

# IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF PAEDIATRICS AND PAEDIATRIC NURSING CARE. REDUCING ADMISSIONS AND DEATHS OF CHILDREN WITH MALNUTRITION IN PAEDIATRIC WARD

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## THE PROBLEM

Mwami Adventist Hospital is situated 30 km from Chipata City, in the rural area. The hospital has a catchment population of more than 100,000. The health care services provided at Mwami Hospital include the following: maternal and child health, Obstetrics, medical, surgical, radiology, laboratory, physiotherapy, pharmacy, dental, ENT, ART, and eye. The hospital has also clinics; men's clinic, cervical cancer clinic, ART clinic and eye clinic. From 2020 to 2023, the hospital has observed that there was an increase in the number of malnutrition cases and children were being admitted due to malnutrition and the hospital recorded some deaths due to malnutrition. The increase in malnutrition cases is attributed to; lack of equipment, and linen, inadequate nurses and nutritionist, Mothers' inadequate knowledge on type of food to feed the children by the mothers, mothers' inadequate knowledge on how to prepare food for the children. The table below shows the number of malnutrition cases, discharges, deaths and cases referred to a third level hospital for a period of 3 and half years;

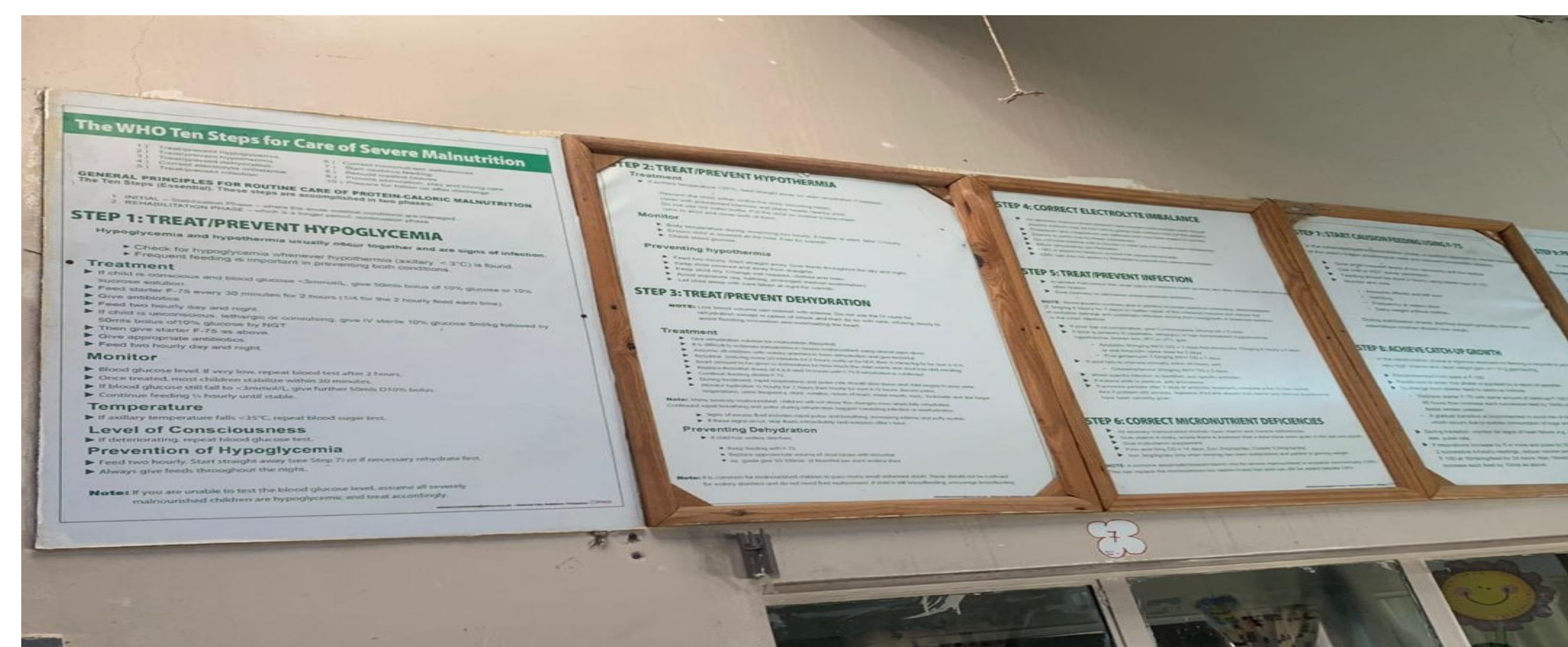
YEAR	ADMISSIONS	DISCHARGED	DEATHS	REFERRALS
2020	6	6	0	0
2021	43	39	4	0
2022	27	20	6	1
2023	20	19	1	0
JAN - JUNE 2024	3	3	0	0

UNICEF, (2021) reports that, 40 per cent of children in 2013 were malnourished and the prevalence rate reduced to 34.6 per cent in 2018 in Zambia. Research shows the vast majority of babies in Zambia are not born stunted (chronically malnourished). Instead, most children under age five who become stunted do so between the ages of two months and two years. The table above shows number of malnutrition cases at Mwami Adventist Hospital; 2020; 6 were admitted and all discharged and no deaths, but from 2021; the number increased; 43 admissions, 39 discharges and 4 deaths, and 2022; 27 admissions, 20 discharges and 6 deaths, 2023; 20 admissions, 19 discharges and 1 death and then the number decreased in 2024, 3 admissions, all discharged and no death. The high numbers of malnutrition cases, admission and deaths from 2021 to 2023 are the reason that measures were put in place. That is to reduce the numbers and improve management of malnutrition at Mwami Adventist Hospital, Paediatrics ward starting the year 2023.

## AIM

To reduce the number of children admitted with malnutrition and deaths caused by malnutrition, and improve child nutrition within six (6) months of implementing the agreed solutions in Paediatric ward.

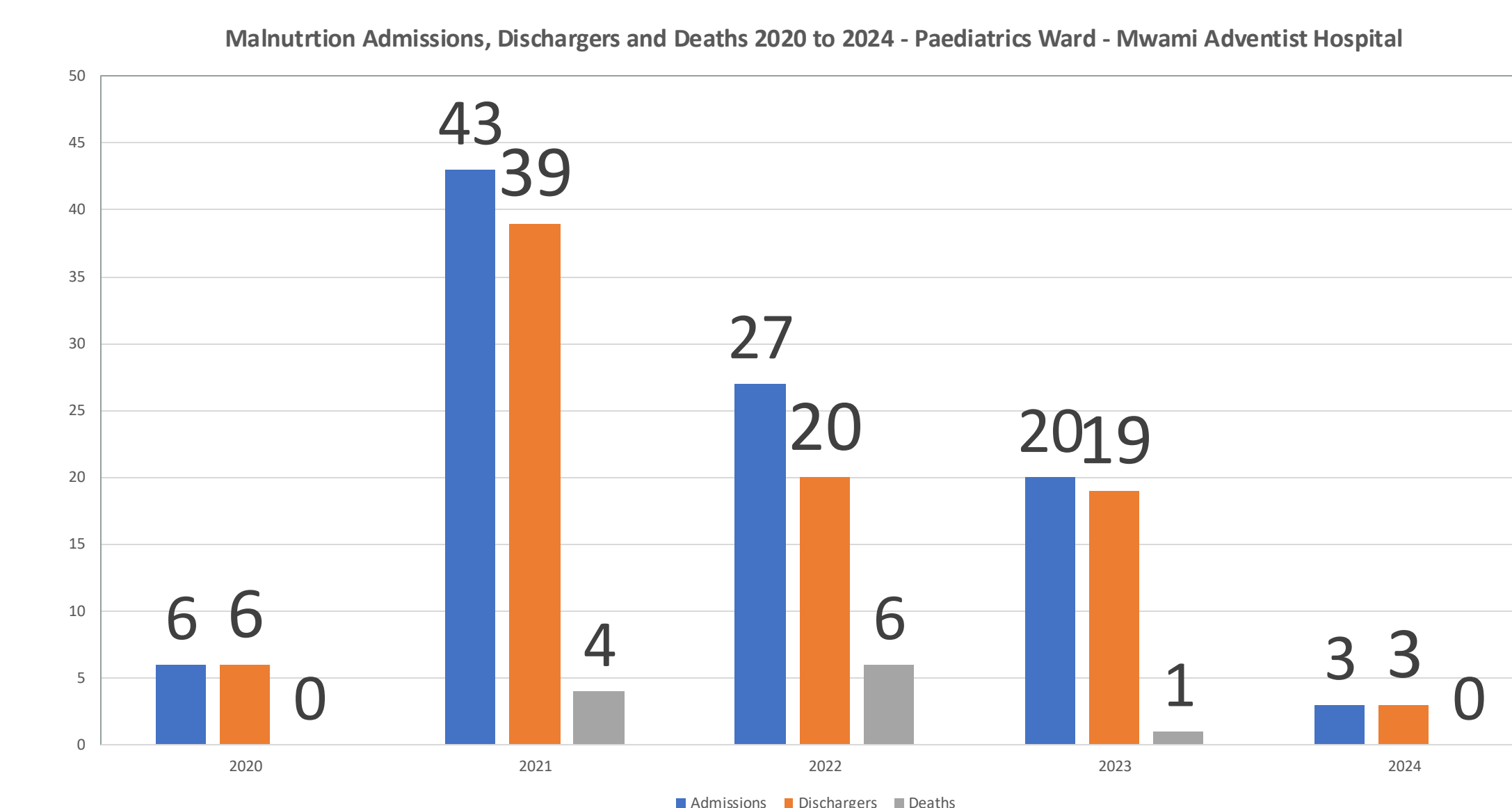
## RENOVATED MALNUTRITION WARD: WITH PROTOCOLS, HEATERS



## PLAN DO ACT STUDY CYCLE



## DATA



## RESULTS

The total number of malnutrition cases recorded at Mwami Adventist Hospital from 2020 to 2024 were as follows: 2020: 6 admissions, 6 discharges, 0 deaths, 2021: 43 admissions, 39 discharges, 4 deaths, 2022: 27 admissions, 20 discharges, 6 deaths, 1 referral, 2023: 20 admissions, 19 discharges, 1 death, January to June 2024: 3 admissions, 3 discharges, 0 deaths

From 2020 to 2023, malnutrition cases increased significantly, with admissions rising from 6 to 43 and deaths from 0 to 6. However, from January to June 2024, the number of malnutrition admissions dropped to 3, with no deaths reported. This demonstrates a significant reduction in the admission of children with malnutrition and no deaths compared to the previous years.

Mwami Adventist Hospital has successfully reduced the number of malnutrition admissions and recorded no deaths in the first six months of 2024. This achievement was made possible through the combined efforts of hospital management and health workers, who implemented the following measures to improve the management of malnutrition:

1. Acquired 2 phototherapy machines, 2 heaters, and a CPAP machine through partners (Peace Health).
2. Renovated and painted the malnutrition ward.
3. Printed and posted malnutrition management protocols on the ward walls for easy reference by nurses, doctors, and nutritionists.
4. Lobbied and received one nutrition technologist, while sent one for BSC in nutrition.
5. Allocated additional nurses to the paediatrics ward.
6. Conducted Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) sessions on preventing malnutrition, identifying nutritious local foods, and promoting a balanced diet.
7. Held review meetings for each death to analyze the management process.
8. Enhanced supervision and monitoring of doctors and nurses by the Medical Director, Director of Nursing Services, and Ward In-charge.

## SUMMARY

At Mwami Adventist Hospital, we have learned that having adequately trained and skilled human resources, essential equipment (such as heaters and Phototherapy units), and good supervision is crucial for providing quality medical care and reducing mortality rates mortality rates.

Undertaking this project has significantly improved the management of malnutrition, resulting in fewer admissions and death among children due to malnutrition. From 2020 to 2023 malnutrition admissions were high but from January to June 2024, admissions have decreased to just three (3) with no deaths recorded.

## FUTURE STEPS/ WHAT'S NEXT?

Our next objectives are to; 1. purchase more equipment and linen to keep the babies warm 2. Renovation of the Paediatrics ward emergency room these steps will further enhance our ability to provide high quality care and ensure the well-being of our youngest patients.