



# Nkhoma CCAP Hospital

All correspondence to be addressed to The Principal Hospital Administrator



## General information on Nkhoma Mission Hospital for visiting doctors, nurses and students.

(Updated: January 2010)

Nkhoma CCAP Synod Health Department comprises Nkhoma Hospital, 10 Health Centres scattered through Malawi Central Region, Nkhoma College of nursing and all health structures as being developed within the Nkhoma CCAP synod at congregational level. Nkhoma Hospital is situated some 60 kilometres south of Malawi's capital Lilongwe, 15 kilometres off the main (Lilongwe-Blantyre) road. The hospital premises are within the historical area of the original (South African Reformed NG Church) mission station, many of its buildings still showing the building style of the missionaries that started it in 1912.

### Services currently provided:

Over a period of almost 100 years the hospital has developed from a single missionary doctor, who expanded his training course in tropical medicine into a reasonably well equipped 220 bed facility. It has paediatric, surgical, general male and female wards with isolation rooms, tuberculosis, maternity and private wards, a labour room, 2 general theatres, outpatient department, family health clinic, ARV-clinic and supportive departments (physiotherapy, pharmacy, administration). There is also an ophthalmic department with ophthalmic theatre.

Its primary catchment area is the surrounding rural community of 64 000 people; however, it serves patients from all over Malawi as well as from neighbouring countries. It offers in- and outpatient care locally and conducts mobile clinics in its catchment area. Yearly 30 000 outpatient are seen, 12 000 people are admitted, 1 500 people are operated on in the general theatre, 2 500 ophthalmic operations are done and 2 000 deliveries are conducted. Some operations are of a specialist nature (e.g. Vesico-Vaginal Fistula repair, cataract removal and lens implantation); provision of these services lightens the workload of the nearest referral hospital (Kamuzu Central Hospital in Lilongwe). The Health Department supervises governmental and non-governmental Health Centres within its catchment area and CCAP Health Centres throughout the Central Region of Malawi. The Hospital has negotiated a Service Agreement with the District Health Offices (DHO) of Lilongwe, which means some care is paid by them. It has built a reputation of offering good quality care, explaining the number of people coming from remote areas.

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✉: Private Bag 206, Lilongwe, Malawi  
☎: 265-1-752799 📠: 265-1-754264  
✉: [nkhoma@malawi.net](mailto:nkhoma@malawi.net)  
🌐: [www.nkhomahospital.org](http://www.nkhomahospital.org)

Bank details:  
National Bank Malawi  
Lilongwe Branch  
PO Box 123 Lilongwe  
Malawi  
Swift code NBM AM WMW

Nkhoma Hospital Euro Account, number: 1241145159400; Nkhoma Hospital Dollar Account, number: 0241145159400;  
Nkhoma Hospital Pound Account, number: 0341145159400 Nkhoma Medical Account number: 0141145159400

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Serving with Love and Care

**Staff:**

*Medical director:* Dr. Reynier ter Haar

*Deputy medical director:* Dr. David Morton

*Matron:* Sr. Ngwanda

*Nurses:* In every of the following wards are 1-2 nurses/nurse-technicians working in the day-time: Male, Female, Paediatrics, Private, Maternity and Surgical ward. In the night the whole hospital is run by 2-4 nurses. First and second year nursing students from the local nursing college are sometimes in the wards during their practical rotations. In the wards the nurses are assisted by *patient attendants* who have a junior certificate of education (= primary school) and received a 2-week introductory course in the hospital. They can check temperature and blood pressure, they also do wound dressings, burn dressings, and they assist expatriate staff with translation.

***Clinicians:***

Medical assistants have a 2-year training and attend to and admit outpatients independently.

Clinical Officers have a 3-year clinical training. They attend to patients that are referred by Medical Assistants. They do ward-rounds and give basic obstetric care (including caesarean sections) independently. Depending on individual skills they also do surgery (e.g. inguinal hernia, total abdominal hysterectomy, and prostatectomy). Two clinical officers are specialized in anaesthesia and two in orthopaedics. Nkhoma also provides training to intern clinical officers.

Doctors: There is currently one Malawian doctor who has joined our team, and 4 expatriate doctors who supervise all clinical work, see referred cases, see private patients and do ward-rounds and surgery. There is one ophthalmologist in the eye hospital, assisted by a Malawian ophthalmic clinical officer.

Doctors and Clinical officers share the night calls. There is always one person on first-call (for maternity and in-patients) and one person on second-call for theatre cases. Medical assistants do night-calls for out-patients.

**Time table:**

Every day starts at 7.00 am with handover for all nurses and clinicians by the night staff. Any special concerns are also discussed in this meeting. On Monday and Friday we also have some in-service training. We try to have a presentation, prepared by one of the clinicians. We often ask visiting doctors or students to give a presentation as well.

Ward-rounds are done on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings.

Tuesday and Thursday mornings are reserved for elective surgery, often extending into the afternoons. In those mornings one or two clinicians stay in OPD and attend to urgent ward matters.

Monday mornings Ante Natal Care first visits are done by midwives.

Wednesday mornings Under Five clinics are done by Primary Health Care nurses.

On Wednesday one medical officer works in ABC-clinic, a private clinic in Lilongwe, to earn some extra money for the hospital.

Thursday mornings Ante Natal Care follow-up visits are done by midwives.

Outreach clinics for under-five clinic, ante-natal care and family planning are done on Tuesday and Friday mornings

If it is not too busy it is allowed to have tea-break 10.30-11.00 am, tea and bread is available in theatre for people working there.  
Lunchtime officially 12.30-14.00 pm, but often starts later due to busy OPD. If enough medical officers are available, one of us has a break at 12.00-13.00 and the rest at 13.00-14.00.  
Day finishes officially at 16.00 pm but often later due to busy OPD.  
Nurses schedule is from 7.00 am to 4.00 pm Or from 7.00 am to 1.00 pm + 4.00 pm to 7.00 pm. Nightshift is from 7.00 pm till 7.00 am.

**Dress code:**

Since July 2009 women are allowed to wear trousers in the hospital. This must be a 'wide-seated' trouser and the buttocks must be covered with your jacket or blouse. In the villages it is still recommended to wear a skirt which covers the knees. If it is a light-coloured dress, please wear a petticoat under it. Malawians often wear several dresses on top of each other with a chitenje (wrap-around) on top.

Nurses wear closed shoes, a white dress or trousers and white top, a dark blue jersey in winter. Clinicians wear closed shoes and a white coat over their clothes. Please bring your own uniform!

For extra clarity: visiting ladies are expected to wear dresses/skirts while on the mission station. All clinicians are expected to wear white coats in the hospital and should bring them, on the job clinicians are expected to wear closed shoes.

As a medical student, please also bring your own stethoscope: you will need it!

Please do not bring any fancy clothes here or those with flashy labels. Bring comfortable walking shoes, there will be a lot of walking!

Surgical volunteers, scrubs are available, however it would be best for you to bring a pair that fits you to use during your stay, then consider it for donation for the hospital when your time is done.

**Weather conditions:**

Winter in July-August can be fairly cold (15-20 degrees in the day, <10 degrees at night), realise that there is no central heating and houses and hospital are built to keep the heat out (bring warm clothes and sweater). The hottest season is in October-November, just before the rainy season starts (25-35 degrees in the day, 20-25 degrees at night). In the rainy season, November to April, there are usually daily thunderstorms, but it can rain throughout the day. Roads and paths in Nkhoma are not tarred, so your shoes can get rather messy this time of year. You are advised to bring an umbrella or buy one at the local market in the rainy season. Do not forget mosquito repellent, long sleeves and long trousers/skirt at night!

**Recommended immunisations:**

BCG (many cases of open TB), Meningococcus, Hepatitis A and B, Typhoid, Tetanus, Rabies, Malaria prophylaxis the whole year round.

Short-term volunteers need not get Rabies vaccine.

Malarone is the recommended prophylaxis for the type of malaria found here in Malawi.

You may need to seek a 'travel clinic' in your area to receive the above medications and immunizations.

You are advised to drink filtered water (especially in the rainy season when tap-water is brown) or boiled water.

It is advisable to bring your own PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis for needle stick injury) if possible. About 60% of our patients are infected with the HIV-virus. The recommended prophylaxis in Malawi is a combination tablet zidovudine (300 mg)/ lamivudine (150 mg). This tablet is easily available. But in the western part of the world the PEP consist of zidovudine/ lamivudine plus nelfinavir (250 mg) or kaletra. The nelfinavir and kaletra is often not available here.

If you have any intention of going on a safari to Zambia, although it is not recommended by the CDC, the Zambia border patrol is still seeking record that you have received the immunization.

### **Accommodation:**

There is one guesthouse near the hospital with single and shared rooms and dormitory, shared bathrooms and a well-equipped kitchen and living room. You have to bring and prepare your own food. There is a fridge, freezer, oven and microwave available. If you provide ingredients (yeast, flour, oil, salt, sugar) someone can bake bread for you. For a small fee you can have washing done.

The amount of rooms is limited, so book the guesthouse as soon as possible! The costs are about 6-8 US Dollar per night. Booking and payment is done through Mrs Veitch: [veitch@globemw.net](mailto:veitch@globemw.net).

The socket type in Nkhoma is South-African.

US visitors can easily buy a 'foreign voltage adapter' pack from Home Depot (\$20) which is very convenient.

No alcohol is permitted in the Nkhoma Hospital mission living areas.

If the guesthouse is fully booked, there are some other options as well. Willeke TerHaar runs a guesthouse also behind her home, which is \$10/day. There is one chalet, sleeps 3 people with en-suite bathroom, and a common bunkhouse, sleeps 6 people with shared bathroom facilities.

Burn service volunteers must arrange housing through, Jennifer Wall, Program Director of Africa Burn Relief.

### **Telephone and e-mail service:**

Telephone and e-mail facilities are now and then available at the hospital on payment of a small fee. Due to poor quality telephone lines, telephones can be out of order. In the hospital we have access to internet since mid 2008. People are requested not to sent e-mails to Nkhoma that are larger than 100 kilobytes. If you are not going to travel after your stay here, it is advisable to bring your own laptop.

Since July 2005, mobile telephone coverage is supplied by Zain, and since 2007 also by Telkom. You are advised to bring your mobile phone (without simlock) with you and to buy a Zain card on the airport or in town (= Lilongwe). It costs about 7 US Dollar cents to send a sms to Europe.

American phones will not work unless you have the ability to place a SIM card.

**Shopping:**

Nkhoma has a local market area with a few small shops. The main groceries (rice, pasta, flour, oil, milk-powder, soap, toothpaste, etc) are available in small amounts in these shops. Vegetables and fruit of the season (tomatoes, onions, cabbage, etc) are sold daily at the market. Meat is sold on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Meat sale starts after 9.00 am, due to checks by the local vet. In Lilongwe there are big supermarkets (Shoprite and Foodworths) where they sell anything including fresh and tinned food, cleaning materials, toys, kitchenware and car and garden appliances. You are advised to buy some food when you are arriving, so that at least you have something to eat in your first week at the guesthouse (think about rice, pasta, bread, peanutbutter, jam, fruit)!

**Leisure:**

Hiking to the hut (1 hour) or the top (2 hours) of Nkhoma mountain.  
Nkhoma has a squash court. Please bring your own racket and balls.  
Visit Dedza (1 hour drive): pottery, tea-garden, hiking in Dedza mountain.  
Visit Lilongwe (1 hour drive): shopping, swimming, golfclub, etc.  
A weekend trip to lake Malawi at Senga bay (3-hours drive from Nkhoma, with public transport it will take longer) or Cape McClair (4-hours drive, own car needed).  
If you would like to book an extended excursion for a safari in Malawi or Zambia it can be easily booked online before your trip at Kiboko Safari or Land Lake Safari. These safaris depart from Lilongwe and can be 4-7 days in length. You can check on-line for prices.  
Please check with your host supervisor regarding an excursion, to check if it is reasonable during your stay.

**Worship:**

On Sunday there is an English service at 8.00am and a Chichewa service at 10.00am in the main CCAP church. Especially the Chichewa service is really special.  
The hospital chapel has prayer meetings in Chichewa every day at 7.30am and Sundays at 8.30 am.

**Language and culture:**

Official working language is English, but most patients speak only Chichewa. Malawians find greeting very important. Even if you meet a group of people, it will be appreciated if you greet every person separately. You are supposed to wait until the other person is level with you (preferably both persons sitting) before greeting. It is a sign of respect not to be higher than the person you are greeting.

Body language when greeting:

When greeting at a distance you can clap your hands or fold your hands while greeting as a sign of respect. If you give a hand, it is a sign of respect to support the forearm of your greeting hand with your other hand.

Malawians are very friendly people. They are reluctant to say "no" or to disagree, because they do not want to seem unfriendly. This sometimes causes confusion in communication with expatriates.

Malawians do not want to embarrass someone in front of others. If you have a comment to someone, try not to say it in front of others.

Basic greetings and commonly used words:

How are you? I am fine, and you?

Muli bwanji? Ndiri bwino, kaya inu?

Good morning, how are you? I am fine this morning and you?

Mwadzuka bwanji? Ndadzuka bwino, kaya inu?

Good afternoon, how are you? I am fine this afternoon and you?

Mwaswera bwanji? Ndaswera bwino, kaya inu?

Zikomo= thank you/ it's a pleasure/ excuse me/ hello (when you have no time for greeting properly).

Zikomo kwa mbiri= thank you very much

Pepani= I am sorry

Chonde= please

### **Safety**

The Nkhoma village is regarded as being very safe. Malawians are in general soft-spoken kind people. There is no political strife here, no warfare, just poverty.

The entire village is in walking distance from the guesthouse to village market to staff houses. Walking alone in the village is completely safe. Transport is not needed when living and working in the Nkhoma village. There is no danger of untamed animals in this area.

Be aware that visitors must be mindful of bringing expensive items here.

Almost all visitors bring their laptops and cameras, but make sure this is always on your carry-on when flying, as pilphering is common through Johannesburg Airport. We do not recommend wearing any expensive or flashy jewelry. Women should leave wedding rings at home.

Guest rooms always have a lock. However, and rarely, guest houses have had reports of theft, but things have only been stolen when the doors have been left unlocked.

Guest houses have night and day guards posted outside.

Pick-pocketing can occur in the capital city, Lilongwe. They are commonly looking to steal cell phones.

Re: safety and transportation: in general we discourage people using the local mini-bus system, as the drivers are reckless and the vehicles are unsafe and jam packed.

Private vehicles can be hired out for safe transportation. Or your host can arrange transport to the capital if need be. There is also a rental car company via the Lilongwe Airport, Avis, but they are pricey.

The biggest risk in this area is Malaria. All volunteers should be taking prophylaxis so this should not be an issue for visitors.

### **Visiting doctors, nurses and students:**

Because of limited availability of accommodation you are advised to contact us at least six months in advance and let us know the intended period of stay.

For visiting doctors or nurses: contact Dr Ter Haar:

[r.terhaar@nkhomahospital.org.mw](mailto:r.terhaar@nkhomahospital.org.mw)

For visiting Africa Burn Relief team member: contact Jennifer Wall, PA-C, C.O.:

[africaburnrelief@gmail.com](mailto:africaburnrelief@gmail.com)

After confirmation you have to contact Mrs Veitch for your stay in the guesthouse: [veitch@globemw.net](mailto:veitch@globemw.net)

As soon as you have made your final flight-bookings, let us know the date and time of arrival and departure, so that we can arrange transport from the airport to the hospital and back. For students there is a transport fee (about 100 US Dollar to pick you up), for visiting doctors transport is paid for by the hospital. It is quite a lot of money, but these are the real costs; it is still advisable to use this type of transport, especially when it is your first time coming to Africa.

### **Registration:**

**REGISTRATION WITH US EMBASSY:** Volunteers are encouraged to register with the local US Embassy, which is located at: 16 Jomo Kenyatta Road, P.O. Box 30016 Lilongwe 3, Malawi. Tel: (265) 1 773 166; Fax: (256) 1 770 471; Web site: <http://malawi.usembassy.gov/index.html>

Nurses and student nurses need to be registered at the Nurses & Midwives Council of Malawi. You have to contact Mrs Mtengezo: [jacinta.mtengezo@nmcm.org.mw](mailto:jacinta.mtengezo@nmcm.org.mw), +265-1-772044, +265-1-772730. The costs are about 100 US Dollar.

Doctors and medical students need to be registered at the Malawian Medical Council. Costs are also 100 US Dollar. Contact information see below. Probably you can arrange your registration when you come to Nkhoma, but it's better if you start the procedure already.

Please contact:

Email: [medcom@malwi.net](mailto:medcom@malwi.net)

[www.medicalcouncil.org](http://www.medicalcouncil.org)

P.O. Box 30787

Lilongwe 3, Malawi

Tel: +265 (0)- 1727255/ +265 (0)- 1727048

Fax: +265 (0)- 1727060

### **Visa:**

When you arrive at the airport you will get a visa for one month (for free). If you stay longer, you have to go to the immigration officer to get a visa of another 30 days (cost 35 US Dollars) or 60 days (cost 70 US Dollars). If you stay beyond that period, you will have to leave the country (although it is not legally accepted). If you will volunteer with us for a long period, we can always see if we can arrange a work permit.

### **Money:**

The currency used in Malawi is Malawi Kwacha. Nowadays you can easily draw money from the Stanbic bank (visa, mastercard, maestro). In every town you can find a Stanbic bank. Other possibility is bringing US Dollars or Euros. Travellers cheques are not often used any more.

You can exchange money at the airport or in town. Exchange rate is currently 150-175 kwacha per dollar.

You will need money for food, cheap in village market, but expensive at a grocery store in town. Souvenirs from the village market and wood markets in town are very popular. And you will need US cash available if you plan to do any excursions.

**Donations and training fee:**

Nkhoma hospital is funded by Malawi Government for approximately 40% of the annual budget. The hospital receives 15 % of the budget through patient fees and seeks to cover the remaining 45% through external funding.

Currently the hospital has a substantial debt.

For more detail see [www.nkhoma\\_debtrelief.com](http://www.nkhoma_debtrelief.com).

The accounts of the hospital are audited by external auditors.

Nkhoma aims to provide affordable healthcare to the poor. Treatment is provided at cost-price or less. Unfortunately the community around Nkhoma is so poor that many people are not even able to afford these subsidised fees. (Minimum wage is approximately 10 US\$ per month).

Understandably Nkhoma hospital can always make good use of donations in kind or in cash. You can find bank details on the first page. Please do not hesitate to contact the medical director ([r.terhaar@nkhomahospital.org.mw](mailto:r.terhaar@nkhomahospital.org.mw)) if you would like to make any donations or need more information. Donors will always be informed when the donation has arrived and how it was used.

Universities and training institutions will often have a budget for placements of students. If you come to Nkhoma hospital for a placement, the hospital is asking you to pay a contribution towards the costs of providing the supervision and training (and using gloves, masks ect.). The fee is 250 USD for the first month and 100 US Dollar per month for the months after that. It can be transferred via the accounts written on the first page, or you can give it in the time you are here. If you want to can also give it in US Dollars or in Euro's. If you already gave a donation of more than the required fee, this fee is not necessary any more.

For student nurses the fee will be 100 US Dollars per month.

**Communication:**

If you have any questions, contact Jennifer Wall:  
[africaburnrelief@gmail.com](mailto:africaburnrelief@gmail.com)

Or per phone: +265-99-3713456

Further information regarding the ABR Program can be found at:

Website: [www.africaburnrelief.org](http://www.africaburnrelief.org)

Blog: [www.africaburnrelief.blogspot.com](http://www.africaburnrelief.blogspot.com)

Facebook: Africa Burn Relief Program