

## PARTNERPLAN

# David & Rebecca Morton - Malawi March 2018

c/o Nkhoma Hospital  
PO Box 48  
Nkhoma  
Malawi

<http://davidrebeccamorton.wordpress.com/>

Dear All,

This is a further follow-up on our January requests. As most of you know, our work permit saga was resolved and we are legally in Malawi, though still awaiting the official paper work and stamp in our passports. Regarding the other issues, for the Service Level Agreement (SLA) payments owed to Nkhoma from the Malawi government, since January we have been paid Mk32.6 million (\$45,000), invoices through September 2017. We are still owed Mk50 million (\$68,700) for invoices October 2017 through February 2018. The problems with delayed payments are still there, despite much negotiation on our part. We have been promised that a new system is being set up to speed up the payments, but have not yet seen this in operation. For the past four weeks we have been promised payments "by Friday", without receiving any. This has kept the hospital in a very tight cash flow situation, though we have managed to pay the bills through generous donations from many. Please pray that a long - term solution to these payment issues will be found to relieve the cash flow burden we face every month and sometimes on a weekly basis.



As for staff conflict issues, we have gone through some difficult times, including letters of resignation from a number of key staff which we have successfully been able to get withdrawn. We have also sorted out some of the conflict issues through prayer and counselling. The Eye Project remains a very serious and difficult issue, not yet resolved. Please pray that we will find a solution to these issues that will be accepted by all concerned, and that the project can move forward and focus on remaining the premiere eye programme in Malawi.

Another key issue is the future of the hospital leadership. We have excellent Malawian leadership in the hospital management team including Mrs Agness Nyanda our Principal Hospital Administrator who has worked at Nkhoma Hospital for 27 years, beginning as the medical director's secretary, then being trained in finance eventually becoming the Hospital Accountant until being appointed to the top administrative position in May 2017. With qualifications both as a Chartered Accountant and an MBA, she is the most qualified person to ever hold the position of Principal Hospital Administrator at Nkhoma, and currently is on a fund - raising trip for the hospital in the USA. Teaming up with her is the Principal Nursing Officer, Mr Paul Mekani who holds a Bachelor's Degree in mental health and has pioneered a mental health program at Nkhoma, the Accountant, Mr Yowati Nthenga, also a Chartered Accountant, Mr Paul Kawale the Primary Health Coordinator, who just successfully defended his PhD thesis at the University of Edinburgh, and our Chaplain Rev Gamaliel Kalebe. The issue for the future is the positions of Medical Director, currently held by Dr Rey Terhaar who has been at Nkhoma for over 20 years and Deputy Medical Director, held by David. Dr Terhaar is leaving for a one - year sabbatical in July this year, but it is

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uncertain if he will be able to return due to family considerations regarding children's schooling. David's contract ends in December this year. Despite requests to a number of international mission agencies, there currently is no one to take up the position of Medical Director. This month the hospital will continue the search through local advertisements. Please keep our management team in your prayers, and that we will find the right replacements for the medical director's office.

Keep us also in your prayers. Rebecca is challenged to find someone to oversee the paper work side of things, photocopying, file production and record keeping. The clerks we have tend to rely on her organisation of the process but will have to take over eventually. Another part of our presence is to assist in paying bills for the very poorest who come with nothing. We are thankful for our chaplaincy department as they have been able to take care of some of these needs. David had hoped to spend the majority of his final year at Nkhoma focusing on clinical work, mentoring our Malawian doctors and clinical officers, but with these critical administrative issues, has not had time to focus on the clinical work. We will be taking a three week break from mid - April to the States for our son Sam's wedding, and would very much like to see some of these issues, especially the Eye Project, resolved before then. Continue to pray that we will be confident in our Lord's provision in dealing with all of this and experience the Psalmist's promise "When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought joy to my soul" (Ps 94:19).

**David and Rebecca**