



EzaseKhangela

NEWS

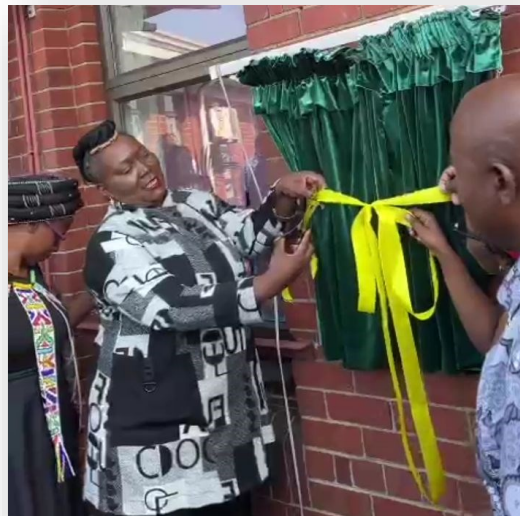
MAY 2024

UNVEILING OF VICTORIA MXENGE HOSPITAL AND CELEBRATION OF NURSES DAY

On May 14, 2024. A significant event marked the renaming of King Edward VIII Hospital to Victoria Mxenge Hospital. The ceremony, which coincided with Nurses Day, was held at the Jubilee Hall within the hospital grounds. This historic event honoured both the legacy of Victoria Mxenge, a renowned anti-apartheid activist and nurse, and the dedication of nurses who tirelessly serve the community.

The ceremony was attended by several provincial officials, hospital staff, officials, nurses from all KZN districts, media representatives, and distinguished guests, including the Head of Departments, Dr. S Tshabalala, the Mayor who was represented by Councillor N. Madlala, and the MEC of Health Ms. Nomagugu Simelane. The family of Victoria Mxenge also graced the occasion with their presence, adding a personal and poignant touch to the proceedings. The gathering was a testament to the deep respect and admiration held for Victoria Mxenge and the critical role played by nurses in the healthcare system.

Victoria Mxenge's legacy is deeply rooted in the hospital's history. She took midwifery training at King Edward Hospital and worked as a community nurse in Umlazi, serving her community with dedication and compassion. The renaming of the hospital honours her contribution both as a healthcare professional



and as an activist who fought tirelessly against apartheid. Her life and work remain an inspiration to many, symbolizing resilience and the fight for justice.

MEC Nomagugu Simelane, in her address, emphasized the critical need to address the shortage of nurses in the health department. She announced a comprehensive plan to employ more nurses, recognizing that they are the backbone of all hospitals. "Our nurses are the heart and soul of our healthcare system. Their dedication and hard work keep our hospitals running, and we must ensure they have the support they need to continue their virtual work."

The event began with a warm welcome and a series of speeches from notable guest speakers including Cllr Nkosenhle

Madlala, Ms. C Sosibo, Ms. B Mhlongo and MEC Nomagugu Simelane. Each speaker highlighted the importance of recognizing the contribution of healthcare professionals and commemorating the enduring legacy of Victoria Mxenge. Dr S Tshabalala, in his opening remarks, praised the dedicated staff of the hospital and underscored the significance of this renaming in keeping the spirit of Victoria Mxenge alive.

Ms. C. Sosibo led the Nurses Pledge, accompanied by a candle-lighting ceremony symbolizing the Nightingale Lamp, representing the hope and faith nurses bring to their patients' lives. This moment underpinned the theme of the day: appreciation for the unwavering dedication and compassion of nurses. The pledge and candle-lighting served as a powerful reminder of the noble mission nurses undertake daily, often in the face of many challenges.

Entertainment for the event was provided by the Victoria Mxenge Scathamiya group and Mondli Ngcobo, who added a celebratory atmosphere to the occasion. Their performances were not only a tribute to Victoria Mxenge but also a celebration of the rich cultural heritage of the community.

The highlight of the ceremony was the cutting of the ribbon, officially renaming the hospital in honor of Victoria Mxenge. This symbolic act was met with applause and cheers, marking a new chapter in the hospital's history.

FOREWORD FROM ACTING CEO

Welcome to the latest edition of our hospital newsletter. I am pleased to connect with you through this platform to share updates, stories of resilience, and the latest developments in our hospital that define our journey at Victoria Mxenge Hospital.

Firstly, I would like to thank you for the warm welcome and support. Your dedication and commitment to our hospital's mission are truly inspiring, and we are grateful for the opportunity to serve our community with excellence. As we navigate these challenging times together, I am confident that we will emerge stronger and more united than ever before.

In the face of unprecedented challenges, our hospital staff has demonstrated remarkable dedication and compassion. From our frontline healthcare workers to our support staff and management team at all levels, everyone has played a crucial role in upholding our commitment to patient care and safety.

As we navigate the path forward, guided by our mission to deliver compassionate, patient-centered care, I extend my deepest gratitude to our entire hospital family. Your hard work, professionalism, and unwavering dedication continue to inspire us and reinforce our shared commitment to making a positive impact in the lives of our patients and community.

The significance of the hospital name change reflects the department's ongoing dedication to providing exceptional care and services to our patients. This change represents a new chapter in our commitment to delivering compassionate, patient-centered healthcare that prioritizes the well-being of all those we serve.

Collective leadership and collaboration are essential as we move forward in this new chapter, ensuring that our patients receive the highest quality care possible. Together, we will continue to strive for excellence and make a difference in the lives of those who trust us with their health and well-being.

Despite all challenges, the Hospital Senior Management Team remains committed to creating conducive working conditions for productivity, teamwork, and quality patient care. We believe that by fostering a supportive and empowering environment for our staff, we can achieve our goal of providing exceptional healthcare services. Our dedication to continuous improvement and innovation will drive us to meet the evolving needs of our community and exceed expectations in every aspect of patient care.



MR BRIAN SHEZI: ACTING CEO

Thank you once more for your ongoing support and trust. Together, we will continue to build a healthier future, and we will place our hospital on the map nationally and internationally through best practices.



HAND HYGIENE AWARENESS AT VICTORIA MXENGE HOSPITAL

On May 28, 2024, Victoria Mxenge Hospital hosted an Hand Hygiene Awareness event, emphasizing the importance of proper hand hygiene in preventing the spread of infections and ensuring patient safety. The event, organized by the Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) team, was led by Mrs. Thabo Nkosi, IPC Coordinator, and assisted by Ms. Nompilo Mahlaba IPC Nurse. The event, took place in Jubilee Hall at 9am and featured a comprehensive program dedicated to educating healthcare professionals on best practices for hand hygiene.

The Importance of Hand Hygiene

Mrs. Nkosi began the program with an extensive discussion on the significance of hand hygiene in the healthcare setting. She highlighted how hand hygiene is one of the most effective measures to prevent the transmission of pathogens and reduce healthcare-associated infections. She indicated that proper hand washing and sanitizing can significantly minimize the risk of spreading viruses and bacteria, protecting both patients and healthcare workers.

Historical Background and Celebration

This global initiative, led by the World Health Organization (WHO), began as part of the “SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands” Campaign launched in 2009. The Campaign emphasizes the importance of improving hand hygiene practices worldwide to reduce healthcare-associated infections.

Hand Hygiene Day is celebrated on May 5 each year, while Hand Hygiene Month is observed throughout the month of May, aligning with the global focus on promoting hand hygiene in healthcare settings.

Event Activates

During the awareness program, Mrs. Nkosi presented a hand hygiene awareness video that vividly illustrated how viruses can spread through contact and the critical need for proper hand washing supplies in hospitals. The video demonstrated various scenarios in which poor hand hygiene could lead to widespread contamination and highlighted the effectiveness of proper hand hygiene practices in preventing such occurrences.

Mrs. Nkosi, with the assistance of Sister Nompilo, also engaged attendees with some interactive game where she asked questions related to hand hygiene. Those who answered correctly received gifts, including sanitizers and wet wipes, all aimed at promoting hand hygiene practices. This activity added an element of fun to the event while reinforcing the importance of maintaining good hand hygiene.

The Hand Hygiene Awareness event at Victoria Mxenge Hospital was successful, reinforcing the hospital’s commitment to patient shared informative presentations which provided attendees with valuable knowledge on maintaining high standards of hand hygiene.

The hospital continues to advocate for rigorous hand hygiene practices to ensure the health and safety of all patients and staff. We encourage all healthcare professionals and visitors to remain vigilant about hand hygiene. Regular Hand washing with soap and water, or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, can save lives by preventing the spread of infection.



WORLD HYPERTENSION DAY

On 17 May 2024, Victoria Mxenge Hospital hosted a significant event in recognition of World Hypertension Day. The event held at the New Block venue, was organized by the Department of Internal Medicine in partnership with Servier, a leading pharmaceutical company. The day was dedicated to raising awareness about hypertension, providing free screenings and offering education on managing and preventing high blood pressure.

The event featured a comprehensive three-step free screening process designed to provide participants with a thorough understanding of their blood pressure status. The process began with the nursing staff performing blood pressure measurements. This was followed by junior doctors conducting a brief questionnaire together gathering essential background information and other relevant data from patients. The final step involved specialists from the Department of Internal Medicine providing counseling and advice to the patients based on the screening results.

Dr. Perumal and Dr. Naidoo led the event, they emphasized the importance of this initiative, stating that it was their third year running the program in conjunction with Servier. Dr. Perumal explained, "High blood pressure, or hypertension as the number one cause of preventable death, with 10 million lives lost each year. However, only 50% of people affected are aware they have it, which is why screening is so important." He stressed that early detection and management of hypertension is crucial in preventing serious health complications.

CAUSES

The causes of hypertension are multifaceted and can include factors such as poor diet, lack of physical activity, obesity, excessive alcohol consumption, smoking, and stress.

They highlighted that this event is part of a larger global campaign known as awareness month; aimed at screening patients for hypertension to ensure more patients receive treatment and to prevent diseases or death related to high blood pressure.

Additionally, hypertension can be inherited, which is why the background questionnaire during the screening is vital to identify those at risk.

SYMPTOMS

The main symptoms of hypertension, often referred to as the "silent killer" due to its asymptomatic nature, can include headaches, shortness of breath, nosebleeds, and chest pain. However, many people with hypertension may not experience any symptoms, making regular screening essential.

PREVENTION

Regular BP checks, healthy lifestyle choices, and early detection

BENEFITS

The benefits of World Hypertension Day at Victoria Mxenge Hospital are manifold:

- 1. Optimal Care:** Helping medical staff optimize care for patients already known to have hypertension.
- 2. Early Detection:** Identifying individuals who are asymptomatic but have high blood pressure.

3. Lifestyle Advice: Providing valuable lifestyle advice to help manage and reduce the risk of hypertension.



Dr. Perumal highlighted the importance of regular blood pressure checks, particularly for individuals over the age of 30 and that checking hypertension in adults over 30 is essential, as early detection can significantly reduce the risk of complications.

The event was a resounding success, with over 100 participants benefiting from the free screening and counselling provided. By raising awareness and offering practical advice, Victoria Mxenge Hospital with Servier are making a substantial impact in the fight against hypertension, ultimately helping to save lives and improve the quality of life for many.

World Hypertension Day at Victoria Mxenge Hospital was not just an event but a critical health intervention aimed at combating one of the leading causes of preventable death. The hospital's ongoing commitment to this cause underscores the importance of early detection and continuous management of hypertension, ensuring a healthier future of the community.



IMKHULEKO KANYE NOMGUBHO WOSUKU LWABAHLENGIKAZI



Mr. B. Shezi: Acting CEO

Isibhedlela iVictoria Mxenge sibe nomkhuleko wesibhedlela kanye nomgubho wosuku lwamanesi mhla zingama 16 kuNhlabha 2024.

Lolusuku lwaqala

ngomkhuleko owawuhanjelwe abasebenze bemikhakha eyahlukahlukene esibhedlela. Lomkhuleko wavulwa ngendumiso eyayiholwa uMs. Ngwazi noMr. Tsawulwayo. Wathi engena nezwi kanye nentshumayelo uMfundisi uShangase, inkundla yabe isivundele ukuwa kwembewu.



Dr. Mthembu: Guest Speaker

Abahlengikazi babe sebedlulela ehholo (Jubilee) ukuyoqhubeka nezinhlelo zokugubha usuku lwabahlelengikazi. Izinhlelo zosuku zahamba kahle kakhulu, izinkulumo ezakhayo, umculo kanye nezinhlonde, konke kwakukhuluma nomuntu ngamunye. Isikhulumani sosuku uDr. Mthembu, ongumphathi jikelele wezikhungo zokufundela ubuhlelengikazi wathula inkulumo evuselela abahlengikazi, futhi ebakhumbuzisa ukuthi ubaluleke ngani umsebenzi wobuhlelengikazi nokuthi kungani baqoka ukungena kulomkhakha.

UNkk. Mabaso wakhuluma ngosiko-mpilo lwesikhungo sokusebenza nokuthi linomthelela ongakanani ekwakheni noma ekubhidlizeni ugqozi lwabantu abazimisele ngokusebenza. Lenkulumo yayicashe esiphicaphicwaneni nokuyilapho okwabonakala ithalente ebelingaziwa ngoNkk. Mabaso.

Umcimbi waba impumelelo enkulu kanti wonke umuntu owayewuthamele wazizwa evuselelekile futhi wazizwa ebalulekile.

Abasebenzi ababethamele lomkhuleko bazwakalisa ukuthokoza okukhulu, bakubeka kwaba sobala ukuthi bebeyilambele imvuselelo efana nale; bacela futhi ukuthi sengathi loku kungaba injwayelo.

UMnuz. Shezi obambe njengomphathi sibhedlela, wabonga kakhulu uMfundisi uShangase ngamazwi okuvuselela abasebenzi waphinde wacizelela ukubaluleka komkhuleko ezindaweni zokusebenza. UMnuz. Shezi waphinde wabonga abagqunguzeli balomkhuleko.



TAKING A LOOK INTO PALLIATIVE CARE

Dr Fiona Lourens is a trained palliative care clinician working in ICU. Ms. Ndlela spent time with Dr Lourens to get more information on the importance of understanding palliative care when conducting counselling

What made you interested in palliative care?

I am employed in the ICU as a Medical Officer. Here we house critically ill patients who are receiving specialized and intensive care for their illnesses. Supporting the patients with machines and medications while they heal is one aspect, and the other aspect is making sure their loved ones know what is happening with their (critical) condition. We have a designated counseling room for these conversations. Sometimes the conversations are easy because the patient is improving, and other times we are preparing the family for the worst news, that their loved one is dying. It was here that I realized I was not afraid to have these difficult conversations. My HCU saw my potential and provided me with the direction and the opportunity to hone in on this skill. It was then that I attended the Diploma

offered by UCT, loved it, and completed it at the end of 2023.

What has this knowledge done to you as a person, a doctor and as a human being?

I would have to admit that it has made me a more holistic doctor. Back in med school, they teach you to look at a patient holistically and to use the Bio-psycho-social model when approaching a patient's problems. In reality, though, it's simply not feasible to help patients as a whole when you have a clinic with 20 patients to see and treat. With our resources, shortages, and challenges it just isn't realistic.

I used to think there was something wrong with me because I felt like we never had enough time to explain to patients what was happening to them when they got sick. I have always enjoyed talking with patients more than some of my colleagues did. But this meant I wasn't clearing the queues outside OPD quickly enough. I was too slow because I was talking too much. It's only after this course, that I learned that it wasn't a weakness, it was a strength, and something I now take pride in. When you have time for your patients, sit and talk with them, then they trust you and feel they're quality of care is better. And this has been backed up by literature.

- As a person:

I am calmer in my understanding of dying and death

I am not afraid of my mortality

I'm confident talking about the process of dying and what people need when they face death

I feel fulfillment in my career like I am making a difference to a patient or their family in the most frightening part of their disease

- As a doctor

I am more empathetic of patients'



The goal of palliative care is to relieve suffering and provide the best possible quality of life for patients and their families.

Dr Fiona Lourens

suffering, of their families and caregivers' suffering.

I am more aware of how I speak with patients, families and colleagues, the words I use, and how we interact

I feel like I'm useful and valuable to the team

- As a human being

Humbled by the reality of how a lot of people die

How important is it for patients/relatives to be involved in counseling when loved ones are at the end stage of life?

It is incredibly important, and I cannot stress this enough: Patients and their families look to us when they are seriously ill and in hospital. Most people know they are sick because they are in hospital, but they may not understand that this admission could be the first of many (ie End stage COPD/heart failure/Renal disease) and that they may not see their next birthday. The doctor could have an idea that this is the case but the patient may not.

If we don't necessarily take the time to counsel the patients or their families, then they will likely not be making any preparations for their last months to years of life. Studies have proven that late referral to Hospice and palliative care leads to poorer outcomes. Withholding this information from patients could potentially change the way they live their lives, with whatever time they have left. We owe it to the patients to give them a choice of which treatments to continue and which to stop. We help them plan their lives to prioritize what's important to them. It allows them to live with quality of life until they die, over quantity.

How sensitive should the person doing the counseling be in terms of taking into consideration the shock, denial, and un-readiness of people being counselled, etc?

Of course, this news ought to be delivered with empathy and understanding for the patient's condition. The challenge comes for doctors and nurses - How do we tell someone they may only have a year or less left because of their serious illness? We may be inclined to shy away from the emotion, which can be multifactorial in its origin; fearing the reaction from the patient/family, the emotions it stirs in the clinician and the uncertainty of what to do next.

It is difficult. And we tend to shy away from "being the bearer of bad news". There is a medical stigma that if we can no longer help treat a patient's disease, we have failed as doctors. What does that make us at the end of the day? Failures? "Don't shoot the messenger" is a phrase that comes to mind. But when you give the information you give the patient and the family a choice. A choice in how they want to spend their last remaining days, weeks, or months of life.

It's HOW you tell them. We do not necessarily feel comfortable as we don't have the words, we haven't necessarily had a lot of mentoring in a counseling room. You get some training in medical school and then you are left to it in the real world. And many doctors just adapt as they go, learning from bad experiences.

There are a few "tools" that you can learn to add to your "toolbox". There are patient-tested languages that can be better received by the family or patient. Some workshops can help up-skill clinicians on how to conduct difficult counseling. I hope to be

involved in some in-service training in the hospital to help equip clinicians with better "tools".

Has she extended services or rather in-service training to other disciplines within the hospital, is it only doctors or nurses who have also been part of sharing the knowledge?

I enjoy sharing some of the skills I have learned in this Palliative Care course. A massive part of this coursework is communication skills. I have had the privilege of giving some counseling tips to rotating registrars in the ICU and the nurses in the ICU. There is a great need for a Palliative care service in the hospital, for a designated post to help the doctors prioritize these patients and support the doctors when transitioning from curative to palliative care. We can provide care, hope, and a plan of what to expect from their treatment and disease progression. If we can help patients die with dignity in the hospital, or at least get them home to where the majority of patients want to die, then we can be comforted knowing we do something when the medical staff says "There's nothing more we can do". I hope to be part of implementing hospital-wide awareness of Palliative care and its value in communicating with seriously ill and dying patients, and its benefit in providing comfort for families in their most fragile and vulnerable position.

It was lovely chatting with you today.

Warm regards

Dr Fiona Lourens

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Warm regards

Dr Fiona Lourens



Photo Gallery



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EDITORIAL TEAM / DETAILS

NONTBEKO NDLELA PRO, SABELISIWE NDLOVU PRO INTERN, SAMEERA HOOSEN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Dr Nerissa Naidoo , Dr Dane Perumal, Dr Fiona Lourens

Dear Nontobeko,

I would like to humbly express, on behalf of myself and my family, our sincerest gratitude to all the nurses at Ward S3B, including the orthopaedic doctors.

My name is . I was a patient at Ward S3B from 28 January until 05 February, when I was discharged.

Although I was not well, my experience at your wonderful hospital with your absolutely fantastic nurses at Ward S3B feels me with so much emotion. I never knew people are treated so well in hospital as I had never spent so many days at a hospital before, in my 67 years. The nurses were so warm and patient with the patients, some of whom can at times be difficult and belligerent.

The orthopaedic doctors, particularly Dr Sigodi who has been treating me for my ankle problems since 2023, deserve a great deal of acknowledgement. I'm extremely grateful to her and the orthopaedic team.

I will always sing the praises of all these awesome individuals who are a perfect example of people who are true to their calling and pledge to serve the community.

Kudos to the doctors and nurses.

Yours humbly

Good morning,

I am writing to you in a private capacity. Our aunt who is 92 was admitted to ward i4A on Thursday.

She was very confused and phoned me on Friday night in a panic. It sounded that she had an anxiety attack.

To give her peace of mind and to calm her down I phoned the ward (asked to speak to the sister or matron in charge) and asked them just to check on the 2 old ladies in the ward as they were very scared and indicated that they could hear a lot of noise outside. Due to her anxiety it took a few phone calls as she would not calm down and I had to assure her that they are going to be just fine. The staff kept their cool and listened and assured us that they are fine.

I just need to say that the staff in that ward was excellent. They were so accommodating and checked up on the 2 old ladies and pacified them. We visited her on Saturday afternoon and could not have met friendlier staff than those that were on duty.

I just want to compliment the staff in that ward. It is not an easy job to work in an Orthopaedic ward especially with old people but the service was tops.

On behalf of the whole family we just want to say thank you.

From

p/s It is only a pleasure. The family has to give credit where it is due. I think the public sometimes really goes out of their way to target the Government Hospitals. And you know what, there is always 2 sides to any story. But they will take the part of the person. And on Friday night I spoke as an outsider not indicating that I was employed by the Department. I don't like using my work position to get things done.

Also the guy that worked at the switchboard. He was very very polite. When I kept on phoning back he was concerned that I could not get through to the ward. You don't find service like that everywhere.

We are really impressed. My hubby had 2 knee replacements done (1 in 2022 and one 2023) in a private hospital. I, one evening had to intervene and had to threaten the acting CEO or person in charge of the hospital that night that if something happened to him, they will hear from me. So, they are not better than our hospitals.

Thank you once again.

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KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health



KZN Department of Health



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