Mosvold Hospital - Ingwavuma
Jozini Dam
SA doctor shortage is critical

By SHOLAIN GOVENDER

SOUTH Africa’s medical brain drain is at crisis point, with more than 23 000 doctors working in other countries.

Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang began World Health Day celebrations yesterday with the launch of a Human Resources Health Plan, intended to combat the rapidly increasing migration of doctors.

A section of the health plan revealed that 23 407 SA-born health professionals were working in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the US.
Current situation - vacancy rates 2005

For the whole of Area 3:

- 46% vacancy rate for Professional Nurses (1171 vacancies of 2546 establishment posts)
- 41% vacancy rate for Medical Officers including CSOs
- 55% vacancy rate for Senior Medical Officers and higher
This is not a new problem

- Recruiting and retaining staff is a major problem (medical staff / pharmacists - fall out of the sky by the Grace of God)

- **This is not the way it needs to be:**

- Some attempts to address this problem
  - 1990’s Adverts in SAMJ & BMJ
  - 1994 Recruiting video
  - 1996 Post graduate training program
  - 1998 Pressure to allow local selection of KZN bursaries
  - 1998 FOM SS
The penny dropped- Local graduates!

- BUT:
  - Poor schooling
  - No role models
  - No money

- Anglo scholarship program
1. Belief that local students have potential
2. Rural origin students are more likely to come back to a rural area
Objectives of the Friends of Mosvold Scholarship scheme

- Identify and support 4 new students /year
- Raise awareness at schools
- Support and mentor students at university
- Students to be role models and peer AIDS educators
- Ensure community involvement
To be eligible

- Come from the area
- Get a place to study health science course at university or technikon
- Do 2 weeks holiday work
- Be selected by a local selection committee
- Sign a year for year contract
Friends of Mosvold Scholarship scheme

Selecting local students with potential
Helping students pass
Facilitating students returning
Investing in people
We were told

- We would be unable to find students
- None of our students would pass
- Graduates would not return to work in the area
Over the last 8 years

- 2500 attended open days
- 250 have done voluntary work & applied for financial support
- 95 trained as peer AIDS educators
- 103 Supported at University
- 33 Students have graduated
- All have returned and have / are completing their work back commitments
In 2006, FOM was closely associated with 55 students of whom 37 students funded entirely by FOM. 44 passed (82% - as against a national norm of 20 -25%) and 13 graduated!

R 1 900 000 invested by FOM into tertiary education in Umkhanyakude in 2006.

Developing capacity within the local population to ensure long-term and sustainable health care delivery to the population of Umkhanyakude.
9 years since we started

- Time to reflect
- What factors are contributing to our success?
- What are the challenges and how should we respond?
Snemhlana Gumede

Physiotherapist
Mseleni hospital
Schooling

Challenges

- Learning in Zunglish - right up to Matric
- Teachers encouraged us to take standard grade subjects - it makes the school look better
- No career guidance – did not know where to apply to for what and when to apply
We only thought that we could be:

- Teachers
- Nurses
- Police man
- Soldiers

To be a doctor you needed to be white
At University

- Lectures are in ENGLISH!! And fast
- New environment – urban – what is a lift??

- Trying to catch up with:
  - The language
  - The content
  - The life style
  - The opportunities
France Nxumalo
Optometrist
Work situation

- Started in 2004 - Clark post
- No prev. Optometrist for the whole district
- This meant: No rural allowance
  No scarce skills allowance
  No equipment
  No job description
Work situation - Solution

- Motivating for:
  - Post,
  - Career pathway
  - Networking

- District service
- Clear career pathway
- Have fully equipped eye clinic
  - Thanks to Disc.
Work situation

- Part of the team evaluating eye clinics
- Chosen as the best eye clinic in the province
- Allowances under discussion
Work achievements continued...

Full Optometry Service to the district

- Seeing about 300 patients/month
- Average of 50 cataract surgery/month
What makes it work? We asked our graduates what factors contribute to FOM success

1. Selecting the right students (open days, work experience prior to selection, local selection committee)

“They see us (graduates) working !! And know it is possible”

2. Highly motivated students (? Is this enough)
3. Support at University
   – academically, (mentoring, FOM visits, regular contact- phoning) – How are you doing? What ever it takes, you have to pass
   - socially (FOM family- No one in the FOM family must fail- how can you help each other?)
   - financially

4. Holiday work (builds experience, confidence, relationships with other students)
Reinforcing the need to return
Strategy for sustainability

- Developing close working relationships
- Run a successful project
- Invest in graduates
- Be accountable for the resources
Lessons learnt (and Duplicability):

- Believe that it is possible
- Create a dream with concrete steps
- Ensure community involvement
- Support students along the way
- Talk often about HIV – so that students don’t die from HIV
- Talk often about the need to come back and serve
- Obtain support from Hospital management
- Provide ongoing support for graduates
- Create working relationships that work
- Be passionate
- Determined to find solutions
- Find staff who want to find solutions
- Believe that change is about people, you get involved 1 person at a time. Looking for large “system wide” change often discourages one from getting going with the one’s and two’s
- Service delivery is about having good people. Good people will find solutions.
Generalisability:

These things can be done anywhere

- Promote careers (in health sciences) through biannual open days + work experience
- Establish local selection committees that work together with local government department (District HRDC)
Support at university

- Have regular contact with “your” students—phone monthly, visit where possible
- Build relationships
- Encourage students to do holiday work
What can you do?

1. Teach life skills
   - Study technique
   - Money management
   - Sexuality
   - etc
What can you do to help?

2. Mentor students
   - Meet regularly
   - Discuss academic and life issues
   - Must pass
   - Must go back
   - Don’t get HIV
- Encourage All bursary students to do 4/52 holiday work / year
- Feed and accommodate your students
- Pay them if you can
- Facilitate return
- Active effort made to place graduates in vacant posts in the district (active, funded post, equipment etc)
- Support for appropriate post grad studies
It really works
If your vision is for a year, plant wheat
If your vision is for a decade, plant trees
If your vision is for a lifetime, plant people

Chinese proverb

Some men see things as they are and ask "why?". I dream of things that never were and ask "why not?"

George Bernard Shaw
FOM has shown

- Local students have potential
- Local students will return

And can help us provide long term sustainable health care to the people of Umkhanyakude

Do you have the vision and passion to make it happen through your department?
The Future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams

Nelson Mandela