



March 2005

Sisonke

We're in this together!

Volume 2

The official Newsletter for the staff of Northdale Hospital

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New Nursing Manager

A tribute to our customer service CHAMPS!

The new district chronic medication dispensing policy saw hundreds of Grey's patients descending on Northdale every month to collect their medication. Suddenly, over and above our usual patients we were struggling to get through, we had, daily, hundreds of extra patients to see to as well, albeit without extra hands! The pressure duly built up and perhaps the culmination of this pressure was on that dreaded day, 7 January 2005 (if you work in Outpatients you will definitely remember this day!) when we had a crisis on our hands. Fortunately, the worst seems to have passed, though we're still taking it one day at a time. We should all congratulate one another on pulling together during this difficult time – this includes our support services departments. Special mention must be made of Pharmacy, MOPD, OPD, Casualty and Security (these departments have received Customer Service Awards) for their efforts throughout this time. We salute you! *Aluta continua* (the struggle continues).



The MOPD queue backed up all the way to the Laboratory!



The Casualty Team



The Pharmacy Team



The MOPD Team

PS: Congratulations to S Ramharak (circled) who recently became Mrs S Naidoo

Editorial

Just recently we were wishing everybody a happy holiday and now it's the end of March already. Seeing as this is our first encounter in the new year, please accept our best wishes to you and your loved ones for 2005 – may it be everything you want it to be. Now, to finalise a few matters from the year gone... Who would have ever thought you folks could turn down a R200 freebie?! Not one person in this whole hospital sent through a suggestion for a name for our staff newsletter. Guess we'll just have to find some other worthy cause for that moola. Seeing as there were no suggestions for a name, the editor personally went around and asked a few people for ideas. The result? "Sisonke", a Zulu word meaning togetherness. This name is just perfect for this newsletter because one of its main aims is to promote teamwork and a positive vibe in the hospital. Thank you Mfo-kaMutambo for a brilliant suggestion. Which brings us to the next matter from the year gone. In our first Issue we'd asked people to volunteer their services and serve in the Committee which would have been responsible for compiling this newsletter. Again, there was no response. However, we won't give up yet. Perhaps the more you see Sisonke the more you'll understand what it's about and you'll start getting ideas about how we can make it better. We've decided to dedicate this edition to our staff, especially those who've done well in the recent past in terms of service delivery under very trying conditions. To all those featured in this newsletter, hope you enjoy seeing yourselves! If you weren't featured on this one, don't worry, you'll be on the next one. 'Nough said ... get intimate with the pages, will you.

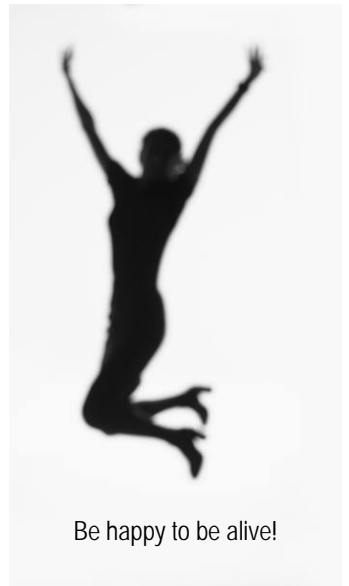
Editor

If walls could talk...

"Push! Push!" ... says the Sister; "You're doing so well. It won't be long now till you're a proud mom." Then there was a cry. Her first glimpse of the world, her first breath. "It's a little girl," screamed the Sister! A tear rolls down the cheek of 16 year old Carol's face. A 16 year old HIV positive mom with nowhere or no one to go to except for this 'bundle of joy'.

"Wendy! I think I'll call her Wendy," says Carol. "My little Wendy." Then there was silence. Nurses rushing, noises of equipment and alarm bells. "Is it Wendy? What's wrong?" asks Carol. Then they take Wendy away. "Relax Carol, we're doing everything we can," says the Sister.

Carol's tears of joy are replaced with words of anger and immaturity. "I wish Wendy were never born! I wish I were never born!" Then the sister comes back, exhausted, but with a sigh of relief she says, "You've got a little fighter, Carol! Wendy is hanging on with everything she has in her." Carol smiles lightly, but cannot say anything. A warm silence fills the air again.



I see the beginning of life everyday, but what saddens me is that everyone is born with a fighting spirit, but hope and determination doesn't exist anymore. Where does it get lost? If little Wendy could fight with every breath and every heart beat for what seemed like a dismal life ahead of her, why then do I also see wealthy people who have everything trying to end their lives?

Wendy wasn't just a baby, but an inspiration! The moral of the story...?

PERSUE! PERSEVERE! PRODUCE!

Nikita

It's your newsletter, tell us what you think. Write a letter to the Editor and have it published.

You can e-mail your letter to h043093@dohho.kzntl.gov.za or just drop it off at Registry or the PRO's office.

To discuss any ideas for the newsletter call the editor on extension 9048.

Ward clerks appointed

After a dragged process, the Ward clerks have finally been appointed – much to the relief of the nursing staff who have been relieved of clerical functions. All Ward clerks are people who have been promoted from within the hospital. They are N D Dladla (A Ward), S Dos Santos (Q Ward), T Govender (G Ward), S Gumede (C Ward), M H Mnengela (Casualty), K Naicker (Helpdesk), D V Ngubane (R Ward), N C Nkubevana (B Ward), and N Zondi (Labour Ward). Among other things, they are responsible for providing administrative support to the ward staff through ensuring the updating and safekeeping of all records, duplication documents, office provisioning, management of telecommunications systems, receiving correspondence (hard copy and electronic), interpreting, informing the Unit Manager or otherwise dealing with and / or redirecting correspondence. We wish all of them the best of luck in their new jobs!



The Ward Clerks

OPD Helpdesk up and running

One of the requirements for an effective hospital that provides a professional service to its clients as outlined the KZN Department of Health's five-year strategy plan is an Information Desk or Helpdesk for patients. Northdale's Helpdesk is finally up and running! Operating from the security office at the entrance to OPD, some of the functions of the Helpdesk are to handle general verbal queries, direct patients to appropriate departments, disburse any communication material available, and make sure patients are seated in the right queues. This is not a post that exists in our establishment and as such an internal arrangement has had to be made in order to get it going. Karthy, a Ward Clerk, currently operates the Helpdesk and it is hoped that this function will be rotated amongst the rest of the Ward Clerks for multi-skilling purposes.



doh news

COHSASA accreditation

The KZN Department of Health has recently signed a 4th Contract with the Council for Health Services Accreditation of Southern Africa (COHSASA) in terms of which all KZN hospitals will be facilitated by members of COHSASA and the Quality & Assurance Accreditation Unit through an abbreviated Accreditation Programme, as it is the intention of the Department of Health that all hospitals will be accredited by the close of 2005.

The abbreviated programme commences with a Presentation by COHSASA staff followed by an assisted baseline on the same and following days. The External Survey follows shortly thereafter. COHSASA made their presentation to our hospital on 9 February. The assisted baseline has also been conducted (10th and 11th of February). All departments now have the grinding work of putting in

place policies and procedures that are currently not there. The External Survey to complete the process is in June.



All captions read left to right, back to front



Revenue Department—Yegen, Dan, Dillon, and Zanele



The OPD Department enjoying themselves at their Christmas party in December



Dolly, Maliga, Premi (Hospital Manager's Secretary), Banmathi, and Siyanda of Registry



The Sick Bay team, Ismail and Thandi



Medical records—Rosé, Chris and Di



The Antenatal and Gynae Clinic Team: Back—Pearl, Mpume, Ntsiki, Elizabeth
Front—Sen, Pat, Fikile



Eye Clinic and Counselling Staff: Back—Nduduzo, Lorraine, Eillaine, Lungisani
Front—Ntombi, Monica, Indira - Insert: Nicky



Linen Room: An- and, Musa, Faride, Brijlal, Ronnie



POPD staff: Back—Khetiwe, Ncamisile, Sr Zondi, Nompumelelo, Pretty Front—PN Singh, Sr Prince



Dental Dept: Dr Singh, Dr Pillay, Dr Ramphal, Sthembile, R Ramkilwan, Mrs Holder, Dr Chetty, Carolyn, Roshni



Stores team: Back—Daniel, Donovan, Raymond, Eugene, Zweli, Irvin, Cedric, Kersy Front—Sandra, Jainthee, Dudu, Prakash



X-Ray Team: Rooksana, Vivian, Kershni (back), Maya, Charmaine (forefront), Mimi (back), Zanele, Indrin, Renisha (front), Dalip

Jenny and Noma of the Nursing Administration Office



30 years' service!

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the following staff members for completing thirty years' service at Northdale Hospital. You now qualify to be called 'amadlozi' of NDH!

- * I Chuntarpursat
- * D L Hargreaves
- * S Ismail
- * P Iyer
- * M Moodley
- * G Nagapan
- * L P Pillay

- * S Kalloun
- * J M Mohabir
- * S Pillay
- * K D B Singh
- * J P Peters
- * D M Khan
- * L B Peters
- * V Thupsee

Tuberculosis (TB)

24 March 2005 was World TB Day. So, what is TB?

TB is a disease caused by bacteria called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. The bacteria can attack any part of your body, but they usually attack the lungs.

TB is spread through the air from one person to another during coughing or sneezing.

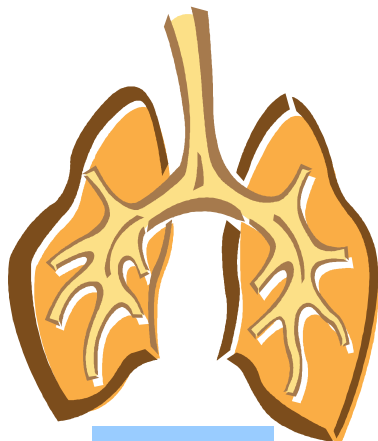
People nearby may breathe in these bacteria and become infected.

When a person breathes in TB bacteria, the bacteria can settle in the lungs and begin to grow. From there, they can move through the blood to other parts of the body, such as the kidney, spine, and brain.

Symptoms of TB depend on where in the body the TB bacteria are growing. TB bacteria usually grow in the lungs. TB in the lungs may cause

- a bad cough that lasts longer than 2 weeks
- pain in the chest

coughing up blood or sputum (phlegm from deep inside the lungs)



"TB bacteria usually grow in the lungs."

Other symptoms of TB disease are

- weakness or fatigue
 - weight loss
 - no appetite
 - chills
 - fever
- sweating at night

TB disease can almost always be cured with medicine. But the medicine must be taken as the doctor or nurse tells you. It is particularly important for us as health workers who sometimes have to care for people infected with TB to take extra caution when dealing with patients. Do not delay a visit to a doctor if you think you might have been exposed to TB.

Source: National Centre for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention website

Kidney health

Personal health should be a top priority. Everyday, personal health must come first, whether it is deciding what to eat, or how late you work. This is especially true for people who have diabetes or hypertension. These are the top two conditions that can lead to kidney failure.

Symptoms of kidney disease vary from person to person. One person may experience many of the symptoms below, but another person may not.

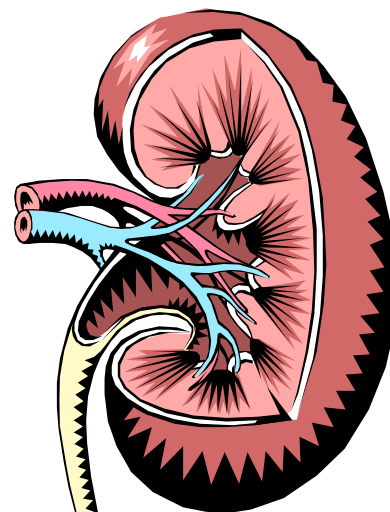
- **Feeling generally sick:** When kidneys begin to fail, waste products will build up in the blood. This may cause a person to feel generally sick.
- **Fluid retention:** The kidneys may produce less urine, which may cause extra fluid to build up in the body. People with this problem may have swollen hands and ankles.
- **Anemia:** The body will not produce as many red blood cells when the kidneys are not working. People with anemia may feel weak, cold, and tired.

Toxin build up: When the kidneys are not working to clean the blood, waste products called toxins will build up in the body. This may cause fatigue, loss of appetite, and may make a person's skin feel itchy.

Visit your doctor early and regularly, and if you have high blood pressure, follow your doctor's orders to control your blood pressure.

In commemoration of National Kidney Awareness Week, 24 – 30 March 2005.

Source: www.kidneydirections.com



"When kidneys begin to fail, waste products will build up in the blood."

Batho Pele Principles for the month

In this issue we look at giving our clients the best deal possible...

- * **Redress:** If the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy; and when the complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic, positive response.
- * **Value for Money:** Public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value for money.
- * **Customer Impact:** Impact means looking at the benefits we have provided for our customers both internal and external – it's how the nine principles link together to show how we have improved our overall service delivery and customer satisfaction. It is also about making sure that all our customers are aware of and exercising their rights in terms of the Batho Pele principles.

In-service training

The Clinical Department has drawn up a programme for in-service training for 2005. The programme covers a wide range of topics including infection control, resuscitation services, disaster management, health and safety, conflict management, patients' rights charter / Batho Pele, stress management, nutrition and dietary services, and so forth. The programme has been sent to all departments and staff are urged to peruse it and make the necessary arrangements should they wish to attend any of the presentations. For more information, contact the Clinical Department on extension 9026.

staff news



Premie Govender

Client Service Awards

As stated in our previous Issue, we are introducing a Client Service Award to recognise outstanding performance and exemplary commitment to service delivery. The following staff members, nominated by their section heads, have received Awards:

- * Ms K Surajpaul (for her enduring helpfulness at Registry)
- * Dr V V Raghavjee (for his role in the 7/01 crisis)
- * Dr S Sirkar (for his role in the Path and HPH projects and training of Interns)
- * Dr Bizaare (for her committed involvement in the ARVT Clinic)
- * Mr Prnil Haripersady (for going the extra mile for a client)
- * Mr R Naicker (for his role in the 7/01 crisis and for being always available to help)
- * Mrs V N Hlophe (for performing over and above her normal duties to ensure smooth running of OPD)
- * Mr Eugene Ngubane (the Stores man who is always ready to help)
- * Dr Pillay (see letter written by patient elsewhere on this page)

Congratulations to all of you—keep up the good work! To everyone else, let's see if you can do enough to get your name published in the next *Sisonke*.

Thumbs up from satisfied clients

Even though we get criticised a lot, it is heartening to see that some people appreciate what we do. Here are letters from Cynthia Hodges and G Deoparsad that appeared in the *Witness* on January 20 and February 23 respectively.

I was recently admitted to Northdale Hospital within half an hour of arriving at casualty. If anyone is being forced to go this route, I would like to reassure them Northdale was clean and the staff (including the cleaning staff) was professional and caring. I would even say that the care I received at Northdale was equal to, if not better than that which I received at a local private hospital. Well done, Northdale, and thank you.—Cynthia Hodges

In a space of five months I was admitted twice to

Northdale Hospital via the casualty department. My heartfelt gratitude goes out to the dedicated, hard working, humble and sincere doctors and nurses, both in Casualty and in B Ward. A special "thank you" goes to Dr Pillay in B Ward. It is good to that the overworked doctors and nurses are still humane and compassionate. The beds, toilets and bathroom were cleaned but in no time were messed up by patients. Once again, a very big thank you to the staff.—G Deoparsad

Goodbye to Premie Govender

After 23 years at Northdale Hospital, Chief Professional Nurse Premie Govender has moved on to the East / Boom Street Clinic to take up the post of Nurse Manager. The management and staff of Northdale Hospital take this opportunity to wish her well in her new position and hope that her stay at East / Boom Street Clinic will be rewarding. Her professionalism and expertise will be sorely missed at NDH.

As many of you might know, we have a new Nursing Services Manager – Mrs du Preez – who took over the office left vacant by Ms Mfeka who was promoted late last year to Townhill Hospital Manager (heavens help her!). Born and bred in ‘Maritzburg (a Haythorne graduate), Mrs du Preez started her career at Northdale Hospital at the most junior level and it is fitting that she now returns to the hospital to lend a hand at the most senior level.

Apart from NDH she has had stints in Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town (four-year nursing training), Fortnapier hospital (psychiatric nursing training), and Umgeni Hospital, where she spent the past twenty years – her leaving position being Nursing Services Manager, a position she had occupied for five years. Undoubtedly, Mrs du Preez brings with her a wealth of experience and credentials which will be of immense benefit to our hospital. Her post graduate qualifications include a Diploma in Psychiatric Nursing, a Diploma in Community Nursing Science, a BA Degree (with specialisation in Education, Ethos and Professional Practice), a Diploma in Public Administration, and she is currently completing her Master’s Degree in Mental Health.

Meet the new Nursing Manager



Besides her work as a nurse, she is also involved in community service as a member of the Family & Marriage Society of South Africa (FAMSSA). FAMSSA is a community based organisation providing holistic assistance to families ranging from child care to the nurturing of married couples’ relationships. Led by her passion for the preservation of family life, she has served in FAMSSA PMB for ten years, the last two of which have been served as Executive Chairperson. Naturally, she has a family of her own that she adores very much. She and Mark, her husband of twenty two years, have three children – Lee (21), Simone (16), and Bevan (13). Mrs du Preez says they are a very musical family – always blasting some kind of musical instrument and practicing dance steps during their free time. They spend a lot of time travelling during holidays and having get-togethers with members of their extended family.

She cannot keep quiet about the warm welcome she received from everybody when she joined NDH recently. For that she says ‘THANK YOU!’ “All I want now is to make a contribution towards the achievement of NDH’s Vision and Mission,” says Mrs du Preez. Well, we wish her well in her endeavours.

See the funny?



Larry Wright, The Detroit News

Perhaps this doctor can learn the meaning of the word ‘flawless’ from the KZN Health Ombudsperson, Dr L B Gumede, a former surgeon. Legend has it that, while visiting his soon-to-be in-laws to pay lobola donkeys years ago, he was stunned to learn that he had to slaughter a goat all by himself and take it back with him on a plane. Working carefully not to spoil his designer suit, he made a perfect dissection of the goat, tying knots at all ends of its major veins, resulting in a clean job with not even a single drop of blood spilling on to the ground. With his designer suit unspoilt, he neatly packed the goat in little packs and, off he went to catch his plane back home! Now, that’s flawless!