

The Kudjip Experience--Students

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.

Medical students 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. Depending upon their level of training and their own aptitude they may see patients on their own, consulting with staff doctors as appropriate for each patient. They commonly are able to perform more procedures than they would in their home country. These include thoracentesis, pericentesis, lumbar puncture, suturing of lacerations, incision and drainage, ultrasound, vaginal deliveries, dilatation and curettage and manual extraction of retained placenta. They usually assist in the operating theater. Depending upon their interest, level of training and aptitude, they may perform individual steps of operations under the direct supervision of a staff doctor.

We have a limited library, but it contains material that is relevant to what we do, and includes recent publications. Students 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.

Students (again depending upon level of training and aptitude and interest) may take call on nights or weekends. When they do, a staff doctor is assigned as supervisor, and is always available on short notice to help. Often the student will go in to the hospital to evaluate a patient, and then the staff doctor will come and check the patient and discuss the care plan before it is implemented. In emergencies the student and staff doctor come to evaluate the situation together.

Outside the hospital, the student 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, students 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 students who have been here are continuing to pursue plans to become missionaries, and one former student here is now one of our staff doctors.