

## **MBARARA REGIONAL REFERRAL HOSPITAL**

Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital, commonly known as Mbarara Hospital, is a government owned referral hospital which started in the 1930s as a nursing school for the SouthWestern Ankole region.

Its status was then elevated in the 1950s to a district hospital for the former Ankole region until it was again elevated to a regional referral facility in the early 1990s.

When the government started a second public university - Mbarara University of Science and Technology in 1989, the hospital which is within the university's vicinity also became a teaching hospital for the University to train doctors, nurses, pharmacists and laboratory technologists. It also attracts interns from other institutions such as Bishop Stuart University, Mayanja Memorial Hospital and St. Francis Hospital, mutolere in Kisoro District.

The Mission Statement of Mbarara Hospital is to provide comprehensive, super specialized health services, conduct tertiary health training, research and contributing to the health policy.

Although the hospital's official bed capacity is 350 beds, its actual bed capacity is way above that, which is the main reason for the 'floor cases'.

Currently, the hospital serves a population of over four million people in its catchment area comprising the districts of Mbarara, Bushenyi, Ntungamo, Kiruhura, Ibanda, Buhweju, Rubirizi, Mitooma and Isingiro. The hospital also receives patients from kabale, masaka, Fort Portal and neighboring countries like Rwanda and Tanzania.

The management has just finalized a Master plan that will guide new developments at the hospital over the coming decade. The implementation of that master plan is already underway.

A new three- block complex was recently completed, thanks to funding from the government and other partners.



Newly constructed staff Units at Mbarara RRH



*Drug Store at the Hospital*



This complex now hosts seven wards including the Accident and Emergency Ward, the ICU, Surgical, Medical, Obstetric and Gynaecology, Paediatrics, Psychiatry and T.B Wards as well as a private wing for both male and female patients. In the newly constructed building, there are also eight operating theaters, an ICU of eight beds and four beds for the NICU. The Eye center too has

been fitted with two operating theaters. It is because of these recent installations such as the new state of the art theatres that have enabled the specialists at the hospital to carry out 500 – 600 minor and major operations in the last couple of years.

Other important specialized units have been launched at the hospital including the Cardiology Clinic, which started operating in October 2012. According to Dr. George Upenyho, the hospital director, within months of the clinic's opening, 174 in-patients were registered with heart problems. Following these new developments, Dr. Upenyho says there has been an upsurge of admissions compared to the previous years.

At the moment, the clinic registers between 25-40 patients very Tuesday, yet the clinic does not have enough facilities to handle the overwhelming numbers.

A cancer treatment unit was also started recently, thanks to support from friends in Harvard University in the US, with monthly technical support supervision visits by consultants from Mulago Cancer Institute. The Cervical Cancer Clinic in the hospital has registered 12,921 patients from April 2010 to July 2013 plus revisits of approximately 9,695 coming to a total of 22,616 patients.

Every day, the hospital sees about 1,200 – 1,500 patients including 300 at the HIV Clinic, over 100 at the Maternal and Child Health Unit, over 200 at the General OPD, between 30 – 50 in the Eye clinic, 50 – 80 at the Psychiatry Wing and between 30 – 50 patients at the Physiotherapy unit.

The total number of staff required for a national referral status would be a minimum of 1,114 as compared to the current number of 240. Dr. Upenyho also says they are in negotiations with the government and other partners to have the second phase of construction to improve the bed capacity of the hospital to at least 650. This same block will be able to host a state of the art laboratory and OPD plus the Administration offices.

Meanwhile a memorandum of understanding to establish a cancer institute has been signed and the university has provided land for its construction.

### **More latest Developments**

In January 2011, President Yoweri Museveni laid the foundation stone at the hospital to mark the renovation, rehabilitation, and expansion of the hospital and transformed it into a National Referral Hospital. The physical works were undertaken by Excel Construction Company, a subsidiary of the Madhvani Group. The hospital's bed capacity was increased from 350 to 608.

African Development Bank committed \$30 million (Shs74.3b) and the government of Uganda contributed \$10 million (Shs24.8b) on the first phase where a new structure has been set up with facilities such as intensive care unit, private wing and theatres. The constructions are expected to improve service delivery in the Health sector.

The renovation of the hospital has also been beefed up with new equipment which includes those for Emergency Obstetric Care, X-Ray machines, Dental equipment, Pediatric equipment, Maternity beds, specialized and hospital furniture among others. Others include, Hospital Furniture (Hospital Beds, Bed side Lockers, Patient Screens, Examination Beds, Examination Mattresses, Hospital Chairs, Surgeons Stools, Cabinets, Drip stands, Patient Stretchers and Trolleys, Wheel Chairs, etc).



*Procured Regulators*



Mental health unit which comprises of psychiatric Unit