Naguru Hospital stuck with equipment

By Agnes Kyotalengerire

China-Uganda Friendship Hospital Naguru is stranded with high-tech radiology and laboratory medical equipment that has not been used since it was delivered to the hospital in 2013.

The radiological equipment that includes fluoroscopy and mammography have not been used because they lack spare parts and vital accessories, including cartridges and films.

The fluoroscopy does special X-ray investigations such as the barium studies used to visualise the structures of the esophagus. Mammography is for screening breast cancer.

Idle equipment

The unused laboratory equipment includes Prepmate (used for screening cervical cancer), a PRC machine for DNA testing and the Electrophoresis machine which tests for sickle cell disease.

The hospital has been in contact with the donor country, but somehow the fittings are still not here.

"We can only rely on the Chinese (engineering team) to send the spare parts and accessories," Juma Ojwang, the principal radiographer at the hospital, said.

Some of the equipment is programmed in Mandarin (Chinese language) and have user problems, and local technicians cannot operate it.

Principal laboratory technologist Patrick Tabuga said some of the laboratory equipment has not been used because it has never been installed and also lacked reagents.

Technicians not trained

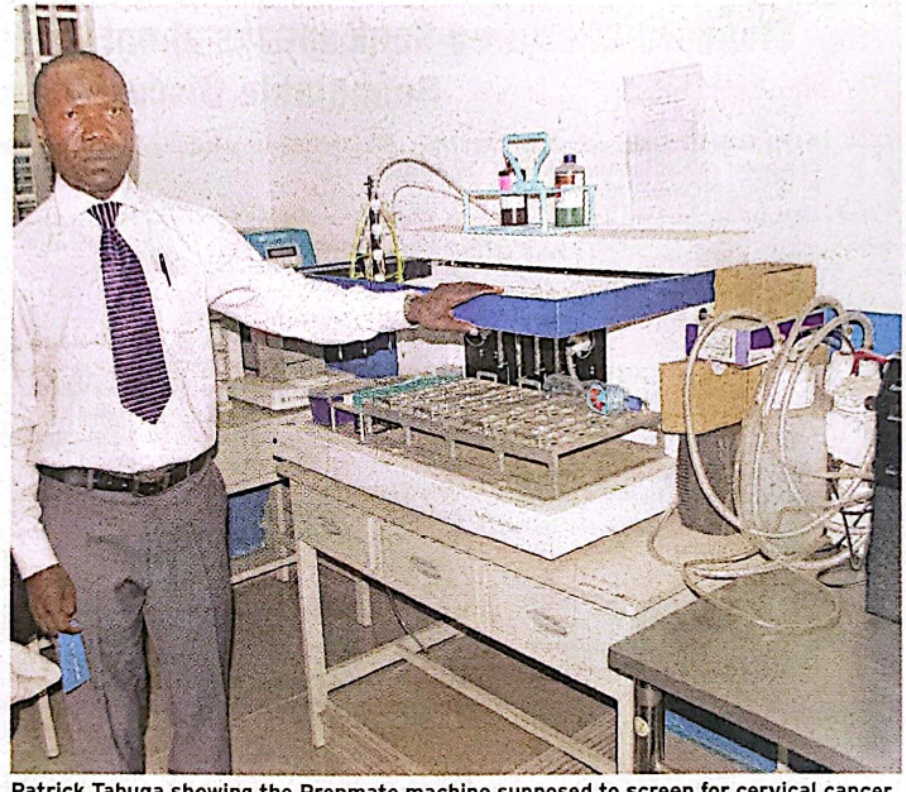
Tabuga added that all the laboratory technicians are not trained to use the machines. This was revealed at a function where eight Chinese medical personnel who have been at the hospital for the last two years were sent off and another team of nine welcomed.

The function was held at the Great Chinese Hotel, Kololo in Kampala on Wednesday.

The hospital, formerly Naguru Health Centre IV, was built and handed over to the Ugandan government in 2012 as part of efforts to decongest Mulago Hospital. The referral hospital treats between 10,000 and 13,000 outpatients and 14,000 inpatients every month.

Every two years, the Chinese government sends close to 10 medical officers into the country as part of the China-Uganda friendship agreement for running the hospital.

Since 1983, the Chinese government has sent 18 medical teams to Uganda.



Patrick Tabuga showing the Prepmate machine supposed to screen for cervical cancer but has never been used. Photo by Agnes Kyotalengerire

"The Chinese medical teams have brought not only the high-level medical treatment technology through the years, but also the traditional Chinese medical methods like acupuncture and manipulation therapy to Uganda," Chinese Ambassador Zheng Zhuqiang said.

The hospital director, Dr Emmanuel Batiibwe, said the new team came with a technical group, which is expected to maintain the medical infrastructure. He said a Chinese supplier had been contracted to deliver the spare parts and accessories.

At the function, the Chinese donated medicines and medical supplies worth sh157m.



Aceng asked the Chinese medical team to acquire work permits

Health minister Jane Ruth Aceng and the Chinese Ambassador signed a certificate in honour of the outgoing medical officers for their contribution to Uganda's healthcare.

They also signed a certificate acknowledging the consignment of drugs and the supplies donated.

Aceng said some of the equipment at the hospital was worn out and requested the Chinese to install new equipment. She also advised the Chinese to process work permits to allow them to work in Uganda.

CamScanner