

News from MCAI Newsletter 2003

MCAI's community-based service for the prevention and treatment of severe malnutrition in under 5 year old children in Lusaka, Zambia continues to grow.

Malnutrition is a huge problem in Zambia and deserves more attention, for 50% of the under 5 population is affected to the extent of causing stunting of growth.

Dr Peter Wilkinson, Honorary Country Director for Zambia, recently visited the programme and was impressed with the local healthcare staff and the service they provide for the young children.



Medical staff are taught the importance of identifying children whose growth is faltering and the action and help which can be given - nutritional education, cooking demonstrations and the identification of factors causing or exacerbating the malnutrition, i.e. pneumonia, gastroenteritis, TB, HIV/AIDS.

The outreach clinics aim to identify children suspected of having HIV /AIDS and arrange referral of the family to the excellent Voluntary Counselling and Testing Service.

The future

Fund-raising is a major issue and is a high priority.

Chipata and Kanyama districts were identified as two large, very deprived areas in Lusaka. Statistics have shown that these two districts account for 32% of the admissions to the malnutrition ward (A07) at UTH.

With further funding, this outreach programme could be expanded to include other highly deprived districts in Lusaka.

Progress report on community based outreach programme from December 2002 to December 2003

Month	Chipata Clinic			Panyana Clinic			Ref UTH
	New clients/ follow-up clinics	Total supplements	Ref to UTH	New clients/ follow-up clinics	Total supplements	Ref to UTH	
Dec	24		5	Xmas		New Year	
Jan	32		5	12		16	
Feb	37		4	14		5	

Mar	56		5	8		2	1st Training Workshop
Apr	53		2	4		12	2nd Training Workshop
May	21		3	15		1	
Jun	10		3	12		3	
Jul	29		12	1		-	
Aug	36		26	-		10	Supplementation started
Sep	45	41	4	31	29	2	
Oct	72	67	5	137	128	9	
Nov	75	70	5	123	117	6	
Dec	95	90	5	173	165	8	

News from MCAI Newsletter 2004

Around 5,000 children and their families are now benefiting from the outreach clinics in Lusaka, Zambia.

Dr Peter Wilkinson visited the project in February 2004 and was delighted with the progress. *“By identifying and monitoring children at risk of growth faltering, we can intervene at an earlier stage to prevent severe malnutrition and hospital admission”* said Dr Wilkinson.

In addition we can identify any underlying cause of malnutrition such as AIDS/HIV, TB, gastro-enteritis etc and give appropriate treatment as necessary.



This accessible low-cost service is popular as carers do not have to make a difficult and expensive journey.

MCAI involves the local community by encouraging carers who can promote by good example such as providing nutritional advice and cooking demonstrations.

Emphasis is also given to increased training for the health care workers in the outreach clinics, giving them improved skills and techniques and ensures sustainability.