



BWINDI COMMUNITY HOSPITAL NEWSLETTER

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December 2009



Health Care for Children in Bwindi

In the last newsletter, we told you about the early success of the Child Health Access Programme (CHAP), and how the number of children seen at the Hospital had increased dramatically since we reduced the price of care. This trend has continued as more and more children have been registered into the programme. We now see more than 800 children each month, and we think that as more children are registered with the scheme it will even rise to 1,200 a month.

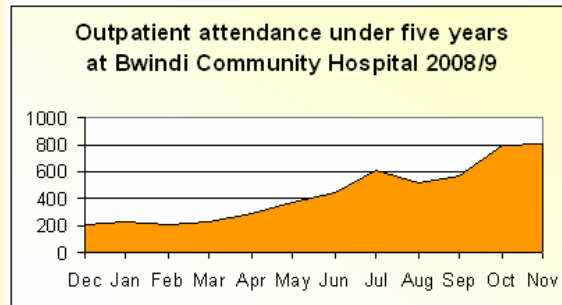


Sincere and her mother at the Hospital

Sincere will have to spend two weeks or more at the Hospital before fully recovering from malnutrition. While she receives treatment, her mother will benefit from teaching sessions about nutrition, family planning and prevention of malaria, all of which will help improve the wellbeing of her family after she returns home.

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Number of children seen at the Hospital

Sincere is 9 months old and is one of the thousands of children who have benefited from CHAP. She is the eighth child of her mother and has just been brought to the Hospital with malnutrition. A child of her age should be almost ready to begin walking, but because of the disease, she does not even crawl, a step that most children pass at around six months.



Looking after children on the ward

Although her Mum noticed her condition more than a month ago, she didn't bring her to the Hospital because she was worried she would not be able to pay for treatment. Fortunately, Sincere and her brother and sister, who are all under five years old, registered with CHAP last week, and they will only have to pay a nominal charge. We will also get the chance to talk with Sincere's mother about contraception.

Like Sincere, there are thousands of children in this community who now have access to quality health care at BCH under CHAP. We are looking forward to the time when all 60,000 people in this community have access to excellent health care at the Hospital at the time of need through the community health insurance plan we are introducing.



Safe Deliveries in Bwindi



Alice with mothers at the hostel

Every woman has the right to a safe delivery. So many women are now making the choice to give birth at Bwindi Community Hospital that the labour ward is our busiest area, and the Waiting Mothers Hostel is full to capacity. We are making our contribution towards Millennium Development Goal 5 – to reduce pregnancy-related deaths.

It hasn't always been this way. It used to be hard for women to get to the Hospital on time. Many people walk for a day to reach us, and if women waited to begin the journey to until they went into labour, they never made it here in time to deliver. We heard stories about babies being born by the side of the road to exhausted mothers.

We opened the Waiting Mother's Hostel in 2008. Women who are a few weeks from their due date can stay, without charge, to await their delivery. While they wait the nurse in charge of the Hostel, Alice, teaches the mothers-to-be about nutrition, sleeping under mosquito nets, how to

care for their baby, water and sanitation, personal hygiene, and family planning. The moment they go into labour they are able to access the Hospital's maternity services from the team of eight midwives.

Three years ago we were only delivering 12 babies a month in the Hospital and we were seeing very few women for contraception. Now we deliver more than 100 babies every month, see 300 women each month in our pregnancy clinics, and see more than 500 women for family planning. Out of the 1,000 deliveries at Bwindi Community Hospital last year there was only one maternal death - a fifth of the national average.

We are pleased that we have recently been given money to build an extension to the Waiting Mothers Hostel, increasing the number of beds from 14 to 60. This will enable us to cope with the extra deliveries that we hope will take place at the Hospital each month. We are now looking for funds to expand our maternity ward and to support the running of this very successful programme.



Mothers staying on our maternity ward

Byumba and Community Health



Jacob at work in Byumba

In the last newsletter we told you about our new Health Centre in Byumba. Although Byumba is only 6 months old, Patric and Julius, the two nurses there, are very busy looking after a population of over 5,000 people in a remote and poor area, including a community of Batwa pygmies. We now need to hire more staff in Byumba to cope with the demand.

When Byumba first opened its doors, malaria and diarrhoea were the most common cases that Patric and Julius saw. Most of the diseases in this area are preventable, and so they have devoted lots of time to teaching the community about prevention - the use of mosquito nets, nutrition, accident prevention, and good hygiene and sanitation. As a result, the numbers of patients coming in with malaria and diarrhoea have already reduced.

Every second Wednesday of the month, the Dental team from the Hospital travel to Byumba for a dental clinic and for teaching sessions about preventing tooth disease. Each Friday midwives go to run pregnancy clinics and family planning sessions, and once a month a doctor visits to deal with difficult cases.

Although there is still a long way to go, we are happy with the progress we are making in teaching the Byumba community about health and bringing services closer to the very poorest - , none of which would be possible were it not for the generosity of all the people who support our work. We still need donations for our community health programme and Byumba Health Centre. Please visit www.bwindihospital.com to find out how you can help.

World AIDS day in Bwindi

The theme for World AIDS Day this year, December 1st, is 'Universal Access and Human Rights'. At BCH, we focus on helping the poorest to access the services available through the Hospital. Our vision is "A healthy and productive community, free from preventable disease, and with excellent health services accessible to all"

HIV has not gone away for the 1,300 HIV positive people that get their care from our Hospital and the mobile HIV clinics that we run in six different places in the Bwindi area. But instead of HIV being a death sentence, we are able to give people drugs that keep them alive and well. This year we are focusing on helping men to access our services. Although men in this area are just as likely as women to have HIV, they are less likely to be tested. We test more than 1,000 people each month, and want at least 500 of these to be men.

Over 120 people living with HIV attend our monthly Patient Support Group meetings, and these patients have formed a lively drama group. Adah is an expert patient who works for the Hospital and spends her time teaching people about the disease and how to live healthily when HIV positive. Sometimes she travels to homes to find patients who have missed appointments. In a very short time the HIV services in Bwindi have gone from being non-existent to some of the best in the country.



Expert Patient George Bitti leading the Patient Support Group choir on World AIDS Day

Specialists Clinics

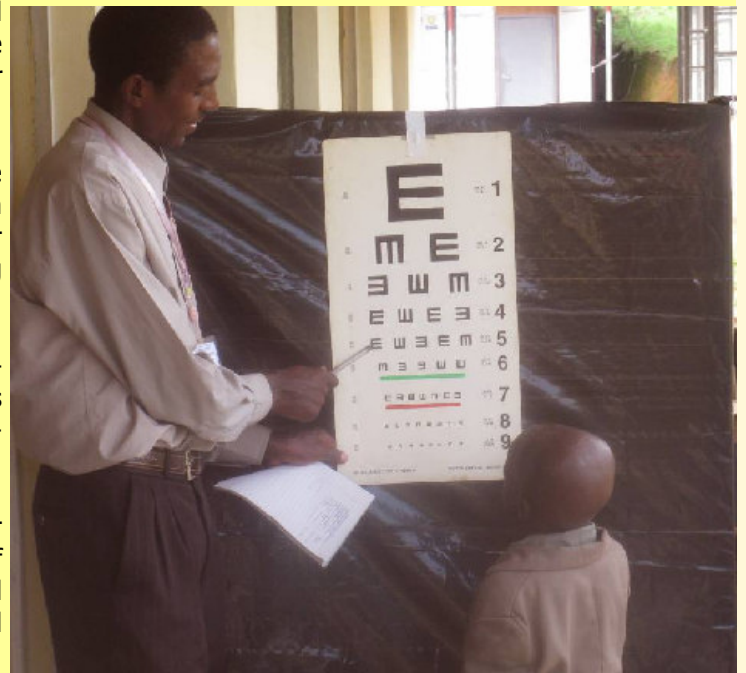
In order to improve the management of long-term medical conditions at the Hospital, a number of specialised clinics are being introduced to give the patients more attention and better services.

In February, the Hospital introduced an epilepsy clinic. We started with only 13 patients, but now look after more than fifty. Many of these are children, and Robert, the head of our Children's Ward, sees the children and their parents, giving advice about how to properly manage and control seizures.

The month of October saw the opening of three other important clinics: eyes, hypertension and diabetes. Dr. Mark Astill is overseeing these clinics, and each week the number of patients we see continues to grow.

More than 50 people have so-far been seen in the Eye clinic for treatment of sight-threatening diseases or for the provision of glasses. In the surgery clinic we see patients with hernias and other important conditions, and many of them are operated upon the next day.

People with hypertension and diabetes receive treatment and education about how to manage their conditions. The hypertension clinic now looks after over 100 patients. We have plans for starting skin, mental health and children clinics in the near future.



Patrick conducting an eye clinic in October



Give the Gift of Health and Hope in Bwindi for Christmas



For Christmas this year, buy your friends and family a gift that makes a difference. Give the gift of health, opportunity, and hope to someone much less fortunate living in Uganda. Instead of a DVD, give a mosquito net. Instead of a tie, provide food for a malnourished child. Instead of an iPod, give a pregnant woman a safe delivery. What the world needs is not another thing, but another person doing caring things.

All money from Bwindi Community Hospital Christmas Gifts goes directly to the Hospital - helping us to help some of the poorest people in Uganda have the opportunity that many of us already have- to live a healthy and productive life.

When you purchase a gift from the list below, we'll send you a card within 24 hours, which you can then give as a gift. The card explains how the gift that has been given will help improve the lives of families in Bwindi. *Please visit our website to preview the cards for each gift: www.bwindihospital.com*



-\$25 (£15) Gives people the Gift of Knowledge
- an HIV (CD4) test

-\$50 (£30) Gives ten families the Gift of Protection
- mosquito nets to sleep under

-\$100 (£60) Gives the Gift of Healthy Childhood -
the care that we give to a malnourished child staying at our Hospital for two weeks

-\$250 (£150) Gives the Gift of Life- a Caesarean Section saving the life of a mother and her child at Bwindi Community Hospital

-\$500 (£300) Gives the Gift of Health Care - three months salary for a nurse looking after patients in our Hospital

-\$1,500 (£900) Gives the Gift of Hope - to hundreds of Batwa pygmies and other people in the remote area of Byumba who had nowhere to easily access HIV testing, dental services, family planning, ante-natal care and other treatment services before we opened a Health Centre earlier this year

To purchase a gift send us an email today to bwindicommunityhospital@gmail.com and we will respond within 24 hours or call us on + 256(0) 70 334 2891

All donation details and links can be found on our website: www.bwindihospital.com.

You can make a gift aided donation through our UK charity:

Friends of Bwindi Community Health Centre

Details are at:

www.bwindifriends.co.uk/bwindi/how-to-donate.html

You can make a tax deductible donation through our US charity:

The Kellermann Foundation

P.O.Box 1901

Penn Valley, CA 95946

(530) 432-3201

www.kellermannfoundation.org/donate.htm

