



**CAMEROON BAPTIST CONVENTION  
HEALTH SERVICES**  
**Director of Health Services**  
**P.O. BOX 1 Bamenda, North West Region**  
**Republic of Cameroon**  
Email: [Samuelngum@cbchealthservices.org](mailto:Samuelngum@cbchealthservices.org)  
Website: [www.cbchealthservices.org](http://www.cbchealthservices.org)

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS OF THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES (SAMUEL NGUM) PRESENTED DURING THE 2024 LEADERS MEETING HOLDING FROM NOVEMBER 18-19, 2024, AT THE CBC HEALTH SERVICES RESOURCE CENTER MVAN-YAOUNDE.**

Distinguished Leaders of the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC) Health Services, it is with great honor and gratitude that I address this assembly for the first time as Director of Health Services. I bring you the greetings of the Central Administration of the Cameroon Baptist Convention under the leadership of the Executive President, the Rev. Dr Nditemeh Charlemagne, the Health Board Chair, Prof. Judith Torimiro, and the Vice Chair, Prof. Helen Kimbi. They send their best wishes and prayers for the success of this critical leadership meeting.

It is honourable for me to begin by expressing profound gratitude to Prof. Tih Pius, my predecessor, whose four decades of visionary leadership laid the foundation for the CBC Health Services we proudly steward today. Prof. Tih's commitment to excellence and innovation and the work of missionaries, expatriates, funders, and developmental partners has set a benchmark for us as we continue building on the legacy of providing holistic, quality, and Christ-centered care to all who need it.

I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to you all, our leaders across the CBC Health Services, for your dedication and resilience in advancing the mission and vision of the CBC Health Services. Your efforts in leading your teams, often under challenging conditions, do not go unnoticed, and I deeply value your unwavering commitment.

Within this year and in recent months, the CBC Health Services family has experienced profound losses, with several esteemed staff members passing on to glory. This also includes two of our missionaries whose contributions have left an indelible mark on this institution. We mourn the loss of Pa Dr. Thom Welty, who died on November 16, 2024. His decades of dedicated service have significantly shaped the development of key services such as our hospitals, the Non-Communicable Diseases Prevention and Control Program, the Life Abundant Primary Health Care (LAP) Program, our disability programs, Women's Health, and Central Pharmacy, leadership development of CBC Health Services staff among others. His visionary leadership and tireless commitment to improving healthcare in resource-limited settings remain a legacy we will always cherish. We also remember with deep gratitude Pa. Geoff Mitchell, the Life Abundant Primary Health Care Systems Administrator from the UK. Ma Pat Mitchell says, "Geoff died peacefully after a long illness" on Friday, October 27, 2024. His contributions advanced the reach and impact of LAP in delivering community-based health care. Their lives were a testament to service, compassion, and a relentless pursuit of the CBC Health Services' mission. As we honor their memory together with those of our staff, may we find renewed strength to carry forward the work they so passionately devoted their lives to. This year, we were walloped by the hands of death, losing two staff

at the Central Pharmacy (Mr Njerim Paul and Shafe Ita), one at Meskine (Kan Maxwell), an SRN at Etoug-Ebe (Ndishey Italia), one recently at Ekoumdoum (Fon Bernard) ...

We gather today at a time when unprecedented challenges and opportunities mark the global and national health landscapes. Globally, health systems strive to adapt to post-pandemic realities, emerging diseases, climate-related health risks, and economic pressures. In Cameroon, we continue to grapple with the need for accessible and affordable healthcare, ongoing insecurity, and the impact of economic hardship on healthcare delivery. As leaders of one of Cameroon's largest faith-based health organizations, we are called not only to respond to these realities but to provide hope and solutions. This mandate demands that we strengthen our systems, promote resilience, and sustain the values and principles that define us as a Christ-centered health ministry.

Since assuming office in May 2024, I have desired to visit all our facilities and programs to connect with the staff, understand their challenges, and chart a collaborative path forward. So far, I have visited some of our facilities, including those under Nkwon Zone, Bafoussam, Littoral, Southwest, and Center Regions. While I have not yet visited all facilities, plans are in place to ensure I connect with all zones soon.

For my time in the office, several critical themes emerged from discussions with staff and other stakeholders, including but not limited to sustainability and stewardship, resilience and systems thinking, quality improvement, and patient care, patient satisfaction and trusted systems, solid values and ethics, affordable and sustainable financing, effective human resource development and management, strong partnerships, community engagement, and high-performing pharmaceutical systems. Universal Health Coverage. Please permit me to expound on these themes.

### **1. Sustainability and Stewardship**

In a dynamic and resource-constrained healthcare environment, sustainability is non-negotiable. We are called to be stewards of the resources entrusted to us, ensuring that they are used wisely and strategically to sustain our mission and services over the long term. We are, therefore, expected to think innovatively about how we resource and deliver care while preserving the integrity of our ministry.

### **2. Resilience and System Thinking**

CBC Health Services operates in a highly unpredictable environment marked by economic volatility, sociopolitical instability, and global health crises. Resilience is the ability to adapt and thrive despite these challenges. System thinking requires us to look at our organization holistically and understand the interconnectedness of services, facilities, and staff. We have to look, think, and act beyond our noses.

### **3. Quality Improvement and Patient Care**

Patient care lies at the heart of our mission. In an increasingly competitive healthcare landscape, quality is a key differentiator that builds patient trust and loyalty. Continuous quality improvement (CQI) will ensure that we are not just meeting but exceeding standards of care. Use the CQI tools if you value some of the tools Dr. Welty left with us via Engender Health (COPE, Supportive Supervision, etc.). Use IPC/WASH tools, MCH QI tools, PMEL tools, Clinical audits, and Pharmaceutical QA/QC.

#### **4. Patient Satisfaction and Trust**

A healthcare system thrives when patients feel cared for, respected, and valued. Building a trusted healthcare system will require transparency, empathy, and responsiveness to patient needs. Trust is a cornerstone of patient retention and community engagement. Trust is the currency of all businesses. In many of our facilities, some of our colleagues prefer to toast patients around town either for surgery, a laboratory of imaging investigations, or medicine. If the reason is genuine, we salute that, but if the reason is for personal gains, I assure you that that will be short-lived.

#### **5. Values and Culture**

The CBC Health Services is rooted in Christian compassion, integrity, and service principles. Our values and culture must guide every decision and action, ensuring we remain true to our identity while adapting to modern healthcare needs.

#### **6. Affordable and Sustainable Financing**

Financial barriers should not limit access to healthcare. At the same time, providing quality services requires adequate funding. Therefore, we must balance affordability and sustainability, which are critical for our organization.

#### **7. Effective Human Resource Development, Management and hiring**

The success of any healthcare system depends on its workforce. Motivated, skilled, and well-supported staff are central to achieving our goals. We will invest in addressing challenges such as burnout, inadequate training, and retention while cautiously hiring skilled and support staff. Make use of the CBC's Education and Training Institutions, promote them, own them, and take pride in them. (BTSHP, CECPEs, RTCE, BIHS, BSPH, BHIPS).

#### **8. Building and Sustaining Strong Partnerships**

Collaboration with local and international partners has been a hallmark of our success. Partnerships bring resources, expertise, and networks that help us achieve our goals. As we move forward, we must consolidate existing relationships and build new ones to address emerging needs.

#### **9. Accountability and Stewardship in Data and Systems**

In today's data-driven world, making informed decisions requires accurate and reliable data. Effective management of data-related operations ensures that our interventions are evidence-based and impactful. We will study EMR, EHR, and DAMA to determine their added value to our operations. Every investment needs good returns, and we will not invest in duplicate efforts.

#### **10. High-Performing Pharmaceutical System**

A well-functioning pharmaceutical system is at the core of effective healthcare delivery. The availability, accessibility, affordability, and rational use of medicines are critical to improving patient outcomes. In the CBC Health Services, a high-performing pharmaceutical system ensures that life-saving medications reach those who need them while supporting efforts to prevent and treat diseases. As part of our strategy to enhance and expand the operations of the Central Pharmacy to respond to the pharmaceutical needs of CBC Health Services, healthcare providers within the country, and the Subregion, CBC Health

Services is engaging in a comprehensive Capacity Assessment of the Central Pharmacy to improve performance.

## 11. Research, Innovation, and Partnerships

Research, innovation, and development are critical pillars for driving progress and ensuring the long-term success of the CBC Health Services. In today's rapidly evolving healthcare landscape, these elements enable us to address emerging challenges, improve the quality of care, and remain at the forefront of healthcare delivery in Cameroon and beyond. Establishing the **Office of Research, Innovation, and Partnership** is a strategic move to ensure that CBC Health Services remains at the forefront of healthcare innovation and excellence. This will be established at HSC Mutengene. The following vital factors are preserves of this office:

- **Enhancing Health Services:** The office will coordinate relevant research to identify best practices and evidence-based strategies for improving health care delivery.
- **Driving Innovation:** Focus on developing practical and effective health solutions, technologies, and methodologies that address current and future health challenges.
- **Building Partnerships:** Cultivating local and international partnerships to leverage resources, expertise, and support for health initiatives.
- **Promoting Sustainability:** Ensuring that health programs and interventions are sustainable, scalable, and aligned with global health goals such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

12. **Universal Health Coverage (UHC):** This requires that all people receive health care without financial hardship (Promotive, preventive, treatment, rehabilitative, palliative, and end-of-life care). SDG 2030, launched in 2015, requires that we leave no one behind. To achieve this, we must return to Primary Health Care. You must have been feeling the pressure in your various facilities already, as this is a political will/choice. Be sensitive. I recommend you read SDG3.8, the book; "Primary Health Care Now More Than Ever" by WHO, and the PHC Declaration of Alma Ata in 1978.

Dear leader, these themes will serve as the building blocks of our mandate, enabling us to strengthen our system, promote resilience, and sustain the CBC Health Services' mission of providing holistic, quality care in Christ's name. Through your commitment and collaboration, we will rise to meet the challenges of our time, ensuring that our organization remains a beacon of hope for generations to come.

## Recent and Ongoing Achievements

Despite our challenges, we have made significant strides, and I wish to highlight a few:

1. *Oncology Center of Excellence, Mbingo Baptist Hospital:* Construction is ongoing, and specialists are being trained to ensure a state-of-the-art facility that meets national and subregional oncology needs. The structure includes a bunker for two linear accelerators, a Patient Hostel, and eventually, a four-storey building Oncology Clinic with wards.
2. *Education Building at MBH.* This is ongoing and will host mainly the BIHS.

3. *Maternal and Child Health at Ndu Baptist Hospital*: Thanks to the support of the Wimbun community and the *Block OPD Block* thanks to UNDP, this project will enhance patient access to services in Donga-Mantung and beyond.
4. *Surgical ward, theatre, and Doctors' Residence at Finkwi Baptist Health Center*: This project, in partnership with the Babungo community, will improve surgical care and provider housing.
5. *Rehabilitation Training Center Ombe - Mutengene*: Near completion, it is already hosting students in a world-class facility.
6. *Children's Hospital Project, Mutengene*: Promising progress has been made, with stakeholders aligning on a shared vision for this transformative initiative. This will be constructed at the HSC Mutengene.
7. *We have continuously paid salaries, taxes & CNPS, and the AFD loan*. Despite this, we still owe huge unpaid bills to our local suppliers, about 1.4 billion. Many of our facilities owe DRF bills, with BBH and MBH owing about 1.3 billion. As a system, we are alive and moving forward

These projects reflect our commitment to strengthening health services to benefit communities and the nation. They stand as a testament to what can be achieved when working with partners, communities, and donors. .

Today's meeting is an opportunity for us to align on the state of our organization, share insights, and deliberate on how to sustain our work amid growing challenges. We must ensure everyone's contributions are valued, as each of us plays a critical role in the CBC Health Services ecosystem.

As we gather, let us focus our energy on building our system, ensuring it stands as a beacon of hope, quality, and resilience. Let us guard against actions that could tear down what we have so painstakingly built.

We must avoid the passive-aggressive strategies that have characterized my first 6 months in office and the act of hiding our faces and blowing steam. Some of us are jubilant about the current controversies in the CBC and even fanning it. I want to assure you, as Matthew 6:18 says, "... I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail."

We acknowledge that we are in a challenging season. However, as system builders, God has called us to rise above our differences and focus on the shared vision of providing quality care to express Christ's love. Anything outside this is a distraction. Let us be reminded of Esther 4:14, which speaks to being called "for such a time as this." God has placed each of us here to steward this ministry faithfully. Despite our difficulties, we must work together to achieve the vision, knowing that our labor is not in vain in the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58).

As we move forward, I encourage you to renew your commitment, knowing that the CBC Health Services remains a ministry of hope, healing, and transformation. Let us consolidate partnerships, strengthen our resilience, and focus on sustaining this system to outlive us and future generations.

Once again, I appreciate every one of you for your dedication. May God continue to guide and bless the work of our hands. As you go, bring my greetings to your families and colleagues and appreciate them on our behalf for their contribution.

I wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a prosperous and peaceful new year, in accordance with our theme for 2025, "Peace be with you."

God Bless you

God Bless the CBC Health Services

God Bless the Cameroon Baptist Convention

Samuel Ngum, PGDip, MSc., (International Health)  
Director, CBC Health Services