



World Child Cancer
No child should suffer

PROJECT FACTSHEET: Cameroon

Project Centres: Banso Baptist Hospital, Northwest Province
Mbingo Baptist Hospital, Northwest Province
Mutengene Baptist Hospital, Southwest Province

Twinning Centre: Stellenbosch University / Tygerberg Children's Hospital, South Africa

Other Charity Partners: Beryl Thyer Memorial Africa Trust (BTMAT), UK

Project Leaders: Dr Francine Kouya
Sister Vera Njamshi

Project Mentors: Professor Peter Hesseling, South Africa
Dr Paul Wharin, UK
Dr Peter McCormick, BTMAT UK

Start & End Date: January 2012 - December 2016



Patient at Banso Baptist Hospital

Background:

The Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Board manages a number of hospitals in the Northwest and Southwest provinces of Cameroon, providing free healthcare for the rural population of subsistence farmers and their families. Professor Peter Hesseling and his team have been visiting Cameroon for around 10 years and have achieved success in raising survival rates for Burkitt lymphoma from zero to 60% in this time.



Patients at Mbingo Hospital

Key Problems:

- Increasing demand for Burkitt lymphoma treatment without adequate capacity
- Easily treatable childhood cancers being diagnosed more regularly as awareness improves but there is a lack of locally appropriate protocols for most tumours
- Lack of trained healthcare professionals to administer chemotherapy drugs
- Lack of funding for curative and palliative drugs
- Many children abandon treatment
- Poor accessibility for children due to distance from the hospitals

Project Objectives:

- 1) Increase access to curative and palliative treatment
- 2) Develop affordable and effective treatment protocols for other tumours
- 3) Equip local healthcare professionals with the knowledge and skills to safely administer cancer care in rural hospitals
- 4) Develop the infrastructure that is needed for child cancer treatment
- 5) Improve the collection of statistical data on the child cancer patients

Key Project Outputs:

- Provide funding for drugs, both chemotherapy and palliative care
- Develop a child cancer training programme for local healthcare professionals
- Develop links with Francophone child cancer units in the capital, Yaonde
- Provide mentoring to local doctors in the implementation of the 5 year strategy
- Establish local parent support groups to reduce abandonment of treatment
- Establish a child cancer database shared between the 3 hospitals

Impact:

- Training sessions and mentoring for the local medics
- Developing protocols for Wilms' tumour and retinoblastoma
- Mobile phone initiative for follow-up of patients
- Parent support groups active at 2 hospitals
- Local fundraising by parents - palm oil production and pig farming
- Palliative care motorbike outreach programme initiated
- Provision of drugs for chemotherapy and pain relief



Parent group pig



Professor Peter Hesseling with a patient



Patient with Burkitt lymphoma



Childhood cancer awareness 2013