

Chapter 4: The hospital

UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD ARTICLE 24: *Health care and medical treatment*



4: The hospital

ARTICLE 24 *Health care and medical treatment*

BUKALA, 6 YEARS OLD SAYS:

“ Last week I had to go to the hospital. I felt sick; I had a high temperature, headache and pain in my whole body. I didn't feel well at all, so it was hard to walk all the way to the hospital. My mum held my hand all the way and finally we reached the hospital, which is located in the middle of Lui.

We had to wait for a long time to see the doctor because there were many who were sick and needed help. The doctor felt my body, pricked my finger and took a blood sample to look at in a microscope. The doctor wanted to find out if I had caught the disease called malaria. When you are bitten by the mosquitoes that live here in Africa you can get malaria. A weak or ill person who is bitten by a mosquito with malaria often catches the disease. The doctor said that many children and adults in Lui have, or have had, malaria. Some people die from it. The tests showed that I had caught malaria and we had to stay for a while in the hospital. My mum was standing in the queue in front of the chemist's to get the pills that help for malaria. The medicine was free for us. During that time I was looking around. Christina, who is a nurse, came and sat down next to me. I know

Christina already. She told me Lui hospital is the biggest hospital in our area. They can even do operations and take X-rays here, but there are not very many doctors and nurses working in the hospital. Since there has been a war going on in our country, no doctors and nurses were being trained in South Sudan. Instead the doctors and nurses working at the hospital are from Italy, Kenya and Canada. Christina told me everybody hopes it is going to be better soon, so that the patients don't have to lie so close together and risk their medicines getting mixed up or that they take the medicine in the wrong way.

I saw some women expecting babies and Christina said that they come to Lui hospital to be helped when the baby is born. I was born at home. “Yes”, said Christina, that was how it was a few years ago, all the children were born at home in the hut. Now almost all babies are born here at the hospital or at the clinics in the villages. That is much safer for the babies and for the mothers. The trained people in the hospital can help the mothers and babies when the baby is born. In the hospital they also know how important it is to wash and to keep everything clean which is much easier here than in a tukul!



Now my mum finally received the medicine and we could go home again. It was nice to go to bed again, but even though I had a high temperature, I felt cold, so mother had to put a blanket around me. My mum took good care of me and saw to it that I got clean water to drink and malaria pills at the right time. A few days later I felt fit again and could stay up for a while and after a week I felt normal.

Now my whole family has started to sleep under mosquito nets, a closely-woven cloth that keeps the mosquitoes from biting when you are asleep. It is important to fasten the mosquito net carefully around the bed so that the mosquitoes stay outside. I hope I never catch malaria again!





South Sudan is a hot country where everything grows, including bacteria and bacilli. Many children don't get enough varied food and easily get ill. Coughs and pneumonia and tuberculosis are also common diseases and the children rapidly get very ill from diseases that we in our country easily cure with antibiotics. With good health care, like washing your hands with soap, drinking clean water, eating more varied food and having the right vaccinations, life would be much easier for children in South Sudan.

THE HOSPITAL

In Lui there is a big regional hospital. There are few trained personnel and therefore nurses and doctors have to choose the patients who are in the most need. The medicines can easily be given in the wrong quantities and patients can get or take the wrong medicine. For people living outside Lui, the situation concerning health care has become much better since the war ended. In most villages there is a health clinic with day and night staff every day of the week. This is very good, thinking of all the snakes bites, spider and scorpion bites that occur. Much

of the medicine is given by help organizations such as Salisbury-Sudan Medical Link, and it is free. An ambulance is based at Lui hospital.

VACCINATION

There are many different organisations vaccinating children, eg. against polio. Two drops of vaccine in the mouth protects a child against this serious disease. WHO (The World Health Organisation) sends their staff to the schools. They give the drops and mark with a pen on a fingernail to show that the child has received the dose. Organisations put up posters with pictures showing the people which vaccine will soon to come to the area. This helps people who cannot read. There is also a special day organised every year, usually on the 16th of June called African Children's Day, when health education is offered through drama and music.

NEW BORN

Nowadays most babies are born in the hospital in Lui or in a clinic in the area. That has meant that more babies and mothers survive the birth. In the hospital in Lui all babies over two kilograms (4.5 lb)

survive. In the health clinics outside Lui there are midwives and labour rooms to ensure birth in a hygienic environment.

Malnutrition exists among children. It is common that the mothers have babies close together and also that they don't have enough knowledge about children's need for nutritious food. "Mentor-mothers" are trained in breast-feeding and child development. The mentors are to support and help the women.

STOMACH DISEASE

Many children often get ill from stomach diseases and diarrhoea. Most often caused by dirty water and lack of toilet facilities. Not all adults know that it is necessary to boil water before you drink it, to kill the bacteria that make people ill. For children in South Sudan it is difficult to regain strength after a stomach disease especially if there is no clean drinking water.

BROKEN LEG

When the mango fruits growing high up in the trees are ready to be picked, many older children fall down out of the trees and break their arms and legs. They can come to the hospital and get an X-ray and plaster. If you have a broken

leg, you may stay in the hospital for a while.

MALARIA

People living in Lui recognise the signs of malaria and go to the hospital for help. You cannot take medicine all the time, so you take pills when or if you get malaria. To sleep under a mosquito net is an important part in fighting the disease that every year kills millions of children in Africa. All newborn babies are issued with mosquito nets at Lui Hospital.

NODDING DISEASE

This very strange disease causes growth and development problems and there is no definite explanation to how it appears. The children affected by the disease are usually between 5 and 15 years old. When they see food, they start to nod their heads and cannot eat. They also have serious developmental problems rather like cerebral palsy. Nodding disease also occurs in Uganda and Tanzania and the local people think it is water-borne.

HIV

HIV causes big problems. Many people don't change their behaviour even if they are informed about the disease and how it is spread.





SUGGESTION 1

Conversation

CHILD RIGHTS CONVENTION

Article 24 in the Child rights convention is about the child's right to health care.

Talk about how you can prevent children from getting ill.

Talk to the children about what it is like in a hospital or in a health centre. Why do we have them?

What are vaccination, medicine and chemists and why do we have them?

BASIC FEELINGS

Talk about:

Have you had an injection from a nurse or a doctor? How did it feel?

Have any of the children been in an ambulance?

When you hear or see an ambulance, what feelings do you have?



SUGGESTION 2

Prayers

BIBLE WORDS

The lame man (Mark 2:1-12)

Ten sick lepers are cured (Luke 17: 11-19)

Blind Bartimaeus outside Jericho is cured (Mark 10:46-52)

SÅNGFÖRSLAG

He's got the whole world in His hand (KS2 508)

Jesus' hands were kind hands (KS 194)

Kum ba yah, my Lord (CJP 149)

When I needed a neighbour (CJP 275)

PRAYER

God, we pray for all who are ill. Help them come to hospitals or health clinics and get help and be cured. Thank you for doctors, nurses and medicine. Amen



SUGGESTION 3

Invite someone or go on a study visit

Invite a nurse, a midwife or a doctor to the preschool/school. Maybe there is a parent in one of the professions?

Make a study visit to a chemist's, a health centre or a hospital.

Talk about different professions in a hospital/health centre and what happened when you were there.

Talk about ambulances, if you passed one, heard or saw one.



SUGGESTION 4

Birth

In the story it mentions that more children are born in hospitals nowadays. Where were you born, at home or in a hospital?

Do you know what your weight was when you were born?





SUGGESTION 5

Games

PLASTER TAG

Chose one of the children to be the hunter, the person who will tag the other children. When the hunter tags another one i.e. on the knee, that person must put a plaster on the knee by putting one hand on the knee and shout out loud the body-part: The right knee! When you are tagged a second time, you do the same thing with the other hand and shout out loud the name of that body-part. When you are tagged a third time, it's your turn to be the hunter.



AMBULANCE TAG

One child is the tagger; four children are “the ambulance” and have the task of carrying the person who is tagged. Chose a place in the room to be the hospital where you can put a thick mat. From the beginning all the children run around randomly. When someone is tagged, that person sits down on the floor and waits for “the ambulance” that carefully carries the tagged person to the hospital. When in hospital, you are free again. You cannot be tagged when in the ambulance.



Alternative

One person is chosen to be “the accident” and is only allowed to move along an invisible straight line dividing the room in the middle. The rest of the group is standing on one side of the room and try to get to the other side.

If you are hit by “the accident” you fall and pretend being hurt. To be saved you must be carried by four “ambulance drivers” to a certain place in the room, the hospital. This special place can be marked by chairs or mats. Everyone in the group except “the accident” can be an ambulance driver.

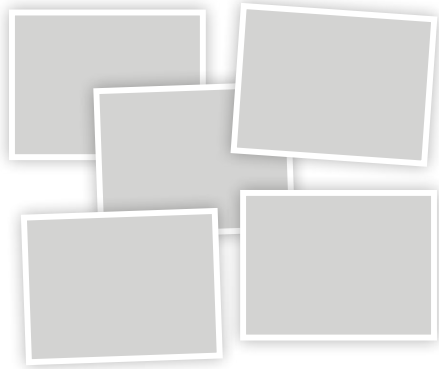
In the hospital you recover by counting to 5, and then you can continue playing again.



The number of “accidents” can be varied depending on the size of the group. When you are hurt, you can call for an ambulance in different ways depending on the group. You can for instance stand up and call for help and the ambulance personnel can save you by arm-in-arm on both arms. Check the level and capacity of the group.



Resources



PICTURES

Ambulance with Arabic name

Ambulance with English name

A midwife in her office

Medicine boxes

A ward in a health clinic

A ward in Lui hospital

Health promotion information

Stop cholera, a poster

Polio vaccination, a poster

Vaccinating against polio

Marking a fingernail after
vaccination

A weighing scale for small
children in Lui hospital

A ward-bed with mosquito net

