

The Kudjip Experience--Residents

KNH is a general hospital, serving as the District Hospital for a large area of the Whagi and Jimi valleys of central Papua New Guinea. We have about 110 inpatient beds, and in 2007 we saw 44,227 outpatient visits and 4,616 inpatient admissions. In addition we delivered about 1070 babies (that's about 90 per month, of which 18-19 are c-sections) and did 1382 surgical procedures. We saw about 760 people accept Christ.

We have a 26-bed adult medicine ward, a 26-bed surgical ward, a 27-bed pediatric ward, a 12-bed tuberculosis ward, and a 19-bed maternity ward. We have a labor suite with 3 delivery beds. We have a nursery the capacity of which is quite flexible, up to about 10 babies. We have two operating theaters and a minor procedure room. Our Outpatient Department includes 6 exam rooms and a 5-bed Emergency Room.

We have both fixed and portable x-ray machines, and can do most basic views. We have two ultrasound machines, which are used by all of our physicians. Our laboratory facilities include both hematology and chemistry, as well as microscopy and blood banking. Unfortunately, we have no microbiology lab, but we are able to do serological tests for syphilis, hepatitis B and HIV.

We are actively involved in care of patients with HIV and AIDS. We have a maternal-to-child-transmission prevention program. We currently provide HART to a limited number of patients in consultation with a clinic in a near-by city, and expect to soon be approved for a fully-independent HART program.

Our medical staff presently includes four family physicians, a pediatrician and a general surgeon. All are residency-trained and board-certified. In addition, we frequently have visiting physicians in a variety of specialties.

Residents who come here usually have a wide variety of experience. It is common for them to spend a portion of their time here rounding on each of the wards for morning rounds, and then spending the remainder of their day in the Outpatient department. Residents see patients independently, consulting with staff doctors as needed. They commonly are able to perform more procedures than they would in their home country (depending on what kind of residency they are in). They often do several thoracenteses and pericenteces, repair complex lacerations, do many I&Ds and lumbar punctures. They may do ultrasounds, D&Cs, manual extraction of retained placentas, and closed reductions of various fractures. Depending on their interest, they assist in the operating theater, and may perform cesarean sections with staff supervision. They take call; although staff is available as backup, it is up to the resident to decide when he or she needs to consult with them.

We have a limited library, but it contains material that is relevant to what we do, and some recent publications. Residents are encouraged to read and study regarding clinical problems that they encounter here. In addition, our doctors all enjoy teaching, and are always eager to discuss clinical problems. We have good internet access, and have access to a World Health Organization-sponsored database of medical literature.

Outside the hospital, the resident has opportunities to gain an understanding of the people of the Whagi Valley. They often visit nearby villages, visit with local people and attend cultural events. There are many interesting hikes in the vicinity of KNH that afford opportunities to see both people and beautiful scenery. Visitors usually go into the nearby town of Mount Hagen once or twice during their stay. (Most find that once is more than enough!)

In addition, residents usually get to know the staff of KNH well. They are usually invited into the homes of the medical and non-medical missionaries, and are included in activities on the station. Those with a personal interest in medical missions have opportunities to ask questions of missionaries at various stages of their careers, and to discuss their own plans and aspirations with experienced missionaries. They also are able to observe how missionaries and their families live, and to gain an understanding of the challenges and the rewards of missionary life. Many residents who have been here are continuing to pursue plans to become missionaries. One of our current staff physicians came here as both a medical student and as a resident.