

## Bringing Home-based Care and Support to Families in Tanzania's Pare Diocese

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania is partnering with the Southeast Iowa Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Iowa Sister States, and Iowa Health Des Moines to strengthen palliative care services in Tanzania's Pare Diocese. With support from the American people through PEPFAR, CDC/Tanzania, and the HIV/AIDS Twinning Center, partners have trained more than 200 medical workers in the concepts and practices of palliative care using the African Palliative Care Association's curriculum since 2007. In addition, they have established 10 community-based sites throughout the diocese, training one nurse as a Sustaining Trainer and 10 non-medical caregivers at each of these remote installations.



Community caregivers, trained by Twinning Center partners to provide palliative care, walk through the mountains to reach people who require home-based care.

"During the first two phases of our project, we held several five-day seminars for healthcare leaders in the Same and Mwanga Districts then our local partners taught these concepts to teams of volunteer outreach workers in the villages. Now, we are accompanying these palliative care workers on home visits to see their patients," explains Iowa partner Pamela Arnold Powers, a Nurse Program Manager for HIV/AIDS and Infection Control with Des Moines-based Primary Health Care, Inc.

"We walked through the Pare mountains, hiking up and down on the burnt-orange soil for almost an hour to see Glory, a single mother of four. She had been sick for several years and it was assumed that her husband died of AIDS. She now lay dying on a bed in the home of her brother-in-law," Arnold Powers recounts, noting that Glory's eldest daughter, a girl of about 9 years in age, was her primary caregiver. "She had advanced cancer, probably kaposi sarcoma, that had ravaged her skin and the underlying tissue and bones of her face ... her daughter was the only one Glory would allow to change her facial dressings."

Mama Ibrahim, the Sustainability Trainer from Same Dispensary, focused a great deal of effort on this patient and her family, according to Arnold Powers. "She made daily visits, providing them not only with much-needed care, but also an ongoing connection with the community. She obtained anti-anxiety medication for Glory and arranged for a visit from the local Pastor to support the family's spiritual needs. Mama Ibrahim also notified the medical team at Gonja Hospital and arranged for a home visit so that Glory's pain could be more effectively managed," she continues.

“While we were visiting with this patient and her family, our American social worker volunteers provided some therapeutic activities for Glory’s children. The children didn’t speak much about their current circumstances, but quietly and purposefully drew pictures for their mother’s bedroom wall. Mama Ibrahim and her team walked hand in hand with Glory and her family throughout the next two weeks until Glory’s death,” Arnold Powers concludes. “For us, it was an honor to join our partners in their mission to deliver palliative care to patients in their home villages. They were eager to provide this care to their communities. Through an academic lens, it was gratifying to see supportive, holistic care give meaning and dignity to patients and their families in the midst of challenging end-of-life experiences.”



For individuals who are too sick to travel to a clinic or hospital, the home visits offer much-needed treatment, care, and support.