

CENTRAL AFRICA MEDICAL MISSION – MALAWI/ZAMBIA

May 2019 Newsletter

Since the beginning of 2019, I have been making monthly trips to our clinic at Mwembezhi, Zambia. That's a bit unusual for the Malawi administrator, but so are the circumstances. Following a field trip to Zambia in the summer of 2018, and in consultation with the Zambia Mission, CAMMC made the decision to hire a Zambian National as Clinic Administrator. In late December 2018, Pastor Dan Sargent who had somehow managed to include Clinic Administrator among all his other duties left Zambia to take a Call back in the United States. With Dan's departure, so went a lot of institutional memory, and the person who would likely train and mentor our new administrator. Hence my trips to Zambia.

The change in administration has not affected patient care. The medical side of clinic operations has been managed very successfully for years by Mr. Jackson Kalekwa. Jackson is a Lutheran Church of Central Africa (LCCA) member who is something of a local icon and as Clinical Officer-in-Charge has led the effort to provide high quality Christian based health care to the villages served by the clinic. The clinic was given a certificate of excellence for its quality assurance program in health care delivery by the Zambian Ministry of Health.

In January 2019, Mr. Alisad Banda was appointed to be our Clinic Administrator. Alisad is a mature Christian and longtime LCCA member who is married with two children. Until joining CAMM, Alisad worked for the LCCA Board of Charities, managing their home-based health care programs. He is very familiar with the operations at Mwembezhi as he has been involved in various issues related to the clinic. He is currently in the process of completing his degree in Public Health.

Alisad's background, experience and qualifications make him a natural fit for the position. Add in a Christian heart and mind, a character that believes in hard work, someone who is respectful of the past but looks for improvement, a desire to learn, a belief in team building and inclusiveness, plus a great sense of humor and you can see that hiring Alisad Banda as our Administrator was an easy decision. Alisad clearly understands that his role as administrator in Zambia is to provide Christian leadership and to ensure that the medical staff at Mwembezhi have the resources and support they need.

As Alisad goes through the orientation process, he is gradually learning the job duties such as reporting, accounting, ordering and delivering supplies, petty cash management, payroll, vehicle and property maintenance, insurance, staff discipline and human resources, licensing, government and institutional relations etc. Alisad is a quick learner and is doing well in his new role. We are blessed and thankful to have him as part of our team.

We have also created a Zambian Lutheran Medical Council. The purpose of the council is to provide guidance and support to the clinic – but not to run it, and to serve as an information conduit to the LCCA and the Zambia Mission. As an example, budgets, changes in pay and clinic conditions are presented to the medical council for their input and advice but are ultimately approved by CAMMC. The Council is comprised of five members: Our Mission Liaison (chair), the Chairman of the LCCA – Zambia, the Chairman of the LCCA-Zambia Board of Charities, the Director of African Mission Operations, and the Malawi Lutheran Mobile Clinic Administrator. Having our African brothers on the team provides a unique perspective when dealing with African issues. The group has only met once, but we are already seeing positive results as we are making progress in dealing with longstanding clinic land and housing issues.

One of CAMM's long term goals is to turn more of the responsibility for running the clinics over to Zambian and Malawi nationals. This is a big step in that direction. We ask that you please pray for God's blessings for the future of the medical mission in Africa, for Alisad and his family and for the Zambian Lutheran Medical Council.

Gary Evans - Malawi Lutheran Mobile Clinic Administrator