



Russ & Beth White

Tenwek Hospital
November 12, 2023

November 12 Patient Updates

This week we have a Cardiac Team from Maine here to operate on a patient a day. They are meeting as I write to go through the patients' cases and evaluate how and when they can best help each one. Please pray for the team, as they have invested a lot to come train doctors and nurses and to care for patients.

Post Op



Caroline, who had surgery on 10/25, pictured here with her oldest daughter, is ready to go home, but she is waiting for family to come clear the bill.



Omari had an esophagectomy and is hoping that he can eat soon. He is a very sweet, grandfatherly man who was happy to see Dr. Rachel.

Pre Op



Joshua, 5, is a cheerful little guy who was trying to escape the room when we arrived. He is pictured here with his guardian, a neighbor who began taking care of him and his 2 y.o. brother when their parents died recently. The neighbors didn't know his physical history, so it took them some time and effort to learn that Joshua's fatigue was due to a Ventricular Septal Defect--a hole in his heart. They didn't know where to go for help until a missionary visited their remote area and told them of Tenwek's heart program.



Shanise, a 16 y.o. Form 2 student (high school sophomore), also has a hole in her heart. She came to Tenwek in 2010 and was given meds that helped her, but she didn't come back until her symptoms returned 13 years later! She is the 5th of five children and wants to be a doctor, but NOT a surgeon!



Edwin is a friendly 9 y.o who has suffered with poor health, dizziness, and difficulty breathing. He has a sub-aortic membrane that obstructs flow out of his heart. Please pray for healing for whatever other issues are going on--he has elevated liver enzymes and likely won't be a candidate for surgery while the team is here this week. A fun note--Edwin has an older sister and twin baby brothers!



Six y.o. **Blessing**--what an apt name!--has Tetralogy of Fallot (TOF) and has suffered with a lot of colds and other symptoms beyond those from her heart defects. She is here with her young auntie, as her mom is home with a 9-m.o. baby. She recited a Bible verse to Rachel and is proud to say that she is in Class 2 (second grade)!



Brevan, 3, also has TOF. His father left him and his mother when he learned that Brevan has heart problems. Brevan came to be seen for the first time last week, and while in the nearby village, had a 'tet spell' where he suddenly turned bluish and fainted. These spells are serious and may be caused by activities that change the pressure in the heart and increase the flow of oxygen-poor blood to the body. He was taken to Casualty (ER) and then went to **Mustard Seed House**, a ministry that provides care and support for families that come from afar for care. He now awaits surgery.

There are many more children being considered for surgery this week. Please pray for wisdom for the team as they decide which cases are most urgent and ready for surgery, and for the patients and families as they await the surgery they need so badly.

Evalene



Evalene is doing much better and has gone home! She came to church today and used all her strength to stand up and exhort the congregation to walk wholeheartedly with God while we are healthy and able.

It is very hard to see patients who either don't come for surgery or cannot leave after surgery because they are lacking funds. I have seen doctors struggle with this real issue as they care for patients. Doctor Agneta recently wrote up the stories of three such patients. I will include one story each week.

Beth & Russ

DESPERATE PLEA FOR SUPPORT by Agneta Odera

Amos, a 17-year-old resident of Narok County, Kenya, has recently undergone a remarkable medical journey at Tenwek Hospital. Born into the family of two children, Amos has faced numerous challenges in his young life. The family experienced eviction from the Mau forest seven years ago, resulting in the need to purchase a new piece of land where they have since settled.

Amos, a diligent Class 8 student, has been unable to attend school regularly due to his cardiac condition. The severity of his illness, characterized by chest pain similar to pneumonia, prompted his father to seek medical assistance. Initially, they visited a hospital in Narok, but no definitive diagnosis was reached. Eventually, they arrived at Tenwek Hospital, where Amos was diagnosed with a heart condition necessitating double valve replacement.

The financial burden associated with the operation, amounting to over Kshs. 1.2 million, placed an immense strain on the family's resources. In order to meet the cost, they were forced to sell a portion of their land, which yielded Kshs. 300,000. Furthermore, a fundraising event organized by well-wishers only managed to raise Kshs. 30,000. The National Hospital Insurance Funds authorized Kshs. 450,000 towards the medical expenses. However, the remaining balance remains beyond the family's means, leading them to appeal to the public for support.

Despite his prolonged absence from school, Amos remains an ambitious and diligent student. His aspirations are set high, as he dreams of becoming a neurosurgeon in the future. His passion for subjects such as Sciences, Kiswahili, and Christian Religious Education serves as a testament to his intellectual curiosity and determination.

Amos's story highlights the challenges faced by individuals and families who must confront not only medical hardships but also financial burdens. The struggle to secure adequate healthcare and education for a bright young mind like Amos is a stark reminder of the inequalities and obstacles that persist in our society.

In light of these circumstances, it is essential for compassionate individuals and organizations to rally around Amos and his family, offering their support and generosity. By lending a helping hand, we can empower Amos to realize his dreams and make a positive impact on society in the years to come.

Amos's journey serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of access to quality healthcare and education for all. Let us join together to ensure that Amos, and countless others like him, are not held back by circumstances beyond their control. Together, we can make a difference and provide hope for a brighter future.



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