



BAYLOR COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
Children's Foundation
LESOTHO

BAYLOR COLLEGE OF MEDICINE CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION LESOTHO

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BIPAI Baylor International Pediatric AIDS Initiative
*at Texas Children's Hospital**


Texas Children's Hospital


Baylor
College of
Medicine



**BAYLOR COLLEGE OF
MEDICINE CHILDREN'S
FOUNDATION LESOTHO**



Execuive Director's Letter

At a Glance

2017-2018 Highlights

Programmes & Services

Education

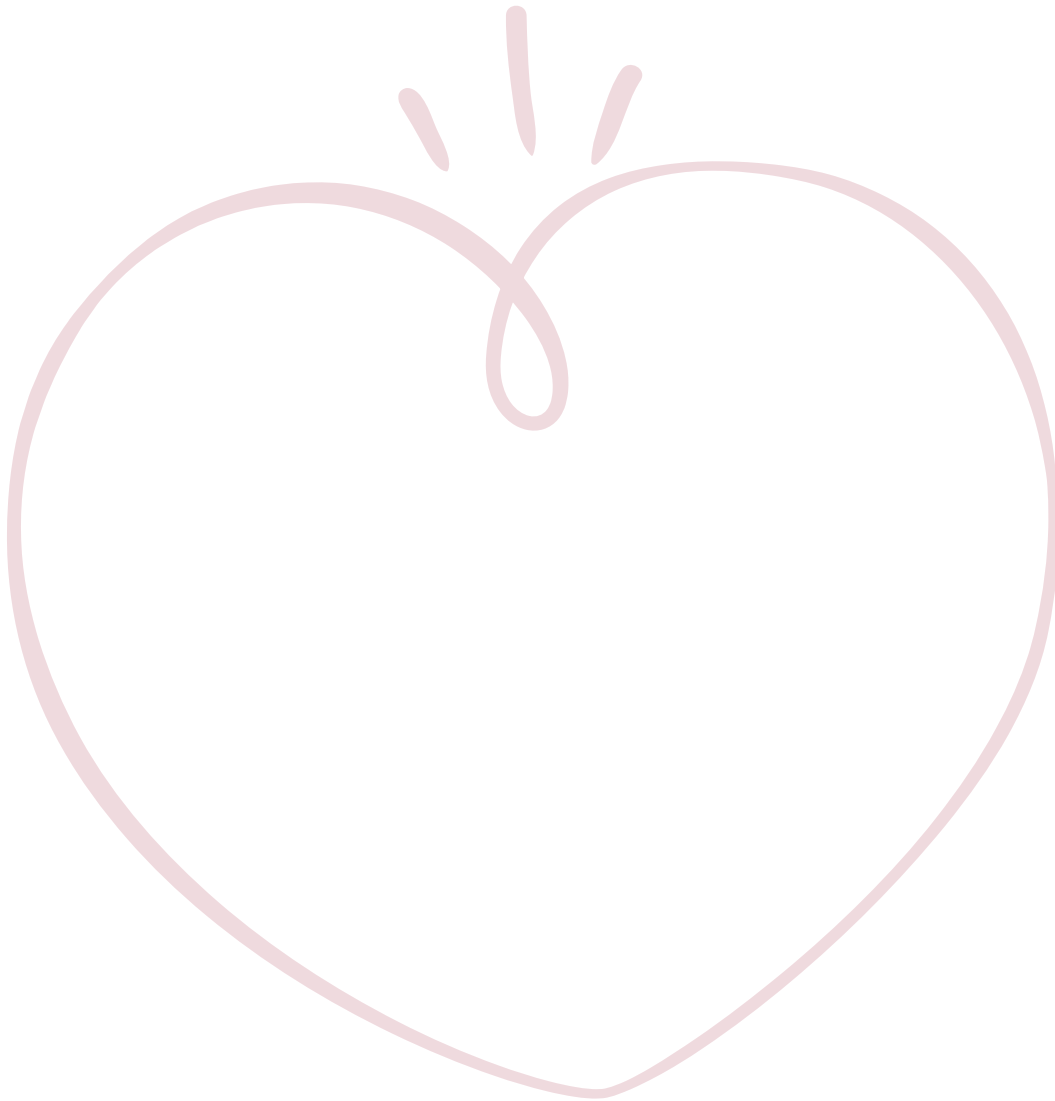
Special Projects

Partners





BAYLOR COLLEGE OF MEDICINE CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION LESOTHO



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

It is my tremendous honour to present the Baylor College of Medicine Children's Foundation – Lesotho annual report for the year 2017/18 as the Foundation's new Executive Director.

This year has been one of transition. Dr. Edith Mohapi retired as Executive Director of Baylor-Lesotho in October 2017, having guided the Foundation since its inception in 2005. She leaves a legacy of caring and compassion for the families we serve, as well as an example of leadership and service for us all to follow. On behalf of the entire staff of Baylor-Lesotho, I would like to express my gratitude to her for the lasting contributions she has made to the Foundation and to the children of Lesotho. During this time of change, Baylor-Lesotho has grown in size and scope while emphasising professionalism and excellence in the core services we provide. We are privileged to continue to operate the Children's Clinical Centre of Excellence in Maseru, five Satellite Children's Clinical Centres of Excellence throughout Lesotho, and an Adolescent Clinic at Queen 'Mamohato Memorial Hospital in Maseru thanks to Baylor College of Medicine International Paediatric AIDS Initiative (BIPAI), Baylor College of Medicine, Texas Children's Hospital, Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation, and the Lesotho Ministry of Health.

This year we have also continued to engage in innovative new initiatives to support the Ministry of Health in making progress towards achieving the global 90-90-90 targets, including:

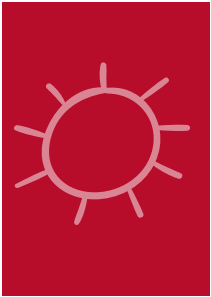
- Piloting the treatment of HIV-infected infants with lopinavir/ritonavir pellets;
- Supporting facilities in the provision of differentiated models of care for paediatric and adolescent patients;
- Facilitating district-based step-down trainings for health providers in HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP);
- Conducting the first-ever paediatric HIV drug resistance study in Lesotho in collaboration with Janssen Pharmaceuticals; and
- Providing community-based HIV testing, treatment, and sexual reproductive health services for adolescents through the use of mobile clinics.

I wish to express my profound appreciation to the BIPAI management and our Board of Directors for their engagement and oversight, to the Ministry of Health for their ongoing support, and to our donors, funders and partners in this journey, as we strive to improve the health and lives of the children and families of Lesotho whom we serve. It is truly a privilege to join the hard-working and dedicated staff of Baylor College of Medicine Children's Foundation – Lesotho.

Closing and signature...

Kea leboha!

Lineo Thahane, MD. Executive Director



OUR MISSION

To provide high-quality, high-impact, highly ethical paediatric and family-centred health care, health professional training, and clinical research, focused on HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, malnutrition, and other conditions impacting the health and well-being of children and families worldwide.



OUR VISION – BAYLOR-LESOTHO

To ensure universal access to care, treatment, and support services for all HIV-infected and -affected children and their families throughout Lesotho; support prevention of new infections; and equip healthcare providers with knowledge and skills to manage common paediatric illnesses.

LESOTHO



Ethnic groups

99.7% Basotho
0.3% other Africans


Demonym(s)

Mosotho (singular)
Basotho (plural)



CAPITAL

Maseru

Nation of
2.203.000

inhabitants



- **320.000**
People living with HIV
- **23.8%**
adult HIV prevalence (ages 15-49)
- **74%**
adults on antiretroviral treatment*
- **60%**
children on antiretroviral treatment*

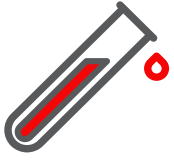
*All adults/children living with HIV
Source: UNAIDS Data 2018



Officially the
**KINGDOM OF
LESOTHO**

AT A GLANCE

COE Programmes and Services



HIV SERVICES

- HIV testing and counselling
- ART provision
- Viral load monitoring
- Management of treatment failure, including second-line and third-line treatment
- PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis)
- PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis)



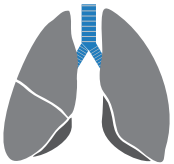
INTEGRATED CHILD HEALTHCARE SERVICES

- Growth and development monitoring
- Immunisation
- HIV testing



ADOLESCENT CARE

- Queen 'Mamohato Memorial Hospital
- Teen Club
- Wise Ones Youth Group
- Teen Pregnancy Clinic
- Sexual and reproductive health services



TUBERCULOSIS SERVICES

- Symptom screening
- Sputum induction
- Treatment
- Isoniazid Preventive Therapy



MATERNAL HEALTH

- Prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV
- Family planning



OTHER PATIENT SUPPORT PROJECTS

- Caring Fathers

OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW



1 Centre of Excellence



5 Satellite Centres of Excellence

4 Paediatricians  **12** Doctors **20**  Nurses

13 
Social workers/
counsellors

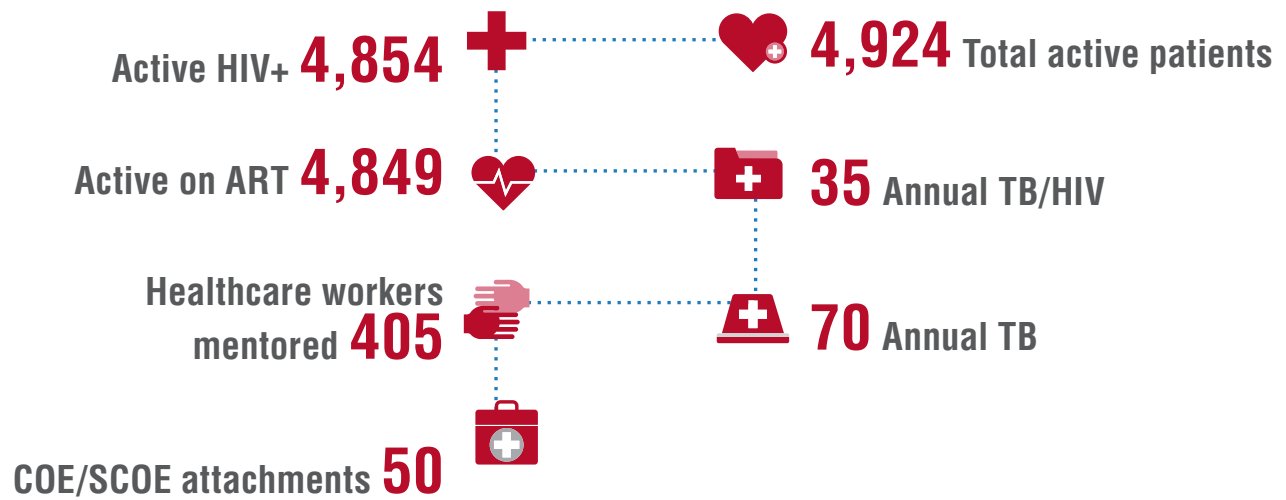
8  Receptionists
 Pharmacists

5  Clinic assistants

9  Pharmacy technicians **2** Treatment literacy liaisons  **2** Peer Educators  **7** others

43 Non-clinical Personnel 

PATIENT DATA



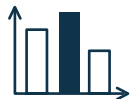
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



Government subvention **US\$2,400,653**



U.S. government funding **US\$2,354,886**



Elton John AIDS Foundation **US\$271,207**

Total.....US\$5,026,746

2017-2018 Highlights

Our Executive Director retires

Having served the Foundation with utmost sincerity and commitment since its opening, Dr Edith Qentšo Mohapi retired in October 2017 after nearly 12 years of exemplary service. The inevitable farewell was emotional for employees, clients, and partners. Dr Mohapi, you will always have a special place in the hearts of the many people with whom you crossed paths. We are blessed to have had you as our leader.



Photography y Smiley N. Pool.

Lopinavir/ritonavir pellets

Treatment of infants and young children with HIV is challenging for a variety of reasons. One of the recommended first-line medications, lopinavir/ritonavir (LPV/r) syrup, is known for its bitter taste. Ensuring that young children remain adherent to a bad-tasting medication is particularly difficult for parents and clinicians. During the year, a new formulation of LPV/r, pellets, were thus introduced in Lesotho as an alternative, with the COE chosen as a pilot site for implementation. We observed a marked improvement in the viral suppression of children in the pilot group, from 54% pre-pellet introduction to 71% during the pilot.

Rotavirus vaccine

Diarrhoea is one of the leading causes of death in children under 5 globally. The most common cause of diarrhoea in this age group, according to the World Health Organisation, is rotavirus. Through the Expanded Programme for Immunisations in the Ministry of Health, Lesotho has introduced rotavirus vaccine. Baylor-Lesotho has actively implemented this new initiative as part of the immunisation schedule at 6 weeks and 10 weeks of age.

PrEP trainings

The latest edition of the National ART Guidelines (5th Edition, May 2016) includes recommendations for pre-exposure prophylaxis for those at risk of HIV infection. We have been working with partners, under the guidance of the Ministry of Health technical working group, to bring local healthcare providers up to speed on HIV prevention therapy. Thus, during the report year, Baylor-Lesotho conducted trainings for virtually all district-level health workers in Lesotho, equipping them with skills and knowledge to best provide this valuable preventative strategy. Baylor-Lesotho facilitated district-based trainings to ensure proper information dissemination across the nation and within all of our centres and programmes.

Raising awareness of preterm birth in HIV-positive parents

Baylor-Lesotho commemorated World Prematurity Day on 17 November 2017. The goal of the commemoration activities was to establish a platform in Lesotho to facilitate awareness of preterm births amongst HIV-infected mothers and to pledge support to the families raising premature babies.

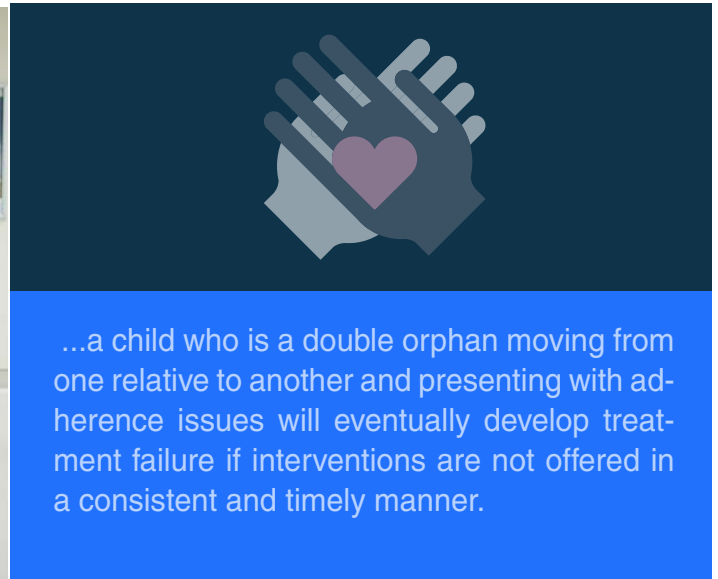
Resistance study

In collaboration with Janssen 'Pharmaceuticals Global Health Programme', we are currently conducting an HIV drug resistance study, the first of its kind in Lesotho. The principal researcher is our own Clinical Director, Dr Jill Sanders. The study will document resistance patterns in Lesotho for both treatment-naïve and treatment-experienced patients with viral loads above 1,000 copies/ml. Results will inform both direct patient management decisions and national treatment policies.



Photography by Smiley N. Pool.

PROGRAMMES



Photography y Smiley N. Pool.

High Risk Clinic

In addition to HIV and other illnesses, our patients face many life challenges, which, left unaddressed, can compound their health problems. For example, a child who is a double orphan moving from one relative to another and presenting with adherence issues will eventually develop treatment failure if interventions are not offered in a consistent and timely manner. But on busy days at the COE, clinical staff are often so overwhelmed with daily activities that there is no additional time and attention to address significant underlying challenges.

Beginning February 2018, we established a special clinic session for struggling patients who need this additional attention. Our High Risk Clinic is run by a multi-disciplinary team of providers: a doctor, a social worker, a psychologist, and an outreach professional. Additional staff participate as needed. The clinic is held on the second and fourth Friday of each month.

Any health professional may identify a patient in need of special attention and refer that patient to the High Risk Clinic. On the clinic day, the team meets before seeing a particular patient to discuss the issues pertaining to the patient's case and to create a preliminary treatment plan. Each team member then consults with the patient independently before meeting again to discuss matters that arose during the consultations. Then they create a final treatment plan with proposed interventions and corresponding timelines.

Even though the programme is young, we are seeing positive results. With the intensified interventions, children are either succeeding on their first-line ART or are being switched to second-line treatment. The programme will continue to follow those children to ensure long-term success, even as new children are enrolled in the programme.



PINCH - Protecting Women, Infants and Children from HIV in Lesotho

PINCH is a project funded by The Global Fund via the Ministry of Finance Project Management Unit. Its goal is to support health facilities in the highlands districts of Lesotho (Butha-Buthe, Mokhotlong, Thaba-Tseka, Quthing, and Qacha's Nek) and to increase uptake of maternal and child health services including PMTCT (prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV).

The objectives of the project include: to improve attendance of mothers to antenatal care clinics, to provide HIV testing and counselling to all mothers and children, to ensure enrolment and retention in care of HIV-exposed infants, to improve tracking of HIV-exposed infants who miss appointments, and to improve documentation of care provided to mothers and infants. Baylor-Lesotho Nurse Mentors build capacity of healthcare workers to care for mothers and infants affected by HIV through trainings, side-by-side mentorship, and didactic lectures.

The project enrolled 499 HIV-exposed infants at health centres in the five districts; 422 (84%) received an HIV test within two months of life. All HIV-infected infants were enrolled in HIV chronic care services within two weeks of diagnosis.

The initial funding period was from July 2017 to June 2018, but the project has been renewed for an additional three years.

STAR-L - Strengthening Tuberculosis and AIDS Response through district-based programming in Lesotho

We are in year four of this five-year project funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention via the Elizabeth Glaser Paediatric AIDS Initiative “Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation”. The overarching goal of the project is to reduce the impact of HIV and TB on the health of Basotho.

Baylor-Lesotho specifically contributes to identification and treatment of children and adolescents in the districts of Berea and Leribe. This year 77,599 people were tested for HIV, of whom 35,038 (45%) were children and adolescents. We enrolled into care and treatment services 202 who were found to be living with HIV. We screened 408,095 patients for TB, of whom 122,250 had symptoms consistent with tuberculosis. Health workers collected 9,153 sputum samples for laboratory testing, and



Photography by Smiley N. Pool.

PROTECT - Providing Prevention and Treatment for Young People

PROTECT began as a one-year project from August 2017 to June 2018, funded by The Global Fund via Ministry of Finance Project Management Unit. It supports eight districts in Lesotho, all except Maseru and Berea, which are separately supported by DREAMS initiative partners. The goal of the project is to create an AIDS-free population of adolescents and young women through community-based HIV and sexual reproductive health (SRH) services.

Objectives of the project are to introduce SRH services to more young people and to link patients to HIV care and treatment services, including antiretroviral therapy. The project utilized two mobile clinics to visit communities, schools, local clubs, and churches to provide health services to young people in their communities. Of the people served at the mobile clinics, 87% were between the ages of 10-24.

The project has been renewed for an additional three years, with funding for two additional mobile clinics to help reach many more young people.

Providing Universal Services for HIV/AIDS - PUSH

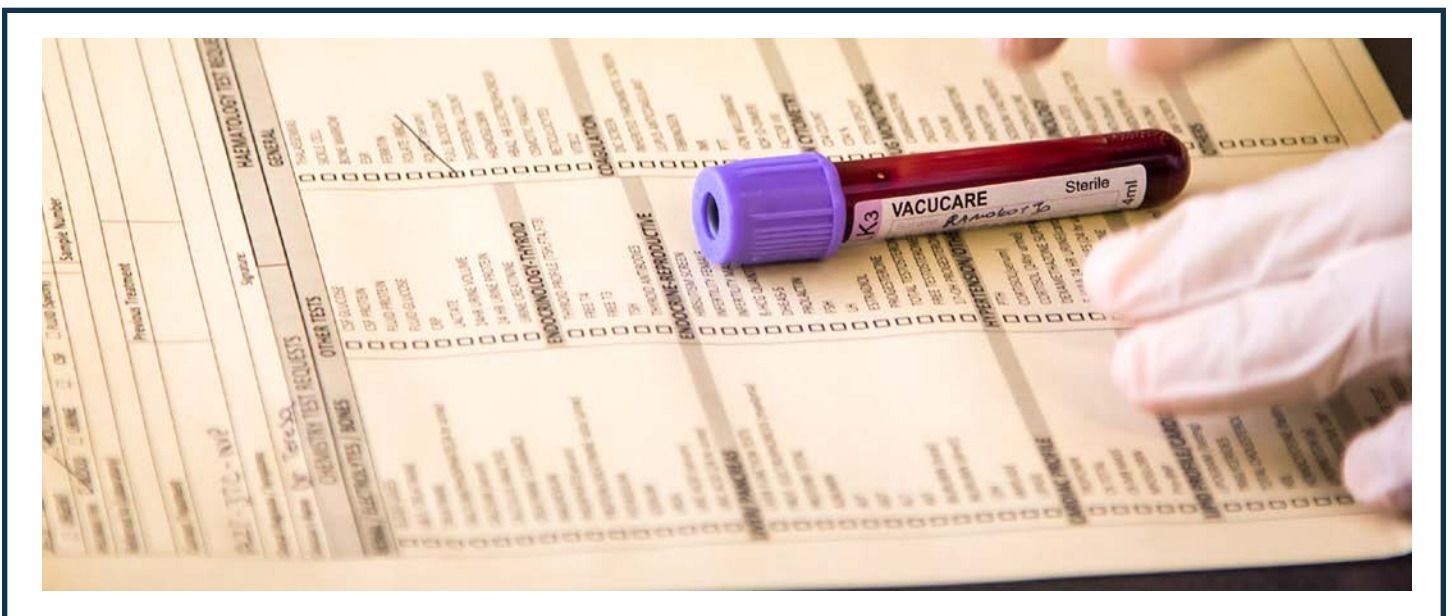
This is a five-year USAID-funded project, implemented under EGPAF, which began in 2016. The project's mission is similar to BIPAI's and supports high-quality, family-centred, comprehensive HIV care and treatment and Provider Initiated Testing and Counselling (PITC) across three districts of Lesotho: Maseru, Mafeteng, and Mohale's Hoek. It also aims to strengthen national and district capacity to deliver HIV programmes by training healthcare workers on HIV and TB and participating in policy, protocol, and guidelines review.

The role of Baylor-Lesotho is to support child and adolescent HIV and TB initiatives. In the past year, lay counsellors tested over 66,600 clients for HIV, and 419 children received sputum induction for diagnosis of pulmonary TB at supported health facilities. One child was identified with MDR-TB and referred to the specialty MDR-TB Hospital.

Training is a key aspect of our participation in the project. Twenty-eight nurses and nurse assistants were trained on Childhood TB and Sputum Induction, and 27 healthcare workers (nurses and nurse assistants) participated in the offsite clinical attachment training programme at the Maseru COE and the Mohale's Hoek Satellite COE (SCOE). Staff from 30 health facilities received didactic training, mentorship, or supervision from doctors, nurses, social workers, and psychologists.

Members of Teen Club at the COE and Mohale's Hoek SCOE gathered monthly, and periodic 'Caregivers Days' invited parents and other caregivers to participate in disclosure workshops to improve the conversation regarding knowledge and disclosure of HIV status within families. The project also funded Wise Ones Youth Groups for young adults at the COE, Mohale's Hoek SCOE, and Mafeteng Government Hospital.

The youth-led organisation, Positive Living, formed by the members of Wise Ones Youth Group at the COE, continued hosting its own radio show devoted to HIV issues. The radio slots were funded by PUSH, and the broadcasts covered themes such as "Self-Acceptance," "Forgiveness," "Social Media," "Communication," "New Year's Resolutions and Festive Season Challenges," "Love", and "Human Rights".



MELD Project



MELD stands for Mentorship of healthcare workers, Expansion of clinical care services, Linking mothers and infants together in HIV care, and Decentralising and differentiating care to best meet patients' unique needs. This two-and-a-half-year, USAID-funded project is part of a regional effort under the Baylor College of Medicine Children's Foundation – Malawi Technical Support to PEP-FAR Programmes, which aims to create sustainable HIV services that will continue even after PEP-FAR funding has ended.

MELD's paediatric/adolescent mentorship component is similar to that of the PUSH project and covers the same three districts of Maseru, Mafeteng, and Mohale's Hoek. To avoid duplication of effort, PUSH and MELD paediatric/adolescent mentors support designated health facilities.

The MELD project also supports innovations in differentiated care for paediatric and adolescent patients, including Community Adherence Mentorship and Retention Assistance (CAMARA) groups

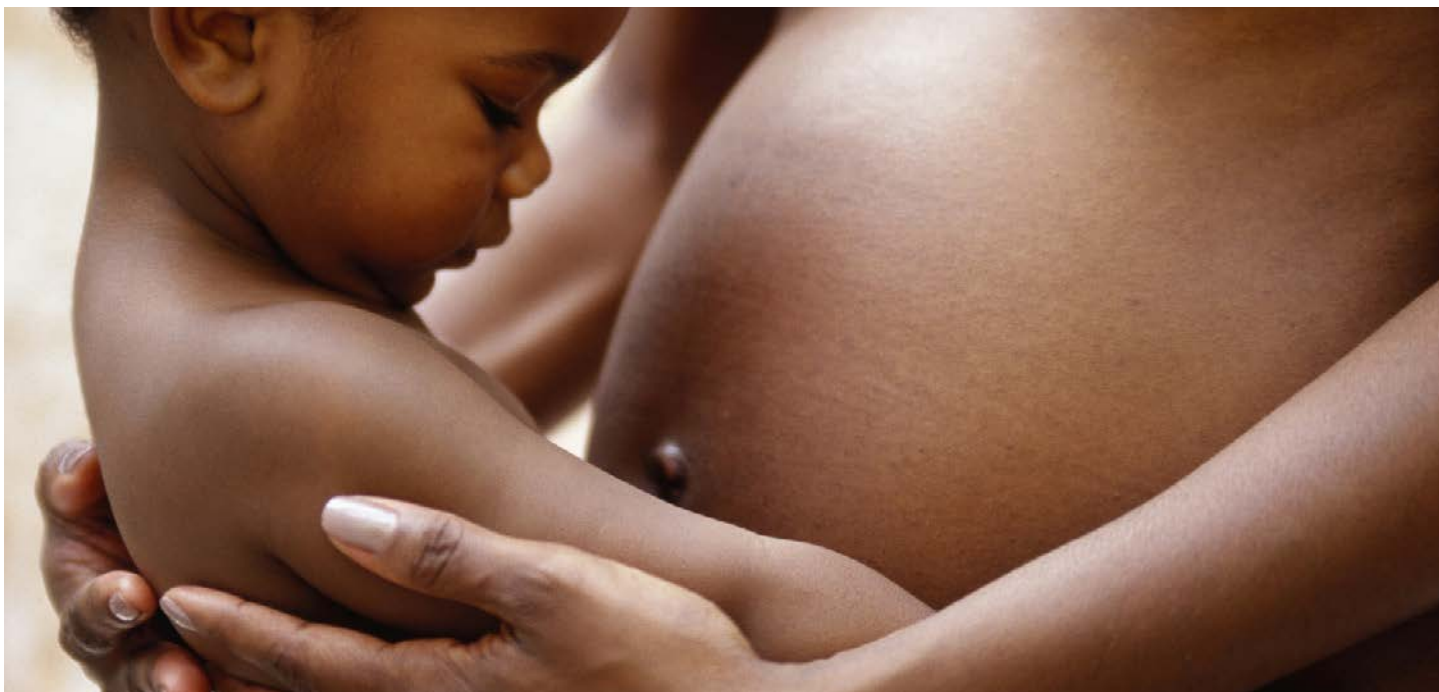
for adolescents and multi-month dispensing for paediatric and adolescent patients, along with improvements in PMTCT.

To date, a cumulative 177 CAMARA groups have been formed, with a total membership of 675 adolescents. Over the year, 277 individual meetings were held. Additionally, 343 family pairs have been established at supported health facilities. Our staff assessed the process by which 61 supported health facilities were carrying out paediatric/adolescent multi-month dispensing (MMD). We found that 24.5% are implementing MMD correctly, 29.5% are incorrectly implementing MMD, 23% are not implementing MMD but have clients who meet the criteria, and 23% are not implementing MMD and do not have clients who meet the criteria. MELD will continue to support health facilities to correctly and appropriately implement MMD.

Staff (nurses, nurse assistants, lay counsellors, and village health workers) from 63 health facilities received didactic training, mentorship, or supervision from doctors, nurses, and social workers.



M-HIT – Mobilising HIV Identification and Treatment



...Services included general outpatient services, maternal, neonatal and child health services (MNCH), and HIV testing and counselling services (HTS).

Mobilising HIV Identification and Treatment (M-HIT) was a three-year project funded by a consortium led by the Vodafone Foundation that provided community-based HIV prevention and treatment services targeting children and pregnant women. Baylor-Lesotho provided mobile outreach clinics in Maseru and Leribe districts with funding support from the Elton John AIDS Foundation. The project ended in March 2018. Services included general outpatient services, maternal, neonatal and child health services (MNCH), and HIV testing and counselling services (HTS).

Over the life of the project, eight teams conducted 3,235 mobile outreach clinics reaching 183,168 clients. Among them, 63,984 were children under 5 years. Healthcare workers administered 7,976 primary childhood vaccine doses. In total, 65,270 individuals received an HIV test, of whom 1,051 were found positive; 24,888 of those tested for HIV were children below 15 years of age, and 130 were positive with a positive yield of 0.5%. We also collected 486 HIV DNA PCR samples from infants for HIV diagnosis.

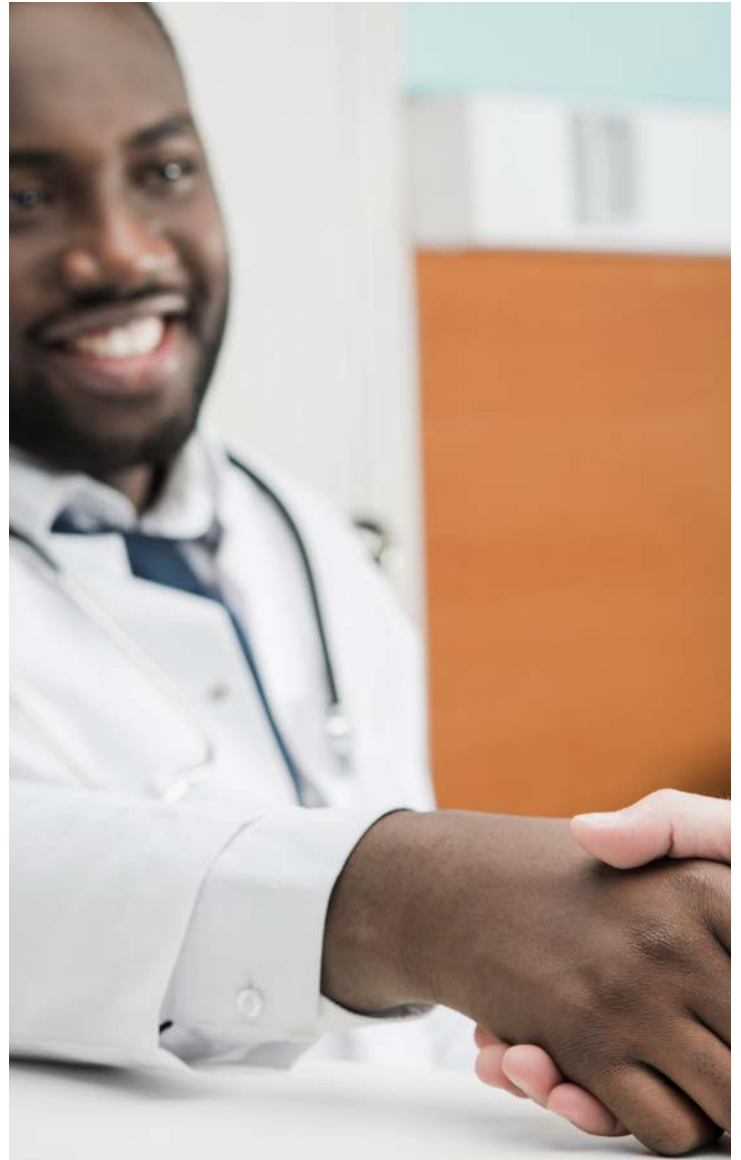
Although the M-HIT project has ended, the outreach model has continued under the Ministry of Health since April 2018. Baylor-Lesotho assisted in the orientation of nurses assigned to continue service provision to communities in the districts of Maseru and Leribe. The Ministry of Health continues to expand community-based primary healthcare services across Lesotho. Lessons learned from the M-HIT project are positively impacting current and novel treatment delivery initiatives.

Continuing Medical Education - CME

Baylor-Lesotho continues to conduct CME sessions every Friday morning to capacitate health-care providers around the country with skills and knowledge to improve the quality of services they provide. Staff members from different departments facilitate the sessions in the form of presentations. The presentations vary from clinical case discussions to updates on new and ongoing activities and new developments in the national treatment guidelines. The participants not only gain knowledge but also continuing professional development points that they use for renewal of their licenses.

LeBoHA residents - Lesotho Boston Health Alliance

Lesotho, through the Lesotho Boston Health Alliance (LeBoHA), continues its family medicine programme in Leribe district in which local doctors are trained to become family physician specialists. Baylor-Lesotho, as the largest paediatric clinical partner in the nation, has been collaborating with LeBoHA in the clinical training of residents on paediatric HIV and TB management. Residents rotate at the COE for a period of two weeks in their third and fourth years of study.



Visiting scholars

Every year we mentor paediatric residents, many of whom come from Texas Children's Hospital, for one-month clinical rotations. Two local doctors are paired with two visiting doctors for one-on-one mentorship and knowledge sharing. All visiting scholars are also provided with lectures on different HIV- and TB-related topics. They also participate in the CME sessions by presenting or reviewing a journal article with Baylor-Lesotho staff. Selected journal articles are relevant to clinical practices at Baylor-Lesotho and are chosen to either introduce or reinforce good clinical practice.

Training attachments

We continue to collaborate with health training institutions throughout the country. This year, we hosted nursing and social work students on rotations at the COE to expand their knowledge and develop clinical skills on the medical and psychosocial care of children and families infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.

Additionally, through funding from the PUSH and STAR-L projects, we support one-week attachments of nurses from public health facilities at the COE and SCOEs.



Photography y Smiley N. Pool.



Online nurses training course on paediatrics

Realising that many nurses lack confidence in dealing with general childhood illnesses, Dr Lineo Thahane has led a collaboration to develop an online nurse training course on common paediatric conditions. The collaboration, with Children's National Health System in Washington, DC, has been active for over three years, with an initial focus on identifying gaps in knowledge or skills. During the report year, we launched the online course to address those gaps. The course aims to capacitate nurses, not only at Baylor-Lesotho but across the country, who are interested in participation. The course has attracted other healthcare professionals, mainly doctors, who have also registered and are participating in the online course to expand or refresh their knowledge in diagnosis and management of childhood diseases. A detailed evaluation of knowledge transfer during course participation is ongoing.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

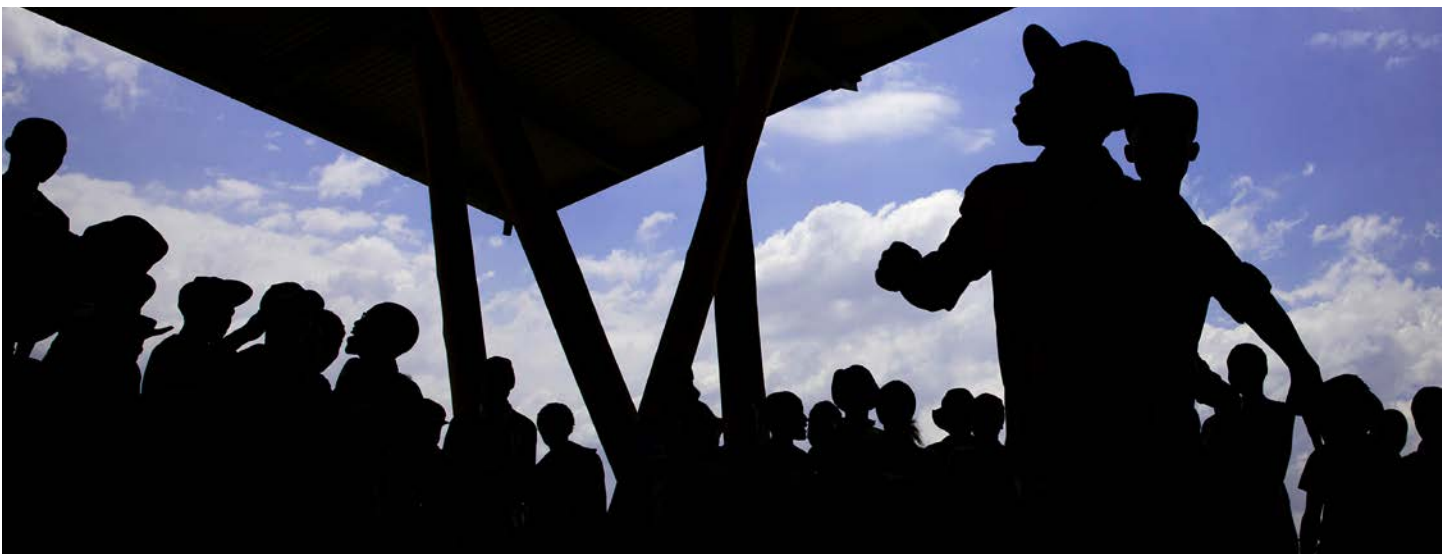
Wise Youth

Baylor-Lesotho has provided high-quality paediatric care to thousands of children and their families since 2005. With the successes of PMTCT and paediatric HIV management, paediatric mortality has drastically fallen, and HIV is no longer a death sentence. Children are now growing up to be young adults that require additional support for the challenges of adulthood. Teen Club was formed in 2008 to address the psychosocial needs of adolescents enrolled at Baylor-Lesotho. The programme continues to grow and expand, with over 450 participants each month at the COE alone. As adolescents age out of Teen Club, many choose to participate in the Wise Ones Youth Group, a peer support group for young people aged 18-25 years.

Wise Youth assists in the successful transition of adolescents into independent and responsible young adults.

As Teen Club continues to thrive with active participation by Baylor-Lesotho staff members, we have also seen overwhelming dedication from our volunteers. They work hand in hand with our staff to ensure that Teen Club serves its purpose each month. Many of these volunteers are former Teen Club participants who have graduated but wish to give back to the group. These Wise Youth members provide educational and recreational support with an added focus on life skills and peer mentorship.

Wise Youth members use radio and social media to share their stories and to inspire and encourage other youth to know their status. They are a powerful advocacy force. Other organisations recognise their positive impact and invite them to speak in a variety of youth-focused activities and forums. Additional Wise Youth-led activities are highlighted below.



Barefoot Walk

Wise Youth launched the Barefoot Walk campaign in Lesotho. Originally started in South Africa, this initiative raises awareness that there are children in the country who do not have proper shoes and are walking barefoot to school. This has a negative impact on their school performance and damages their self-esteem. It is even worse in winter, especially with Lesotho's cold and snowy weather. Barefoot Walk generates donations of shoes, new or used in good condition. Thapelo Majoro (former Teen Club member, Wise Youth committee member, Adult Volunteer with Teen Club and a student at Limkokwing University) and other Wise Youth members walked 40 days without shoes in winter as a way to raise awareness and encourage donations.



Donating clothes at a local orphanage

Wise Youth team members also embarked on initiatives to collect clothes to support other members who needed support. The collection was such a success that excess clothes were donated to a local orphanage, benefitting over 40 children and adolescents.



Vegetables Project

Food insecurity is one of the major challenges in Lesotho. Wise Youth members planted vegetable gardens for other households in their communities. Most gardens were meant to support the needs of a particular household, but if the production was good then excess vegetables were sold.

Cleaning project

Wise Youth members noticed that there was a problem of used ARV bottles scattered between the nearby Queen 'Mamohato Memorial Hospital and the Senkatana Clinic, so they took it upon themselves to clean up the neighborhood. Cleaning up will become an annual project conducted in April.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Generosity, collaboration and support from the following organizations allow BCMCFL to carry out its mission and assist in improving the lives of our patients, for which we are grateful. The following list of our partners and donors is by no means complete.



Government of Lesotho



Donations and Other Support

- AIDS Orphan Care
- Brentwood Baptist Church, Texas, USA
- Bristol-Myers Squibb employees
- Catholic Relief Services
- Clinton Health Access Initiative, Lesotho
- Elizabeth Glazer Pediatric AIDS Foundation
- ICAP at Columbia University
- International Resource Institute
- Janssen Pharmaceuticals
- Mothers to Mothers, Lesotho
- Musco Family Trust, USA
- Paediatric AIDS Treatment for Africa (PATA)
- Population Services International, Lesotho
- Princeton in Africa
- Riders for Health, Lesotho
- Queen 'Mamohato Memorial Hospital



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