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Nursing Tutors, Students Highlight Changes Made through Partnership during HHS Secretary's Visit

US Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius visited Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) in Dar es Salaam July 22, taking part in a roundtable discussion conducted by partners whose health systems strengthening projects have been supported by the US Government. The high-level delegation included Dr. Mary Wakefield, Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration.

Professor Kisalli Palangyo, Deputy Vice Chancellor of MUHAS, opened the roundtable, which was facilitated by Angela Makota, Human Capacity Development Program Officer and Site Officer for CDC/Tanzania.

Nursing tutors and students who have benefitted from the Tanzania Nursing Initiative — a partnership project led by the MUHAS School of Nursing and managed by AIHA's HIV/AIDS Twinning Center — participated in the event, sharing how the initiative has improved nursing education in the country.

things, focused on improving access to up-to-date educational resources and helping schools transition from theoretical learning to more hands on, skills-based training.

These efforts have included the distribution of International Council of Nurses mobile libraries, as well as skills labs that contain mannequins and other resources for practicing clinical procedures in a safe environment.

"Before we got the Mobile Library, the only books I had access to were from the 1980s. These were so outdated and there was no material on HIV/AIDS at all," said Jacqueline Mgasa, a student at Mirembe School of Nursing in Dodoma.

"HIV is a huge problem in my community and the new resources have really helped me gain a better understanding of prevention and treatment options. This makes me feel more confident in my ability to provide care to people once I finish my studies and begin my nursing practice," she explained.

According to Mgasa, the skills lab Mirembe received was another welcome addition.

"When I first saw all the mannequins and models, I was so excited! I was really nervous about being able to perform certain procedures,

like giving injections," she admitted, noting that she and the other students used to practice on oranges. "That always seemed so artificial, but the mannequins are so lifelike. Now, when I am not comfortable with my skills, I can go to the lab and practice over and over until the procedure becomes second nature. It is a really great opportunity and I know it will make me a better nurse," she said.

Juliet Chugulu, a Nurse Tutor at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical College, also gave her perspective on the learning tools provided to her school through the Tanzania Nursing Initiative.

"As a teacher, I have been able to update my own knowledge by accessing the resources of the Mobile Library, particularly on HIV/AIDS. Of course, that is a big help and boosts my confidence because I know I am providing accurate, up-to-date information to my students," she says.

"The training tools in the skills lab really bring training to life for the students and it is so great to see them so excited about the practical training. Also, I am able to easily see when students are doing something wrong and correct them accordingly. I can also encourage additional practice when needed, so students can really hone their skills."



US Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius led a high-level delegation who visited Tanzania in late July to learn more about the impact of PEPFAR-funded projects there.

Thanks to support from PEPFAR and CDC/Tanzania, the Tanzania Nursing Initiative has, among other

AIHA Hosts Health Professions Education Meeting in South Africa



Dr. Sheila Ryan.



Professor Ahmed Wadee.



Breakout session panel on clinical training methods.



Partners networked and shared resources during the Twinning Center Marketplace held on the second day of the meeting.

Some 113 health and allied professionals from eight African countries and the United States gathered in Johannesburg, South Africa, from June 20-22, 2011, for AIHA's 2011 HIV/AIDS Twinning Center Partners Meeting.

Hosted by the University of the Witwatersrand Medical School, this three-day event — titled "Partnering to Strengthen Health and Social Service Education in Africa" — was designed to provide a forum for PEPFAR-funded institutional twinning partnerships working to improve pre- and in-service education and training programs to share best practices and develop strategies for cross-partnership collaboration at both the country and regional levels.

The meeting kicked off on June 20 with opening remarks from Chair of AIHA's Board of Directors, Dr. Sheila Ryan, who welcomed partners, staff, and invited guests. Professor Ahmed Wadee, the newly appointed Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of the Witwatersrand and a champion of international collaboration, told participants, "The Twinning Center partnerships you are engaged in are vitally important to all our countries ... the teaching and research will push our efforts to strengthen health professions education forward."

Professor Ian Couper, Head of University of the Witwatersrand's Division of Rural Health, Centre for Rural Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, spoke next, saying that he was so pleased to discover the broad range of health and allied disciplines being addressed by Twinning Center partnerships across the continent.

For Wits, Couper said, the offer to engage in their partnership with the University of Colorado-Denver was a wonderful opportunity to learn from an institution with a wealth of knowledge and experience that is strengthening their program to train Clinical Associates, a new cadre of health professionals in South Africa.

"Developing further links within Africa, including finding more opportunities for South-South collaboration, will help us learn from each other and continue to grow," he continued.

The next person to speak was Susan Becker, Public Health Analyst with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Global HIV/AIDS Office. Dr. Becker, who manages AIHA's Twinning Center program portfolio at HRSA, explained that PEPFAR II's shift from emergency response to a more sustainability-focused approach stresses health system strengthening, including developing or expanding pre- and in-service training.

"More limited resources mean that we have to work smarter and that our programs must have a significant impact on meeting PEPFAR II's target of training 140,000 health-related professionals," she continued, noting that AIHA's Twinning Center partnerships are playing an important role by developing faculty and institutional capacity to train medical and social service workers.

"Twinning is much more than the one-way transfer of knowledge ... it builds sustainable capacity, is aligned with PEPFAR II strategies, and it gets results," she concluded.

Dr. Ryan took the floor again to introduce the Twinning

Center's new Program Director, Kelly Wolfe, who joined AIHA's Washington headquarters last month.

Following these welcoming remarks, panel presentations that provided each partnership with the opportunity to highlight their goals, objectives, and key accomplishments commenced.

The second day was more participatory in nature. Following a morning plenary session dedicated to implementation science and CDC research guidelines, a series of breakout sessions allowed for interactive discussions on topics ranging from clinical training methods and resource hubs to associations-building and curricula development. The day concluded with a market place of materials and resources from the different countries.

The final day focused on partnership and programmatic sustainability with presentations on building strong institutional relationships that can outlast US Government funding. Key strategies explored included integrating programs with governments, systems, and institutions. Other sessions focused on AIHA-supported activities such as the Volunteer Healthcare Corps and Learning Resource Centers, which strengthen opportunities to research and implement evidence-based practices and encourage collaboration with the South African Cochrane Centre. The proceedings was closed with

In addition to the Twinning Center partners, officials from the Free State Department of Health; US Government representatives from the Department of Health and Human Services, CDC, and PEPFAR; and other key strategic partners also participated in the meeting.

Arming Mozambican Nurses with Critical Leadership Skills, In-country Training Capacity

As Chief Nurse of the Reference Health Unit at the Central Hospital in Maputo, leadership skills are an essential job requirement for Safira Cuna.

After 34 years of practice, she was already an accomplished manager. But, she admits, her skills improved exponentially after she completed a year-long program supported by PEPFAR and CDC/Mozambique.

The Mozambique Nursing Leadership Institute (MNLI) was launched in August 2010 by the National Nursing Association of Mozambique (ANEMO) and St. Luke's School of Nursing at Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

The American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) provided technical support for MNLI, which brought together 38 senior-level nurses from all over Mozambique with the goal of strengthening their leadership skills and elevating the nursing profession in this East African nation of 22 million people.

In addition to an audience of Mozambican nurses, other participants included WHO and SANNAM representatives and twinning partners and nurse educators from Ethiopia and Tanzania, adding a regional approach to strengthening nursing leadership throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

"Nursing can truly be called a multidisciplinary profession and our teams are complex. Each member approaches things from a different angle, with a different perspective," Cuna says.

"MNLI helped me understand these differences among people and within my team,

which — in turn — has really helped improve service delivery in the Unit," she adds, noting that what she learned during the three sessions conducted by US experts over the past year has helped her improve operations despite very limited human and material resources.

Conflict management and effective interpersonal communication were two of the most important lessons she took away from the experience, according to Cuna.

"Being able to effectively solve conflicts is really at the heart of a manager's job. This is critical for keeping the health system functioning as it should," she explains, adding, "Strong communication skills go hand-in-hand with conflict management and are also essential for a nurse leader."

Because Mozambique has a weak human resource management system, Cuna points out, "We still have many conflicts in the workplace with no standard solutions. That is where training projects like MNLI can be a great help, but these opportunities are very rare. I feel fortunate to have been part of such a prestigious year-long course," she says.

As one of four MNLI participants selected to be in-country facilitators, Cuna is part of ANEMO's strategy for bringing more leadership training opportunities to nurses throughout Mozambique.

"During preparation as a facilitator, I greatly improved and refined my knowledge and skills in productive meeting planning and management, which really has helped

me make better use of the limited time we have for these professional development trainings," she says.

She and her co-facilitators put their new skills to the test, conducting their first training August 25-26, 2011, following the final session and their graduation from MNLI.

The US partners from St. Luke's School of Nursing and technical experts from AONE proudly passed the torch to the Mozambican trainers, who will carry out the leadership training in the future.

ANEMO's Executive Director, Dr. José António Chonape Davuca, had only positive things to say about the efforts of the Mozambican facilitators.

"The August training served to stimulate our nurses' interest in leadership, as well as to encourage them to reflect on their role within the workplace, particularly as it relates to improving quality of care," he explains. "It has helped increase their motivation, improve their professional confidence and self-esteem, and given them much-needed conflict management and organizational skills."

"What we learned through MNLI — the technical areas as well as the adult teaching methodology that was so interactive and made learning so enjoyable — really sets this course apart from all the others," Cuna says, concluding, "If we can have these trainings on a regular basis, it would be marvelous for the nursing profession in Mozambique."



Nurse Safira Cuna has gained much-needed leadership skills through the PEPFAR-supported Mozambique Nursing Leadership Institute conducted by ANEMO in cooperation with St. Luke's School of Nursing at Moravian College, AONE, and AIHA. Cuna now serves as a local trainer, passing along the knowledge and skills she learned to other nurses throughout Mozambique.

Twinning Center Partners at the Polytechnic of Namibia Open New Learning Resource Center



Namibia's Minister of Health and Social Services Dr. Richard Kamwi cuts the ribbon to officially open the new twinning partnership Learning Resource Center at the Polytechnic of Namibia's School of Health and Applied Sciences on June 24.

Twinning Center partners at the Polytechnic of Namibia celebrated the opening of a new Learning Resource Center (LRC) on June 24.

Namibia's Minister of Health, the Honorable Dr. Richard Kamwi, spoke at the gala opening ceremony in Windhoek, telling attendees, "The facility being launched here today is yet another manifestation of the Polytechnic's commitment to enhancing teaching and learning with up-to-date innovation."

Noting that the Ministry of Health expects that the new LRC will play an important role in ensuring that graduates from the School of Health and Applied Sciences are equipped with the most current knowledge and technical expertise, Kamwi stressed that the resulting improved access to evidence-based resources will surely make the task of "adequately preparing our students for battle at the frontier of public health ... controlling established and emerging diseases much easier."

The Polytechnic of Namibia has been engaged in an HIV/AIDS Twinning Center partnership with the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences since late 2007.

With support from the American people through PEPFAR and CDC/Namibia, partners established the country's first bachelor's degree program in medical technology. This program is now playing a crucial role in training lab professionals who will help improve HIV care by informing decisions related to the provision of antiretroviral therapy, as well as the diagnosis and treatment of opportunistic infections.

The new LRC will support the work of the partnership and the Polytechnic's ongoing efforts to train health and allied professionals by improving access to evidence-based knowledge resources available online, on CD-ROM, or hard copy. It will also help users to better assess existing practices and policies, which can have a significant impact of quality

of care and rational use of scarce resources.

Other honored speakers included Ms. Sue Gerber, Deputy Director of CDC/Namibia and Dr. Gert Gunzel, Vice Rector of Administration and Finance at the Polytechnic of Namibia. Professor Sylvester Moyo, Dean of the Polytechnic's School of Health and Applied Sciences served as the Master of Ceremonies.

Following the opening ceremony and ribbon cutting that officially marked the launch of the new LRC, noted Ethiopian epidemiologist Dr. Omar A. Abdulwadud presented a public lecture on the benefits of evidence-based clinical practices. Drs. Taryn Young and Tamara Kredon of the South African Cochrane Centre then conducted a training session on evidence-based research.

AIHA Appoints Kelly J. Wolfe as New Director of the HIV/AIDS Twinning Center

AIHA announced on May 9 that Kelly J. Wolfe has joined its headquarters staff as the Director of the HIV/AIDS Twinning Center. Ms. Wolfe's international development experience spans more than 24 years and includes technical expertise in HIV/AIDS, family planning, and public-private partnerships, as well as leadership and management capacity building of civil society organizations working within the healthcare sector in Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

"We are excited to welcome Ms. Wolfe as a senior member of our team," said AIHA Executive Director James P. Smith. "Her management skills and extensive background in the design, development, and facilitation of projects to strengthen NGOs in the developing world is a natural fit for the Twinning Center's partnerships, volunteer initiatives, and other complementary programs — many of which focus on strengthening pre- and in-service education and training programs to expand human resources for health in support of PEPFAR."

Prior to joining AIHA, Ms. Wolfe served as Team Leader and Senior Technical Advisor for NGO and Community Development in the Office of HIV/AIDS at USAID. She has held senior level positions with USAID's Office of Regional and Country Support, Population Services International (PSI), International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), and Interlog, Inc. Ms. Wolfe earned a Master of Public Health at the George Washington University and a Master of Education from Harvard University.

Strengthening Palliative Care in Zambia through Improved Access to Evidence-based Resources

On July 21, Twinning Center partners at the Palliative Care Association of Zambia (PCAZ) celebrated the opening of a Learning Resource Center (LRC) at their headquarters in Lusaka.

"Staff at most hospices have been trained to effectively manage pain in patients with life-limiting illnesses, but providing this care remains a challenge for most other health professionals. Even for home-based care providers, there comes a point when they need to offer palliative care," says PCAZ National Coordinator Njekwa Lumbwe.

"Evidence-based information is the key to building the knowledge base and skills that will give healthcare providers the confidence they need to provide quality palliative care to people who require these services and support," she continues, explaining that the new LRC

provides access to a wealth of up-to-date, evidence-based resources that will help inform and guide clinical practices and improve patient care.

This LRC supports the work of the partnership, as well as PCAZ's ongoing efforts to train health and allied caregivers, by improving access to evidence-based knowledge resources available online, on CD-ROM, or in hard copy. It also helps reinforce a more holistic approach to caring for patients with life-limiting illnesses by allowing users to better assess existing practices, which can have a significant impact of quality of care and rational use of scarce resources.

A delegation from Zambia's Ministry of Health — including Permanent Secretary Dr. Peter Mwaba, Director of Clinical Services Mr. Gardner Siakantu, Home-based Care

Specialist Ms. Veronica Muntaga, and Chief Physiotherapist Mr. Cleto Mweemba — attended the opening ceremony, which took place at PCAZ headquarters.

USAID Mission Director Dr. Susan Brems officially dedicated the LRC to the country of Zambia on behalf of the American people.

Since 2005, PCAZ has participated in a Twinning Center partnership with the African Palliative Care Association (APCA). With support from PEPFAR and USAID in Zambia, this alliance worked to develop institutional and human resource capacity at PCAZ and position the organization as Zambia's leading advocate for national palliative care policies and standards. Based on their success, PCAZ graduated to direct funding from the Twinning Center in September 2010.



USAID Mission Director in Zambia, Dr. Susan Brems, speaking at the opening of PCAZ's new LRC.



AIHA Regional Learning Resources Coordinator Sailas Nyareza (center) highlights some of the e-resources available at the LRC during a tour of the new center.

Livingstone General Hospital Launches Learning Resource Center, Evidence-based Practice Team

Partners at Livingstone General Hospital in Zambia celebrated the opening of a new Learning Resource Center (LRC), as well as the establishment of an Evidence-based Practice Team on August 31. These actions support implementation of improved clinical practices throughout all departments in the hospital.

CDC Country Director for Zambia Dr. Lawrence Marum and Mrs. Gladys Kristafor, Permanent Secretary for Zambia's Southern Province, were among the honored guests who attended the opening ceremonies. Other distinguished participants included key clinical staff from Livingstone General

Hospital: Dr. Muzaza Ntele, Head of Clinical Care; Dr. Robert Fubisha, Head of the Pediatric HIV/AIDS Center of Excellence; and Dr. Kenneth Kapembwa, Head of Internal Medicine and the Evidence-based Practice Team Leader.

Partners have been working to improve ART and related care for children living with HIV by training pharmacists at the Pediatric HIV/AIDS Centers of Excellence located at both Zambian partner institutions. Two key objectives of the partnership have been to better integrate pharmacists into HIV care teams and to build local capacity to implement ongoing professional development and

training opportunities in clinical pharmacy. This LRC will support the work of the partnership by improving access to evidence-based knowledge resources available online, on CD-ROM, or hard copy. It will also help users to better assess existing practices and policies, which can have a significant impact of quality of care and rational use of scarce resources.

With support from PEPFAR and CDC/Zambia, Livingstone General has been engaged in a Twinning Center pharmacy partnership with University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka and the Milwaukee-based Center for International Health since 2006.

Conferences and Opportunities



5th Conference of the South African Institute of Healthcare Managers

June 6-7, 2011
Durban, South Africa

1st International HIV Social Science and Humanities Conference

June 11-13, 2011
Durban, South Africa

2011 Global Health Council Conference

June 13-17, 2011
Washington, DC, USA

Health & Development Communication Conference

June 27-29, 2011
Nairobi, Kenya

8th International Conference on Pathogenesis of Mycobacterial Infections

June 30-July 3, 2011
Stockholm, Sweden

3rd International Workshop on HIV Pediatrics

July 15-16, 2011
Rome, Italy

6th IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention (IAS 2011)

July 17-20, 2011
Rome, Italy

2011 Conference on HIV/AIDS Research: A Collaborative Solution for Tropical Diseases

Sept. 7-9, 2011
Lisbon, Portugal

World Federation for Mental Health 2011 World Congress

Oct. 17-21, 2011
Cape Town, South Africa

139th Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association

Oct. 29 - Nov. 2, 2011
Washington, DC, USA

6th SAHARA Conference

Nov. 28 - Dec. 2, 2011
Port Elizabeth, South Africa

ICASA 2011: Own, Scale Up, and Sustain

Dec. 4-8, 2011
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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The HIV/AIDS Twinning Center mobilizes and coordinates the resources of healthcare and allied professionals in the United States and abroad to effectively build capacity to reduce HIV infection rates and provide care to those infected with, or affected by, HIV/AIDS in support of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

Funded by PEPFAR through a cooperative agreement with the US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, the Twinning Center is a project of the American International Health Alliance, a US-based nonprofit dedicated to helping limited-resource communities make positive, sustainable changes that improve accessibility to a broad range of high-quality healthcare services and preventive programs.

The contents of this newsletter are the responsibility of AIHA and the Twinning Center and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States government or other funding agencies.

