



Vision

Bethesda hospital to be the most desirable hospital to seek help from and to work for

Mission

To develop a people centred district health services in the Bethesda catchment area where all persons have equal access to quality and comprehensive district health services, jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities

THE BETHESDA EXPERIENCE

Despite many challenges, Bethesda hospital continues to grow and strive to offer excellent health services. One of the biggest challenges in deep rural areas is the high turn-over of doctors, which has a huge impact on service delivery. Four years ago the hospital had a serious challenge due to low doctor numbers and the lack of experienced senior clinicians. Junior doctors were frequently overwhelmed and would leave immediately after completing their community service. There was a turning around of events in 2010 when Dr Kelly Gate took over as a Medical Manager and he has done a sterling job in improving the delivery of health services in Bethesda hospital and its satellite primary health care clinics. The hospital now prides itself of having produced one of the most influential individuals in the Public Health Sector, Dr Kelly Gate, who was crown the Rural Doctor



Dr Gloria Mfeka: Family Physician

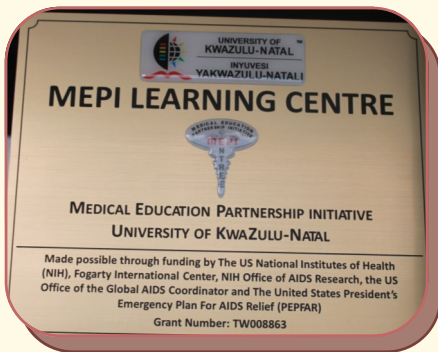
of the Year in 2012, has recently won Gold for Best Public Service Leader of the Year 2013, Best Overall Batho Pele Public Servant by DPSA and Gold award on Premiers Service Excellence 2013/14 for the Best Public Service Leader of the Year. It therefore goes without saying that Bethesda hospital has a niche for excellence and talent development.

Bethesda hospital has also been granted accreditation by the Health Professions Council of South Africa to commence training of Family Medicine registrars. According to the human resources plan for health (HRH) 2030, the specialist Family Physician is meant to strengthen service delivery, provide support and

training to health care workers in the district health care system and primary care teams, and engage in clinically relevant managerial tasks. The department of Family Medicine at the University of KwaZulu Natal has established a platform where Family Medicine finds its fullest expression in a rural decentralized training site in Bethesda hospital. This is the first rural decentralized Family Medicine training site in KwaZulu Natal and it is going to cater for both undergraduate and postgraduate medical students.

Two Family Medicine registrars with a keen interest in rural medicine, Dr Kelly Gate and Lungile Hobe, were allocated to this site in January 2014. The post graduate programme is a four year training programme during which registrars rotate through various disciplines in tertiary and district level hospitals in order to acquire skills needed to function efficiently at a district level hospital. The structure of the Family Medicine registrar programme enables the registrar to not only think about clinical outcomes, but to care and uplift the community they serve. Following the

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successful completion of the four year programme, College of Medicine of South Africa examinations and a research project, these registrars will be qualified medical specialists in Family Medicine.

Although the decentralized programme was recently established at Bethesda hospital, the benefits can already be seen. Not only has the programme increased the level of academic and improved clinical outcomes, but it has also stimulated interest amongst medical officers to raise the rigor of clinical standards. It has also enhanced the recruitment and retention strategy, which is pivotal to the survival of a rural, resource-limited hospital setting.

Having a well-skilled generalist to co-ordinate training, supervise registrars and junior medical officers, and advocate for change in aspects of care and management systems has encouraged many of the medical officers to stay at Bethesda hospital. The morale amongst the team is high and health care workers at Bethesda hospital are beginning to take pride in the quality of health care services being offered.



Computer Lan with video conferencing facilities donated by UKZN MEPI for Bethesda hospital Family Medicine Programme



Donated desktop by UKZN MEPI in the Nursing School Library

“We Need More Family
Medicine Specialist across
Umkhanyakude”



We hope this programme can grow by increasing the intake of registrars in January 2015 so that more Family Medicine specialists can be trained in Bethesda hospital and eventually be distributed across Umkhanyakude district to benefit other district level hospitals. We would also like to acknowledge the support received from UKZN Medical Education Partnership Initiative (UKZN MEPI) for establishing a Computer Lan with eight desktop computers and video-conferencing facilities. To the Bethesda hospital management, the great team of doctors and nursing staff, and the entire Bethesda family, thank you for your meaningful contribution and commitment towards service delivery and to making Bethesda one of the best places to work in. I want to commend you for your efforts and to encourage you to keep doing great work. Future possibilities are endless if we keep pressing on.

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