



DENNIS & NANCY PALMER - Missionaries in Cameroon

FEBRUARY 2018

Dear Family and Friends,

On February 15 every year, World Child Cancer Day is celebrated around the world. With the help of a retired pediatric oncologist from South Africa and two physicians from England, our three largest Cameroon Baptist Hospitals have had a growing pediatric cancer program for the past



15 years. We were privileged to host two of these physicians (who come twice a year to supervise the programs) and several cancer survivors and their parents to celebrate the day.

Noella and her daughter, Lincy, came 8 hours on a bus from Douala to be at the celebration. Noella shared their story with the hospital staff at morning devotions: "Lincy was 3 1/2 years old when she became ill in 2014. I took her to three different hospitals in succession. One hospital treated her for acute malaria. Another hospital operated on her and removed an unknown abdominal mass, but after two weeks the mass returned. Then someone told me to take her to Mbingo because 'they have good doctors there.' When I brought her here the doctor diagnosed Burkitt lymphoma [a fast-growing, childhood cancer common in Africa]. After chemotherapy and an operation, for four years now she has been fine. She is brilliant in school! Special thanks go to the Almighty God and to the entire staff at Mbingo. People should not be afraid; cancer is curable."



PRAISES

- Many December contributions for the NAB Reach projects
- A good Christmas with our Mbingo family
- Our increased ability to diagnose and treat cancer

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Completion of the fundraising for the hydroelectric project. Give through NAB's "Reach" capital funds project (<http://nabonmission.org/reach/>) or contact us for more info
- Peaceful resolution of the socio-political tensions between the English-speaking areas and the government
- Funds to subsidize chemotherapy for needy patients

"In God I trust and am not afraid. I will not fear what can mere human beings do to me?"

Psalm 56:11



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In addition to the six-bed pediatric cancer unit, Mbingo has an outpatient ward of eight beds for adult patients to receive their monthly (for example) IV chemotherapy. These wards are overseen by oncologist Dr. Francine Kouya, one of the first two Internists trained at Mbingo, who returned last April after completing a two-year oncology fellowship in South Africa.



Thirty years ago, cancer was diagnosed less frequently because patients didn't live as long, they couldn't travel so far for diagnosis, and our hospitals had no pathology for diagnosis verification. In addition, there was limited surgical treatment and chemotherapy available. Today, patients come to MBH from all of Cameroon and occasionally from surrounding countries.



We diagnose more than 1000 new cancers each year, thanks to Dr. Richard Bardin, NAB missionary pathologist at Mbingo. The most common types of cancer diagnosed at Mbingo are breast and cervical cancer making up respectively 25 and 15% of all cancers seen.

Although the hospital has only basic chemotherapy drugs, which are much less expensive than the newer drugs available in North America, the cost of a series of treatments is still beyond the ability of most families. Many times patients get the first two to four of the needed six treatments, but then will default treatment because they have depleted both their own funds and their family's ability to assist. Inability to complete the full course of treatment greatly compromises the outcome for the patient.

To help subsidize the chemotherapy for a cancer patient, you can contribute by check to NAB or online through the website for Special Projects: <https://my.nabconference.org/default.aspx?page=3437&funds=348> One course of chemotherapy costs approximately \$600, about six months salary for a general laborer. So your gift of \$300 will subsidize half one patient's treatment cost. Thank you for whatever you can give to this need.

Dennis and Nancy