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Eye care team visit brings hope

September 18, 2016 | David Kare | 0 Comment

A TOTAL of 183 patients in Tabubil and 270 in Kiunga were screened and treated by an eye care team from the Fred Hollows Foundation (FHF) at the Tabubil and Kiunga Hospitals in the Western Province.

Eye operations were also performed on an additional 38 patients in Tabubil and 58 patients in Kiunga.

Elsie Newei, 51, from Kopiago in Hela Province and Ruth Eki, 47, of Olsobip Village in North Fly, Western Province were very thankful to the visiting eye care team for restoring their sight.

"I am so happy; this is a miracle for me because I thought I would never see again as both my eyes were affected. But after the operation I can see

clearly. Thank you also to Ok Tedi Mining Limited (OTML) and Tabubil Hospital for making it possible for the eye care team to come here to Tabubil and treat people with eye problems," said an overjoyed Elsie.

Both mothers were among Tabubil residents including women, children, and OTML and contractor employees that were treated by the FHF team.

Tabubil Hospital Administrator Margareth Samei said many of the patients seen at the Kiunga Hospital had travelled up from the Middle and South Fly regions just to see the eye specialists.

"Many of these patients travelled up from the Middle and South Fly and waited with relatives in Kiunga for the FHF eye care team to arrive," Ms Samei said, adding that even though the visit was short, the outcome was successful.

She said this was not the eye care team's first visit to the province.

"The FHF team came up for two weeks for an annual outreach program in 2013 and 2014 and provided eye care to patients in Tabubil and Kiunga. These visits were sponsored by the Tabubil Hospital and OTML and benefited over 2,000 patients with eye complications.

Ms Samei said there was no visit in 2015 due to the temporary closure of OTML due to the dry weather event.

The FHF eye care team were in Tabubil and Kiunga from 29 August to 6 September.

"This outreach arrangement is part of the agreement between Divine Word University through Diwai Pharmaceuticals Limited and OTML," Ms Samei said.

She said the visit by the FHF team, was also made possible with the support from the Ok Tedi Development Foundation, Callan Services and the Kiunga Hospital.

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