



We've had a lot to be thankful for over the last few months. Thank you to Bryony for her persistence in opening up our eBay charity shop – check us out through this link: charity.ebay.co.uk/charity/i/Medic-to-Medic/95518. My mum has been selling items through Vinted and fundraising a small but useful sum (I think she could have been a market trader in another life). Our elective initiative is progressing well – by the end of its first year we should have had 9 students come to Malawi – all medical students from the University of Auckland. We've learnt something from every elective student and a personal thanks to each of them for coming on their elective with us and helping us fundraise sustainably. We're currently taking bookings for next year. We hope to initiate some clinical observer ships in the coming months aimed at high school students to gain medical experience in a safe, supported and constructive way. Please get in touch if this may be of interest. We have more exciting initiatives in the next few months and we look forward to sharing these with you!

Tamsin

"I'm happy to inform you I have **successfully completed my education**. I wanted to express my **heartfelt gratitude** for your support. Your generosity has played a vital role in helping me reach this milestone, & I am **truly thankful** for all you have done for me."

A trip to Chisoni village

In September 2023 we began conducting guardian visits with prospective students. These visits enable the team to meet the student and their family at home to ensure a thorough understanding of their background. Most recently there was the most challenging guardian visit to date! Dr Yohane Magalasi tells us more:



"Chisoni village lies between the Malawi and Mozambique border. I was required to get a minibus, canoe and then a motorbike to reach the village – a journey of 100kms took over 6 hours! The inhabitants are mostly fishermen. There is one borehole which supplies drinking water to the village. The student comes from an extended family and lives on a compound consisting of 5 mud houses with a grass thatched roof and earth floor. Each house consists of two rooms that accommodates four children or more that share a mat and sack for a blanket. The family relies on fishing after the farming land was damaged. The return journey was full of mishaps due to a border crossing mistake! The whole day took over 12 hours. The student is the most educated in his family being the only one to reach college. He is thoroughly in need of support."

Medic to Medic Mentoring

During July 2024 we trained 28 Medic to Medic graduates as mentors for our mentoring programme in a series of online tutorials.

It is a huge milestone for us to move forward with this initiative. We have long since noticed the challenges students face despite having scholarships. Students continue to have financial challenges and encounter issues living away from their families for the first time whilst having the weight of expectation and family hope on their shoulders. We often hear of student concerns when students reach crisis point, by which time we are playing catch up to offer adequate support. We hope that through this initiative we will be able to be proactive rather than reactive and in doing so prevent student crises from occurring and help students develop into confident health professionals achieving a better academic performance, which ultimately secures our investment in each student's education.

The mentoring programme also gives an opportunity for our graduates to support their younger colleagues and helps share the lived experience and collective lessons learned when walking similar paths. In doing so they develop their leadership skills and confidence. Spain Chimaliro states, *“My motivation for the student mentorship program comes from the lack of this program in our health care system. I am proud to be part of the first cohort of Medic to Medic mentors. I believe mentees will have a proper transitioning experience from their junior years at college to graduation. I believe graduates will be more confident and will be able to work effectively in the health care system, improving service delivery in our country.”*

Our expectation is that each of our students will have 2-3 mentoring sessions per year and can reach out to their mentors via WhatsApp at other times should the need arise. Each of our mentors will have a buddy to offer them feedback should they require support. We will be holding peer review groups every 3 months for our mentors with a continuous professional development presentation and an opportunity to discuss specific circumstances to learn from the collective experience.



Recycling Totals



We have two active recycling groups (two in the UK and one in NZ) who diligently provide recycling services to their communities by partnering with Terracycle to recycle non-kerbside recycling waste – all whilst fundraising sustainably for us! We would love to have some more collectors! Do you have space in your garage to collect for a few waste streams? Writing instruments, lavazza coffee capsules, marigold gloves, pringles tubes or printer cartridges are just some of the options. Advertising to local schools can be a great way to raise collections. Get in touch if you can help!

Totals collected since 2020



9956 kg



568 kg

Over £10,000 raised since 2020!



Chichewa Medical Language



Heading to Malawi soon? Purchase the ultimate companion for your time in the hospital setting with *Chichewa Medical Language* by **Zefa Kameza**.

This book is available to purchase online from our eBay charity shop via this link: <https://www.charity.ebay.co.uk/charity/i/Medic-to-Medic/95518>

If you're already in Malawi you can purchase from Joes Café, African Habitat and La Caverna in Blantyre; Macondo Camp in Mzuzu and directly from Zefa in Lilongwe. Email us if you would like a copy of the e-book.

Want to practice? We also organise Chichewa language lessons. They're £5 per lesson and you will get matched with one of our students to be your tutor. Our language leaflets for Chiyao and Tumbuka are available in the resources section of our website with audio files for pronunciation on our YouTube channel.

Since our last newsletter



17 students have finished their courses
6 elective students have been to Malawi
720 kg of medical books transported

Medic to Medic electives – the student perspective

Malawi captivated us with its breathtaking natural scenery, ranging from the world-famous Lake Malawi to our encounters with wildlife in the national parks (free-roaming elephants!). Everyone we met was incredibly kind and it definitely lived up to its well-deserved name of the "Warm Heart of Africa." But despite its beauty, the economic and social challenges are stark, and it is an understatement to say that the healthcare system, both locally and nationally, is severely resource-limited in the fourth poorest country in the world.

There are too many stories to discuss, but one of the biggest shocks we had was the extent of poverty. It was accentuated by the country's largest International Monetary Fund-directed devaluation, lowering the exchange rate between the Kwachas and the US dollars by 44%. From the minute we arrived, we were asked for money: official airport staff demanded "commission fees" for bringing in our donated medications, followed by an underground money exchange store that our driver brought us to — which he literally described as a "black market trade". After a five-hour, pothole-filled, bus ride, we arrived at St. John's Hospital in Mzuzu. We were warmly welcomed there by Dr. Isaac Gwetsa, the lead of St. John's, and our guides, Dr Petros and Gift.

During our time in Mzuzu, we taught at St. John's Institute of Health, where we conducted three weekly tutorials, and at Mzuzu University on two occasions. The training system is slightly different, with clinical officers serving as the doctor equivalent in rural areas. We put our creative approaches to the test in our teaching, and it was amazing to see the students'

By **Bosco Yue & Kevin Tan** *Continued Page 4*

Funky Scrub Tops!



We've started a social enterprise! We're making scrub tops from Malawian chitenje and selling for our fundraising. £30 / NZ\$50 per top + postage and packing. We would love to take some bulk orders! WhatsApp +265 (0)98 134 5409 to find out more and be added to our WhatsApp group for updates on patterns and sizes.

Dates for the diary!

Saturday 30th November – Electives webinar

Saturday 7th December – Global Gathering (virtual)

School Talks *By Triza Simon & Memory Singini*

On the 8th July 2024 we went to Bandawe girl's secondary school located in Nkhata Bay. We were privileged to talk to 160 students of form three. The topics for motivational talks included the background of both the two Medic to Medic students (Memory and Triza), challenges faced during school life, entry requirements for bachelors and diploma study for health related courses and the process for getting into university. Students were taught two first aid skills, namely CPR done by our elective student Deanna & management of choking done by Tamsin.



Feedback from the school was that the students were happy with the talks and skills impacted.



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For comments, questions and errata regarding this newsletter, please contact the editor at the email address above. Every effort has been made to credit contributors to this newsletter. Where omissions have occurred, please advise and they will be rectified at the earliest possible opportunity.



Medic to Medic



@MedictoMedic



tamsinlillie

www.medictomedic.org.uk

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 NZ Charity No. CC58085. Malawi CONGOMA
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Medic to Medic was founded in 2007 to address the problems of training and retaining medical students in some of the world's poorest countries.

For our first country, we chose Malawi. Like so many sub-Saharan countries, Malawi is desperately short of doctors. It has just two doctors per 100 000 people. The UK has over 230 per 100 000.

Medic to Medic helps by supporting poor but bright students through medical school, who might otherwise drop out. We cover their tuition fees and give them allowances for equipment and books. We can link students to mentors, who provide holistic support.

Our scheme to support medical students has been so successful that we now also support physiotherapists, pharmacists, nurses, mental health workers, clinical officers, optometrists & audiologists in Malawi.

Most of our donors give just £5—20 per month. If you feel you can support a student, please visit www.medictomedic.org.uk to set up a direct debit online.

You will be linked with an individual student and receive regular updates from them on their progress. You are welcome to enter into email correspondence with them and many of our students find this very motivating. Please note that although you will be allocated a particular student, our donations are pooled so that no student is disadvantaged if a donor needs to withdraw.

Keep Updated!

Follow our blog to keep updated with our latest news and activities:
<https://healthprofessionalmalawi.wordpress.com/>



Listen to our Podcasts!
 On Spotify: "Malawi Matters"
<https://anchor.fm/medic-to-medic>



Recycle old coins & bank notes of any currency, stamps, jewellery (including damaged and costume jewellery), mobile phones, cameras and gadgets and raise vital funds for us! We can send you a postage label! It's simple!

Shopping online? Register with easyfundraising.co.uk. For every online purchase, the retailer will give a small donation to your chosen charity at no extra cost!



A travel company that lets you donate a portion of your holiday price to the charity of your choice, completely free!

Help us be in with a chance to win £1000 in unrestricted charity funds by nominating us via this link. Our charity number is 1149904.
movementforgood.com/#nominateACharity



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enthusiasm and how we connected despite our different backgrounds.

We'll never forget the plenty of other adventures, from playing music with patients on the wards to joining the graduation ceremony of an M2M-sponsored student. This was indeed a life and career-changing experience!

By Bosco Yue & Kevin Tan

We partner with five hospitals in Malawi to run our electives. Medical electives foster collaboration between our community & students wishing to visit Malawi on their elective. Elective students are encouraged to:

- ✓ Bring out medical equipment
- ✓ Carry out an elective project
- ✓ Fundraise before arrival
- ✓ Take part in our tropical medicine tutorials & Chichewa language lessons
- ✓ Get involved in School Talks

To find out more watch our video!

<https://youtu.be/0XHY1tMjcps>