



BETTER CARE: Maternity care has been given a boost. Picture: GALLO IMAGES

Doing it for babes in arms

THE newly opened facilities in the Mofumahadi Manapo Mopeli Hospital in QwaQwa was just the beginning of great things to come, Dr Siphon Kabane, head of the department of health in the Free State, said this week.

Kabane spoke to *The New Age* while members of the executive committee of the Free State government visited several newly established units for maternity care in the hospital.

He said one of two highly specialised ambulances for maternity and obstetric purposes at the entrance of the hospital were dedicated vehicles to pick up pregnant mothers who experienced life-endangered problems.

"We bought 18 of these ambulances for the province. Four of them are in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district," he said. In case of an emergency, ambulance personnel will be able to resuscitate a patient or help deliver a baby.

Kabane said it the key focus of his department was to increase the life expectancy of Free State residents and to decrease infant, children under five years and maternal deaths. "It remains important to reduce the burden of HIV and TB."

In the neo-natal high care unit, nursing staff explained the delicate modus operandi in the six-bed unit with newborn babies less than 1kg. Babies with a low-birth weight, respiratory problems or premature birth are referred to this unit. The unit was opened on November 1 last year. During the first six months, 109 babies have been admitted to the unit which has seven beds.

At the Kangaroo mother care ward, a surprise awaited one of the mothers who recently gave birth to twins. Puseletso Mokoena could hardly believe her eyes when the Free State premier, Ace Magashule, paid her a visit. Magashule handed her several clothing vouchers and wished her well while little Pokang and Bokamoso remained fast asleep.

"The service in the hospital is very good. The sisters inform us about everything regarding our babies. They are like mothers to us," she said.

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Hysbakke word oorlaai

Ek wil baie graag kommentaar lewer oor die berigte oor die foutiewe hysbakke by die Universitas-hospitaal.

My broer was twee jaar lank in Universitas gehospitaliseer en dit is wat ek persoonlik ervaar het.

Dit was skokkend om te sien dat hoewel daar uitdruklik op die hysers staan watter gewig dit kan vervoer, die hysbakke erg oorlaai word. As gevolg hiervan, kan die hysbakke nie heel bly nie.

In die meeste van die gevalle van oorvol hysbakke, is dit die verpleegpersoneel wat net van een verdieping na die ander ry pleks van om die trappe te gebruik.

Ek het nie 'n probleem as hulle dalk vinnig iewers moet uitkom en dan die hysbak gebruik nie. Ons as besoekers moes soms staan en wag omdat hulle die hysbakke vol staan net om nie die trappe te gebruik nie.

Ek verkies om trappe te gebruik (ek is 62 jaar jonk) omdat dit soveel gesonder is, maar moes soms wel van die hysbakke gebruik maak.

Ek stel voor dat daar 'n reël ingestel word dat alle verpleegpersoneel die trappe gebruik, behalwe in uitsonderlike gevalle. Dit sal baie goed wees vir almal se gesondheid.

V.E. McIntyre
Bloemfontein

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Dié verpleegkundiges in Bfn vereer

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Jana van der Merwe

INTERNASIONALE Verpleegdag het vanjaar weer die kollig laat val op die diens wat verpleegkundiges lewer.

Tilana Louw, 'n verpleegster van die Netcare-Universitas-hospitaal, is die streekwenner van die Florence Nightingale-toekenning. Haar toekenning het 'n kontantprys en geskenk ingesluit.

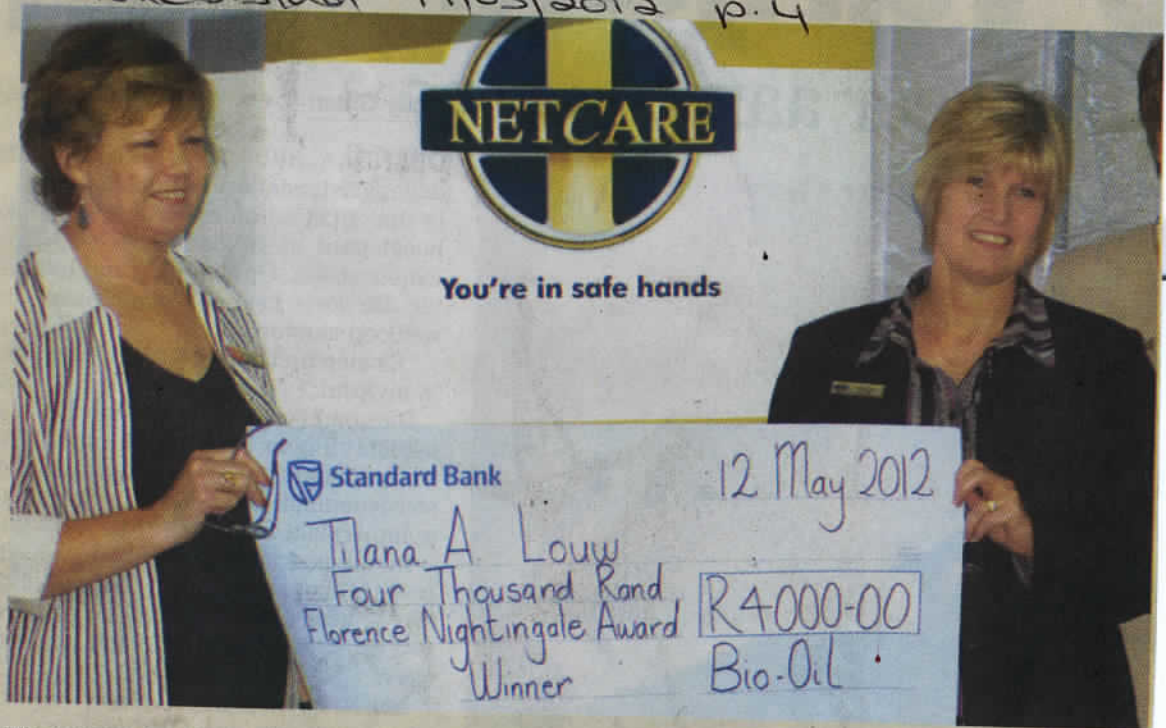
Slegs ses verpleegkundiges oor die land heen is gekies. Louw is geprys vir die integriteit, deernis en onbaatsugtigheid waarmee sy haar kollegas, dokters en pasiënte behandel.

Verskeie hospitale in Bloemfontein het ook hul beste verpleegpersoneel vereer.

Die Mediclinic Bloemfontein het die hospitaal se eerbewys vir verpleegkundige uitnemendheid aan Anja Moolman, eenheidbestuurder van die kardiotoraks-intensiewesorgeenheid, toegeken. Sy is vir haar leierskap en ongelooflike deernis geprys.

Die Life Healthcare-groep het vir Internasionale Verpleegdag sy 100 topverpleegkundiges aangewys.

Sestien verpleegkundiges van die Life-Rosepark-hospitaal in Bloemfontein is finaliste en Erika Roodt, wondsoorgsuster, en Jossie van der Westhuizen, hoof-suster van diabetiese dienste, is onder die 100 weners.



Tilana Louw (regs) van die Netcare-Universitas-hospitaal ontvang haar Florence Nightingale-toekenning van Sante Kellie van Bio-Oil. Foto: VERSKAF



Bo: Anja Moolman (links) is die wenner van Mediclinic Bloemfontein se eerbewys vir uitnemende verpleegkunde. Die naasweners is verpleegassistentes Johan Cloete en Monica Behr.

Foto: CHARL DEVENISH



Links: Susters Erika Roodt (naaslinks) en Jossie van der Westhuizen (middel) van die Life-Rosepark-hospitaal is as twee van die Life Healthcare-groep se 100 topverpleegkundiges aangewys. Links is Lesley Fletcher, verpleegopleidingspesialis van die Life Healthcare-groep, naasregs is Eunice Schulenburg, verpleegbestuurder van die Life-Rosepark-hospitaal en regs is Hein Rossouw, hospitaalbestuurder.

Foto: VERSKAF

Child mortality snock

KZN hospitals record 879 child death cases first three months of year

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Dudu Dube

SOME 879 children under the age of five died in KZN hospitals in the first three months of this year.

Statistics released by the department of health in the legislature yesterday showed that between January and March, Prince Mshiyeni Hospital in Umlazi had 57 infant mortalities, the highest in the province. The hospital also had the most mothers who died while giving birth.

In January, 301 infant deaths were reported, the number decreased to 257 in February and increased again in March to 321.

The report presented by the department's maternal and child health manager Dr Victoria Mubaiwa to the provincial legislature's health portfolio committee led to a furious reaction from MEC for health Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo on Tuesday.

"The children you are talking about are under five years old, it means most of them had survived their first year of life which is the most crucial, especially in HIV-Aids cases. So what happened here? Were they breastfed?"

Dhlomo added it was unacceptable that with all the facilities that had been put in place to deal with maternal and childcare in public hospitals.

"We need to investigate what is happening here," he said.

The report comes just a week after the province hosted the launch of the "Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa" campaign at Osi-disweni Hospital, north of Durban.

The hospital had 10 infant mortality cases between January and March.

The campaign is spearheaded by, among others, former first lady Graca Machel.



PROBE: Infant and maternal mortality rates are high in KZN hospitals.

Picture: GALLO IMAGES

The main five causes of death were HIV, diarrhoea, pneumonia, malnutrition and neonatal care.

Mubaiwa told the committee that the hospitals were fighting a losing battle because of uncooperative mothers.

"We give the babies proper treatment, give them vaccines and treat them until they are well. But after that they go back home to their communities where they get sick again."

Last year, 495 000 cases of malnourished children under the age of five were recorded in the province due to unemployed parents, poverty and

neglect. Malnutrition was named by Mubaiwa as one of the main contributors to children dying young.

Just a few hours before the presentation, the provincial department of social development had told the legislature that it had allocated R489m from its annual budget to focus on child care services.

The money would be used to support children in foster care, fund non-profit organisations that assist children in need and focus on early childhood development among other things.

Currently, 226 682 children in the

province are living on foster care grants and 263 749 are on child support grant.

Asked by the MEC what steps had been taken to address the child mortality problem, Mubaiwa said: "We have partnered with the University of KwaZulu-Natal to conduct a research on why our child mortality rate continues to increase. We have seen some improvement recently because in the past we used to record 30 to 40 deaths per month in regional hospitals but that has since decreased."

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