that Hand Hygiene is the single most important action we can perform in order to limit the spread of infections. This is supported by UNICEF DATA which states that half a million people die each year from diarrhoea or acute respiratory infections that could have been prevented by 30% and 20% respectively with good hand hygiene.

In order to limit the spread of nosocomial infections and other hospital related ailments, staff were challenged to perform hand hygiene correctly and at the right time. Reference was made to “My Five Moments”: “If you don’t perform hand hygiene at the right time the particular/intended outcome wouldn’t be achieved and adverse events will be recorded,” Mr. Alphonse warned.

A Call to Action was laid down calling on the Administration, IPC committee, Pharmacy and all staff (both old and new) to ensure there is availability of hand hygiene gadgets in the hospital, proper supervision and consciousness to proper hand hygiene and best practices. Chapel service ended with a practical demonstration from 2 staff on hand disinfection using an alcohol based solution.

On May 5, 2023, Madam Tchoum Njameni, a Nurse Screener delivered a bilingual health talk to patients and caregivers at the Out Patient Department (OPD) on why, when, and the importance of hand hygiene. She ended by demonstrating to the attentive crowd how to wash their hands using clean running water and soap, insisting on the fact that the water must not be stagnant.

The take home message was that “Hand Hygiene at the right time using the right method gets rid of microbes even those resistant to antibiotics; this saves lives, together we can accelerate these actions and reduce the risk of infections in the hospitals and communities.” Happy World Hand Hygiene Day. Keep your hands Clean!
BBHD Commemorates World Nurses Week and International Nurses Day

The World Nurses’ Week observed each year from May 6-12 has been given the desired recognition at Bonaberi Baptist Hospital Douala (BBHD). The celebration of the International Day of the Midwife on May 5, 2023 in BBHD was a blueprint to plunge the nurses into a hub of activities to commemorate their week.

Celebrated under theme, “Nurses Make a Difference: Anytime, Anywhere – Always,” they were challenged by the Administration throughout the week to emulate the theme in order to give a good account before God. The week honoured the unwavering commitment of nurses to their patients, and the value they provide to the unified health care team in accomplishing their medical readiness mission. Friday, May 12, marked the 49th edition of the International Nurses Day (IND) under the sub theme, “Our nurses, Our Future”.

The day was created in 1974 by the International Council of Nurses (ICN) in remembrance of Florence Nightingale the founder of Modern Nursing. The D-day was flamboyant as the nurses in their immaculate white and amicable voices sang their Anthem which paved way for other interesting items. Madam Bukeh Cynthia, Nurse at BBHD, highlighted that the IND recognizes the dedication and compassionate care provided by nurses who serve as primary health care givers to patients. This was followed by the presentation of three heart touching poems on nursing among others the “Anatomy of a Nurse”.

Mr. Yong Alain, Assistant SNS called upon the nurses to take pride in their profession. “In my days, it was encouragement and refreshment. Improvement on time management and nurse/patient relationship was the central point of this health education. He reiterated that if there are more opportunities to educate people on the dangers of NCDs, many lives will be saved. “A good number of people have been referred to the hospital for confirmation of diagnosis either Hypertension or Diabetes”. Madam Wirnkar noted.

The nurses’ activities gave everyone at morning devotions a sense of humour and a spirit of work cogitation. This included among others presentation of the week’s theme, a briefing on the responsibilities of nurses, and a highly heated debate (with motion - Nurses are responsible for the falling standards of health care). The objective of the day, it was highlighted, is to raise awareness about the contribution and challenges of the nursing profession, while allowing Nurses to take pride in their profession.

The events rounded off with a round table Conference and refreshment. Improvement on time management and nurse/patient relationship was the compendium the nurses brought out from their discourse for a better nursing future.

Nurses Day in Bonaberi
Bonaberi Baptist Hospital Douala

Salga Baptist Health Center (SBHC) has taken part in celebrations marking the world AIDS orphans day, observed each year on May 7. This year’s commemoration held under the theme, “Children without families are the most vulnerable people in the world.” It was first of its kind as staff and some men of God assembled on May 8, 2023 in the chapel to observe the day in grand style.

Drawing inspiration from James 1:27, Chaplain Nsembo Elvis noted that as Christians, our compassion is simply a response to the love that God has already shown us. He encouraged everyone to be involved and not be passive as far as caring for these vulnerable children is concerned.

An orphan is a child who has lost one or both parents. These children lack something most of us take for granted: parents. An orphan once said, “People often ask me how it feels to be an orphan? In response, I ask them, how it feels to have a family” - an extract from the Director of Health Services’ speech presented by Mme Lagchu Emelda, the head of department of care and treatment center.

The chief of center greeted and welcomed everyone present especially the men of God who were present. He further noted that this was the first of its kind in SBH as he encouraged everyone to be fully involved in meeting the needs of these vulnerable children.

Staff and religious leaders raised financial support to assist these vulnerable children living with HIV and AIDS. The day ended with a word of prayer by Rev. Phubise Christian.

EHR Setup at MBHD

An Electronic Health Record (EHR) has been installed at Mboppi Baptist Hospital Douala to better capture the work done on the health facility. The Electronic Health Record is the digital version of a patient’s paper chart, a real-time patient-centered record that makes information available instantly and securely to authorized users. It contains a patient’s medical history, diagnoses, medication, treatment plans, immunization dates, allergies, radiology images and laboratory and test results. It also has all features from registration, vital signs, payment, and rooms of various consultants.

The installation of the DAMA software took place on April 28 by the Personnel Manager of CBCHS, Mr. Ndosak George who worked relentlessly in close collaboration with the technical services department of the hospital. On the day of installation, he encouraged the staff to be optimistic about the software and be ready to embrace the new change. He outlined some benefits of EHR such as improved patient care, increased patient participation, improved care coordination, improved diagnostics and patient outcome, and improved efficiencies and cost saving.

The OPD (outpatient department) registration was the first target to try the software which was a great success as close to 400 patients were registered via the software. Data being the translation of clinical work, the clerks were also capacitated to understand clinical issues to help them better understand what they are inputting into the system.

Reports say, the clerks were swift to master the software at a very short interval making registration go at a faster rate. “I used to experience shortage in finance but with this software onboard for the past few days, shortages has been minimized,” confessed one of the clerks. Other departments such as dental, pediatrics and all consultation rooms are currently using the software.

The software automatically calculates bills so consultants do not stress on bills calculation. “DAMA has not come to add work but to ease work,” said Mr. Ndosak.

PRAYER CONCERNS

1. Pray for journey mercies for all the supervising staff as they travel to various institutions for supervision.
2. Pray that all the patients who come to receive services in our institutions will experience the saving power of God and will give glory to Him.
3. Pray for all medical doctors of the CBC – that God would bless them for the services they render and pray for grace upon them and their families.
4. Pray for all CBC nurses and the various attached services. Ask for God’s guidance, protection and grace upon them as they serve.
5. Thank God for all CBC Health chaplains, social workers, etc. Pray that God will give them extra ordinary insights as they counsel, pray and teach both staff and patients.
6. Pray for the reforms being carried out in the CBC under the leadership of the Executive President.

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Cameroon Health and Education Fund (CHEF)
PO Box 330
Rapid City, SD 57709

If you have any questions, contact:
CHEF President,
Alison LaFrence, MD
Home address: 15 Geneva Blvd
Burnsville, MN 55330
Home phone: 952-898-4054
Cell phone: 952-237-4095
E-mails: adljpe@frontiernet.net