

## **Doctors on Safari Management Plan for Mkwaja Hospital**

Introduction: This management plan follows on from the service evaluation of Mkwaja hospital collaborated by the doctors on safari project. Numerous areas in need of improvement have been identified and this document aims to produce a clear structure for the continued efforts of the project within these areas. It will be split into three core components within which work can be done for the continued improvement of the care and facilities at Mkwaja hospital. These three areas consist of:

1. The work and support provided by the Doctors on Safari project
2. The work and support provided by University of Southampton Medical School
3. The work and support provided by the Mkwaja-Pangani district health authority

### Doctors on Safari

The Doctors on Safari project aims to continually drive the improvement of facilities, education and healthcare at Mkwaja Hospital by focusing on both short and long term improvements. The short term goals are to improve practices within the hospital to make the environment safer for staff and patients. The areas in need of change have been identified in the service evaluation for example the need for foot pedal operated bins with biohazard bin bags. These areas will be targeted first by support from the private sector. These small but effective changes will make a big difference to the quality of the hospital environment.

Some long term improvements have been identified which include the training of nurses, either privately funded by the Doctors on Safari Project or by establishing a Nursing school in Mkwaja whereby experienced nurses from first world countries will elect to take a sabbatical or work full time in the training of Tanzanian nurses and/or in the hospital itself. The link with Southampton University will be used to encourage nurses from the UK to become involved in the project. We feel that to provide a better education for medical students is something which we would currently be unable to provide, however we feel strongly that the education of nurses is an area in which the project would be able to improve. This education will be essential in transforming Mkwaja hospital from effectively a GP practice into a fully functioning hospital. Twinned with this is the idea to fund the nurses from Mkwaja to visit the UK and work in Southampton General Hospital whereby they will be able to gain experiences in the hospital environment. They will be able to experience first-hand the nursing care provided and be able to apply their experiences when they return. The Tanzanian nurses will stay with medical students from the University and be able to experience a bit of the culture. It is clear that education is a major aspect of the project that needs to be addressed and we feel that this is a tangible way in which the project can make a positive change.

In continuation with trying to encourage UK nurses to come and work and teach in Mkwaja and other Tanzanian rural hospitals, the project aims to try and encourage GP's from first world countries to take sabbaticals or work full time within these rural hospitals, again in combination with the University of Southampton. In this way we can raise the level of health care provided and also raise the knowledge base of the Tanzanian doctors. This is the pathway the project deems as the best way to address the concerns about the level of care. With support from the parent foundation "A Tent with a View" we are confident that an attractive package can be offered to GP's and nurses that are interested in working with the project.

As mentioned in the service evaluation Mkwaja is a very small hospital consisting of four beds; therefore there is a need for expansion at some point in the future. This will be

managed by Doctors on Safari project and the health authorities aided with the assistance of medical students. The students will be important in deciding what areas of the hospital can be expanded and other areas that need to be built. For example the hospital does not currently have a laboratory or a radiological department and this is something the project might deem necessary. Students will also be available to come and help with the construction itself giving a holistic approach to what the project can offer the hospital.

The Doctors on Safari project will also aim to try and gain support from other hospitals within Tanzania. The Aga Khan hospital in Dar es Salaam currently supports a number of rural hospitals and has shown an interest in Mkwaja Hospital. It will be important to follow up this interest and try and establish a proper base of support from the hospital and aim to build a good relationship between the two hospitals. The Doctors on Safari project will also tackle the governmental problems associated with volunteering in Tanzania. Aided by media involvement it is the aim of the project to abolish the charges imposed on people wishing to come and volunteer in Tanzania.

### University of Southampton Medical School

The project began by supporting a small number of medical students on their electives in Tanzania including two in Mkwaja Hospital; this support will be continued in future years and is a corner stone to the project. The role of Southampton University's medical school will initially be based around future electives. The current plan is to support between two and four medical students to work in Mkwaja hospital each year. Students will come in pairs therefore giving the option of supporting four students each staying for four weeks or two students staying for eight weeks. The students will be given free accommodation and food in a luxury safari lodge and will have plenty of fantastic opportunities ranging from safaris, swimming with baby turtles and potentially even helping out with elephant collaring. In return we would ask that the students arriving raise £500 per four week period all of which will go towards the Doctors on Safari project and therefore fund the above targets. There are also similar opportunities for medical students to work in Selous and Serengeti.

To aid in this process a student group working within the Doctors on Safari project will exist within the medical school of Southampton University. Initially this will consist of the students who were a part of the project this current year. It will then expand to involve the students who will be arriving for their medical electives the following summer and eventually involving students from any year of the medical school. This student group will be involved in selecting the next set of students to help with the project and also in aiding the finances of the project. It will be involved in fundraising money and helping the next set of students with raising the £500 - £1000 (depending on their stay), determining also where the money raised should be spent. As mentioned earlier the link with Southampton University is crucial in contacting GPs and nurses who might be interested in helping with the project. With a constant involvement of students an audit can be made each year to see what solutions have been implemented for the problems identified. The progress can be monitored by the student group and continually monitor and identify new concerns or problems. In this way there is continuity to the project and problems identified will not be left unchanged. There is also room for expansion with the involvement of other medical schools. These student groups would therefore be extremely useful in sharing fundraising ideas and coming together for events, and in sharing ideas for improvements in the health care and education of the hospital. With this combined effort between medical schools working towards Mkwaja hospital we are confident that a real change can be made and turn the hospital into a centre of excellence.

### Mkwaja-Pangani district health authority

For the Doctors on Safari projects aims to be realised we will need support from the

Mkwaja/Pangani district health authority. In working together with the Doctors on Safari project real improvements can be made to the hospital. We would like to see a system of audits put into place to continually assess the health care given by Mkwaja and other rural hospitals. With this pressure it will drive hospitals to improve their practices and level of care instead of becoming content and complacent about the services they currently provide. This driving force is crucial for the development of the hospital; there is always room for improvement and is a step forward that the project feels strongly about. We would also like to see a shuttle service provided between Mkwaja and Pangani hospital for patients who are referred there. Due to the lack of diagnostic equipment and facilities at Mkwaja hospital, a large proportion of patients are referred to Pangani. A lot of these patients are unable to travel either due to lack of funds, lack of transport or are simply too ill. A minibus that would be available to make trips initially twice a week and also be available for the occasional emergency case would make a big impact to the level of care provided. The district health authority has a duty to provide a basic level of care to residents of villages like Mkwaja and is currently failing to provide this to a number of patients. Until Mkwaja is able to provide the necessary services itself we feel that the shuttle service is an important step forward in providing basic health care for the residents of Mkwaja. It is important however that this service is not abused and is only used for referred patients and not run as a taxi service, therefore it would need to be monitored closely to assure that this does not occur.

### Conclusion

In conclusion access to a good level of healthcare is a basic human right and Mkwaja is struggling to provide this level of care in a number of areas. With support from the Doctors on Safari project, The University of Southampton Medical School and the district health authority huge improvements can be made that will have a significant impact on the quality of life for the residents of Mkwaja. In developing the hospital into a centre of excellence it will be an inspiration to other hospitals across Tanzania and across Africa to raise their level of healthcare. To quote Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has".