

Mozambique Partners Open New HIV/AIDS Clinic and Training Center in Beira

HIV/AIDS Twinning Center partners at the Universidade Católica de Moçambique (UCM) and the University of Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania celebrated the opening of a new HIV/AIDS clinic and training center on June 17.



Located at UCM's campus in Beira, St. Luke's Health Center has greatly expanded accessibility to high quality primary care and HIV/AIDS services to people in Mozambique's Sofala Province. Since its opening, the facility has already provided treatment and care to more than 3,500 people — more than a quarter of whom are living with HIV.

With support from PEPFAR through CDC/Mozambique, UCM has been collaborating with the University of Pittsburgh since 2006. While the clinic site was undergoing lengthy renovations, partners focused on faculty and curriculum development through an extensive series of professional exchanges and trainings conducted in both Mozambique and the United States.



The UCM clinic provides much-needed HIV treatment and other health services to people in Sofala Province.

"We have partnered with the Ministry of Health to create a vital service for the local community, as well as a critical opportunity for current and future healthcare workers in Mozambique to learn important clinical skills," says Dr. Peter Millard, of UCM's Faculty of Medicine.

"St. Luke's delivers HIV treatment in a primary care setting, which helps reduce stigma, improve accessibility, and provide 'one stop shopping' for many patients who would otherwise face long waits at the central hospital," Millard continues, explaining that the clinic also "serves as a center of excellence, teaching current and future healthcare workers the planned care model, a cutting edge medical practice used to care for patients with chronic diseases such as HIV, TB, hypertension, and diabetes."

Partners have already conducted three 10-day, skills-based trainings on opportunistic infections for 20 medical professionals from Beira and nearby areas, with a fourth slated to take place in fall 2009.

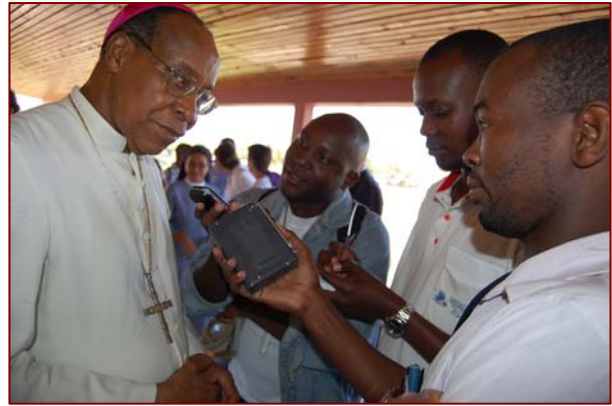
Leveraging US government support for their efforts, the Pittsburgh partners sought donations of medical equipment and supplies, arranging for two 40-foot containers of materials valued at nearly \$85,000, which were shipped to Beira in November 2008.

For the UCM partners, the twinning partnership — and the donated equipment and supplies — have translated into improved capacity to meet the underserved needs of people in their community, both now and in the future as more clinicians and allied caregivers are trained.

“The support we are getting from the American people, the Twinning Center, and our partners in Pittsburgh is greatly enhancing our capacity to deliver quality health services,” said UCM Vice Chancellor Fr. P. Francisco Ponsi.

“The clinic is an excellent contribution to Mozambique’s health system. Not only will it help us to assist people in the neighboring community, it will also serve as a training ground and enable us to launch an internship program for graduate-level medical students.”

Clinic manager Vitor Karatzisdos Santos says, “As the building progressed, my excitement grew along with it. I believe that the quality care that is available here will change the landscape of health services in Sofala Province.”



UCM Chancellor Dom Jaime, Archbishop of Beira, fields questions from local journalists during a tour of the newly opened St. Luke's Health Center.