



Better patient care with Point-Of-Care Ultrasound

in Malawi



Partnership between

University Medical Centre
Hamburg Eppendorf (UKE),
1st Medical Clinic and Polyclinic /
GERMANY

and

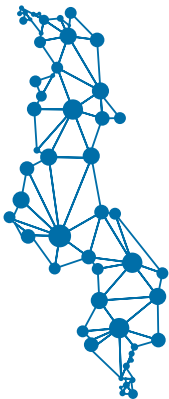
College of Medicine University
of Malawi Blantyre /
MALAWI





CREATING CHANGE IN HEALTHCARE

MALAWI



Malawi is a landlocked country. One third of the country is covered by Lake Malawi, the third largest Lake in Africa. It has 18 million inhabitants living on 118,080 sq km. With a population growth rate of 2.7%, it is moving fast towards overpopulation.

The economy is predominantly based on agriculture. Over 80% of the population is engaged in subsistence farming.

The lakes and rivers of Malawi are well known for the extraordinary biodiversity with a huge variety of local fish species. The southern part of Lake Malawi National Park was labelled a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1984.

Life expectancy at birth in Malawi is 61(f)/ 60(m) years.

The probability of dying under the age of five was at 50 for 1,000 births in 2018.

The programme "University and Hospital Partnerships in Africa" supports partnerships between hospitals and universities in Germany and in African countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The main effort is focused on capacity strengthening, experience sharing and knowledge exchange through professional dialogue, repeated visits and training.

The difference and advantage compared with other international cooperation initiatives is the collaboration with medical professionals in partner countries which builds a high degree of trust and acceptance. The problem is jointly identified, and the activities collectively developed and always in line with national strategies.

In addition to the medical professionals, IT experts are also involved in the partnerships to discuss and find IT solutions to improve medical care.

POINT-OF-CARE ULTRASOUND IN MALAWI



Due to a lack of medical imaging and trained staff, all medical disciplines are facing problems of delayed diagnosis leading to delayed treatment and worsening of the patient's condition. Such a situation also leads to an unnecessary prolongation of hospital stays with respective cost implications for the patients and the hospital.

The use of (POCUS) provides a possible cost-effective solution to this problem and can improve diagnosis and shorten time to treatment.

The German and Malawian partners have decided to join forces and contribute to solving this problem. The activities target all the departments of internal medicine, obstetrics and gynaecology, paediatrics, anaesthesia, and emergency medicine at Queen

Elizabeth Central Hospital, the teaching hospital for the College of Medicine in Blantyre, and extend to nearby district hospitals. The focus of the partnership is on capacity-building and continuous strengthening for the use of POCUS, a methodology proven to be effective for early diagnoses and treatment of several disease-related symptoms.

Our eHealth Contribution

Capacity development and continuous strengthening through follow-up and mentoring are based on the development of an app-based training course, a pre-course training to bring all participants up to the same level of knowledge, and a hands-on training. The latter is always necessary for the use of medical

techniques, such as ultrasound. Not only the correct interpretation of images needs to be trained but also the appropriate use of the ultrasound machines.

An e-learning platform allows the exchange of images for training purposes and professional discussion after the training to ensure the continuous improvement of skills.

POCUS has been integrated in the training curriculum of medical students and will be accredited for continuous professional development of medical professionals. The hosting of the training at the College of Medicine will allow medical professionals outside of the university and even from other countries to access the training, too. These measures contribute to the sustainability of the efforts.

University Medical Centre Hamburg Eppendorf (UKE), 1st Medical Clinic and Polyclinic / GERMANY

Specialises in gastroenterology, infectious diseases and tropical medicine. The department runs large specialist outpatient clinics for liver diseases, infectious diseases, as well as a large pre- and post-travel clinic, and a large clinic for sonography. A treatment centre for highly contagious diseases (BZHI) has been established for the care of patients with highly contagious infectious diseases. This treatment centre is a member of the German Permanent Working Group of Competence and Treatment Centres for high-consequence infectious diseases (STAKOB).

College of Medicine, University of Malawi Blantyre / MALAWI

The College of Medicine (COM) is one of the colleges of the University of Malawi (UNIMA). As medical faculty of UNIMA, COM offers a 5-year undergraduate bachelor's program in medicine and surgery (MBBS) with currently 50-60 students each year. COM also runs several 4-year postgraduate master programs in different medical disciplines (MMed). The teaching hospital of COM, the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital (QECH), is a 1,500-bed tertiary hospital in Blantyre where all of the clinical teaching takes place.



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