

Mtendere Mission Hospital acquires cancer equipment

By Mwala Kalaluka

MTENDERE Mission Hospital in Chirundu has secured ultra-modern clinical equipment worth US\$100,000 that can detect the presence of cervical-cancer in women at its initial stages.

Surgeon specialist and endoscopist at the hospital, Paolo Marelli said the equipment that was bought through an international organisation called Pathologists Without Borders, would be of great help in addressing the high incidences of cervical cancer in the country.

"We have had telemedicine in Chirundu at Mtendere Mission Hospital for about three years," Marelli said. "But now we have gone higher, because telemedicine has brought another programme which is a clinic for the prevention of cervical cancer."

He said the equipment in question consists of a broadband satellite and a specialised scanner that can be used in carrying out a Pap smear examination to ascertain the existence of cancerous cells in a woman's cervix.

He explained that using the above gadgets, the specialists were able to specifically locate the cancerous lesions in the cervix and carry out an operation to remove them using a special microscope known as the Colposcopic, which magnifies the cervix using radio frequencies.

"This is unique in Zambia and the equipment is around US\$100,000, but there is the use of telemedicine to make the Pap smear examination," Marelli said. "We have two specialists who we sent to get an international diploma in vaginal psychology."

He said the cancer-detecting method at Mtendere Hospital was different from the one being used at the University Teaching Hospital because it was more scientifically advanced than the UTH's method of visually inspecting the cervix for cancerous cells.

"There is nowhere else in the country, as far as I know, where they are using this kind of method," Marelli said. "This is more scientific because developed nations do not use the observant method anymore."

Marelli said the current situation where cervical cancer was one of the leading causes of mortality among women could be reversed with the placement of such equipment in the country's major health institutions by the government.