

News Bulletin 3: October/November 2009

Our Cameroon Nursing Students' first year

The first college-year exam results are in for our selected inaugural batch of 5 nursing students. These health workers have been serving their own poor peasant rural communities in primitive isolated clinics during the summer break and start college again in October.

Although SHUMAS had tried to help such community clinics by provisioning equipment and medicines, their capacity for doing so was severely limited by lack of resources, manpower and funding.

When Dr Peter Hearn visited SHUMAS as a volunteer in 2007, he saw at first hand the problems, the limitations and the crying need for better facilities, basic medicines and above all, formal health staff training.

Spreading Health was born of this visit. Peter came back and with family, friends and colleagues, worked to raise funding to sponsor this first intake of trainee nurses, who, on graduation as State Registered Nurses from Bamenda's St Louis Higher Institute of Health & Biomedical Sciences, are committed to return and work in their former rural clinics for a minimum of 3 years.

So how did they all get on after two terms? Reports from the local Project Holder, SHUMAS, with whom Spreading Health is partnered, show very favourable results. All our candidates achieved first year exam results among the first 30 of 225 students enrolled on the current course. An excellent result considering their disadvantaged backgrounds.



The exams cover the dozen or so subjects in the curriculum from anatomy & physiology, nursing and laboratory skills, medical chemistry, IT, education and communication skills.

Following exams in June this year, the college sent all students on 6 week internships in various community clinics & hospitals where their studies can be practised.

Peter is planning to visit SHUMAS next year but other friends are visiting in November and will be able to bring us news of the successful candidates for the next News Bulletin.

Meanwhile, we wish all our current students: Havilah, Zuilaka, Oscar, Elvis and Omer the best of good luck and success in their continuing studies!

This year SHUMAS received about 40 applications from various communities in North West Province for the new 2009 State Registered and Nurse Assistant Courses. After interviewing candidates and their communities in September 2009, SHUMAS successfully selected two students for the 3 year SRN course and three for the 1 year Assistant Nurse Course.
Names and details will be on the website soon.

****Together we are Spreading Health****

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