

SITUATION ANALYSIS ON THE EYE CARE SERVICE IN ST JOSEPH'S EYE HOSPITAL MGBIRICHI OHAJI/EGBEME LGA IMO STATE OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

The article presents the work of St. Joseph's Eye Hospital, a young hospital in the Mgbirichi Ohaji / Egbeme LGA Imo State of Nigeria. The hospital is run by the catholic order of the Congregation of the Daughters of Mary and provides basic eye care in a rural part of Africa. The article highlights the potentials of the hospital, that also offers collaboration with neighbouring health care institutions and the limitations due to lack of personnel and the equipment for more special interventions.

Key words: eye care hospital, Nigeria, ophthalmology, Africa

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Introduction

There are several causes of blindness, most of which are preventable. In addition to uncorrected refractive error, there are other diseases or groups of eye disorders including cataract, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, retinitis, hypertensive retinopathy, uveitis, and eye tumors etc. that are common. These have known strategies for their management and elimination and only effective eye hospitals have the solutions or remedies to them. In view of the foregone and in conjunction with WHO's target of global initiative to eliminate avoidable blindness, Vision 2020: "the right to sight", St Joseph's eye hospital Mgbirichi becomes a child of necessity.

The young hospital was actually born on the 14th of February 2008 when the foundation was laid. It was officially opened on the 29th of December 2009, with a free eye care, given to over 350 patients, who were the beneficiaries. The hospital is owned by the

Congregation of the Daughters of Mary, Mother of Mercy (DMMM), Ahiaeke Umuahia, Abia State, Nigeria and in partnership with Christian Blind Mission International (CBMI) Australia, a non-governmental organization. It is located at Mgbirichi in Ohaji /Egbema L.G.A of Imo State. Mgbirichi is about 18km from the capital city of Imo state, Owerri. It is accessed through the Owerri- Portharcourt highway. Owerri is easily accessed through neighboring cities Umuahia, Okigwe, Aba, Onitsha, Yenagua or Port Harcourt. By air, it is accessed via Port Harcourt international airport Omagwa and Nnamdi Azikiwi airport Imo state.

What do we do?

Our Primary objectives are:

- To reach the underprivileged with quality and affordable eye care services.
- Maximize vision through our medical and surgical treatments
- Enlightenment program to churches, organizations and tertiary institutes

- Regular outreach programs around our State and beyond.
- School vision screening program to primary and secondary schools

These are achieved via the following services we render:

Surgically:

- Small incision cataract surgery with intraocular lens
- Trabeculectomy
- Excision of conjunctival growth with graft
- Corneal repair
- Lid surgeries such as chalazion, entropion repair etc.
- Evisceration when it is unavoidable
- Probing and syringing of lacrimal drainage system

Medically:

- Management/treatment of all kinds of eye diseases

Optically:

- Complete optical service

- Low vision service

Limitations to our service are:

- Retinal surgeries
- Refractive surgeries
- Paediatric surgeries
- Phacoemucification

Our limitations are a result of:

- Lack of personnel
- Lack of equipment for the required surgeries

Maintaining excellence in eye care service

- is our goal.

Statistics

Statistically, the hospital was in building from the year of 2008 to 2009. In 2010 the actual work began. The first figure shows (Fig. 1.) the number of new cases, follow ups, refractive cases and our outreach clinic while the second (Fig. 2.) shows surgery cases. The record for 2013 is from January to November.

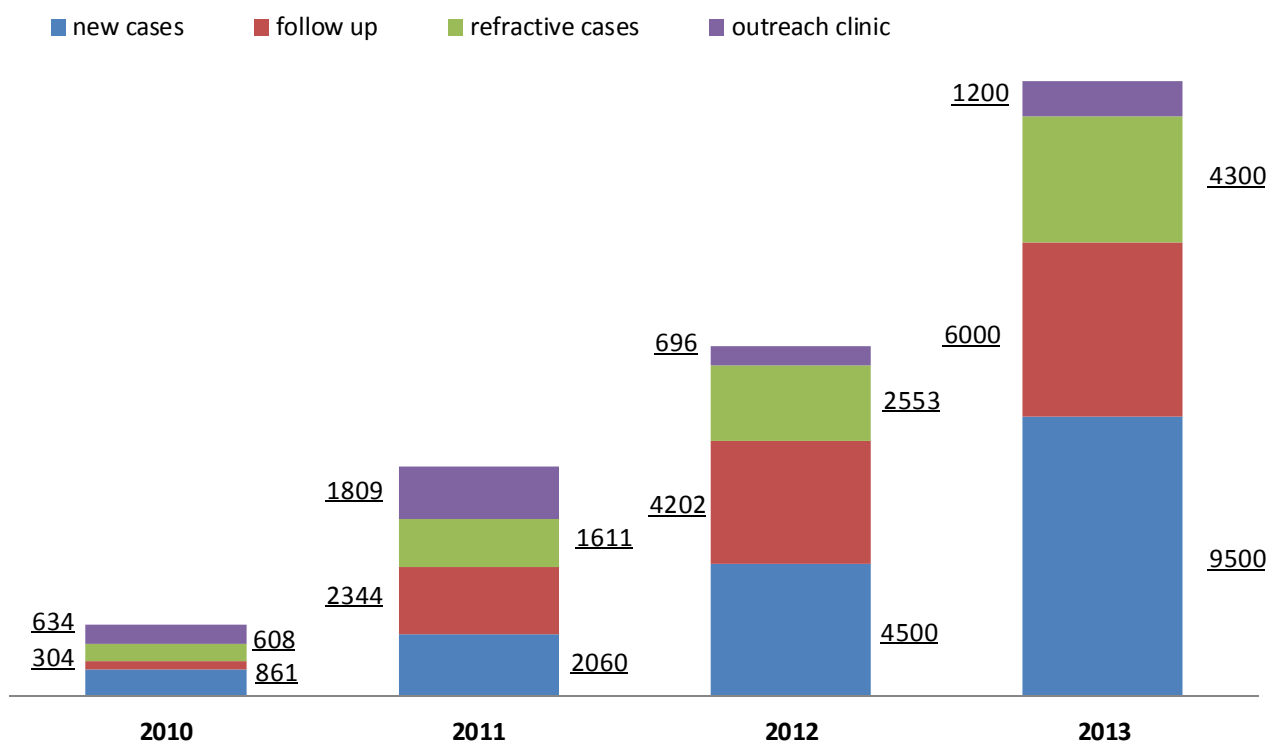


Fig. 1. New cases in St Joseph’s Eye Hospital Ohaji/Egbeme, LGA Iimo State of Nigeria

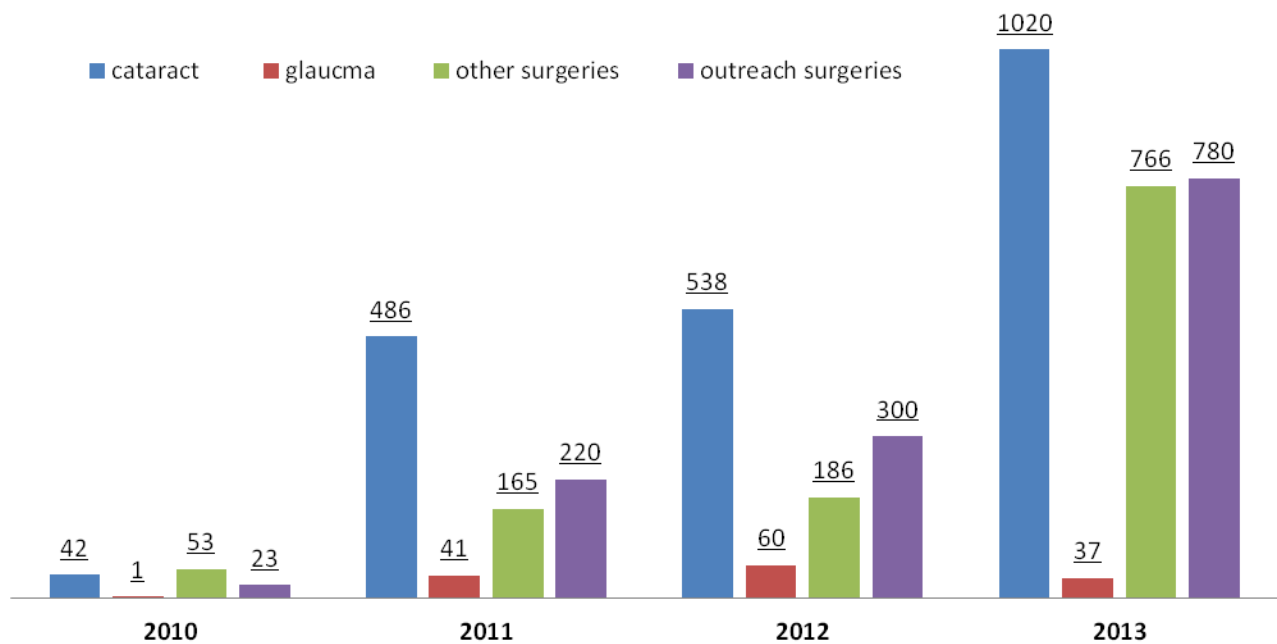


Fig. 2. Surgery cases in St Joseph's Eye Hospital Mgbirichi, Ohaji/Egbeme, LGA Iimo State of Nigeria

How our work is done?

Regular consultations take place from Monday to Friday, from 8am to when the last patient leaves the hospital. Our working days begin with morning devotion. Weekends are strictly reserved for emergencies. Outreach program has its own schedules.

Surgery days are on Tuesdays and sometimes Thursdays. Surgical outreach schedules are usually on some Thursdays.

Outreach programs

Medical outreach centers are:

- St Joseph Annex Akabo in Oguta LGA Imo State
- Anglican Rehabilitation center (eye clinic unit) Akpodim Mbaise
- St Mary's Catholic clinic and maternity Ozoro in Delta State
- Mercy hospital and maternity Mbawsi in Abia State
- St Joseph Annex Anara, Imo State
- St Mary Amafieke Orlu eye center, Imo State

Eye camp surgery centers are:

- Maris eye clinic Uturu in Abia State
- Anglican Rehabilitation center (eye clinic unit) Akpodim Mbaise in Imo State
- Ibem Christian Hospital Ohafia in Abia State
- Ancilla hospital (eye unit) Ihitte Mbaise in Imo State

There are school vision screening programs to various private and public schools.

Our past special events

St Joseph's eye hospital piloted the celebration of the following in Imo State:

- World Glaucoma Week 11th to 17th March 2012
- World Sight Day 11th October 2012
- World Glaucoma Week 10th to 16th March 2013
- World Sight Day 10th October 2013

Our watch word- "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are" -Theodore Roosevelt.

Our human resource personnel are:

- Ophthalmologist - 1

- Optometrist – 5
- Ophthalmic nurse – 3
- Primary eye care nurse – 1
- Theatre nurse assistant – 1
- Community Health Worker – 4
- Account/Administrative staff – 4
- Receptionist- 2
- Pharmacist- 2
- Technician – 1
- Optician - 2
- Driver – 1
- Security – 4
- Lab technician - 1
- Caterer - 3
- Laundryman-1
- Cleaners- 4

We have other challenges and difficulties that are limiting us to carry out our mission efficiently. They are:

- Lack of mobility in carrying out our outreach and school screening programs
- Seeking support from organizations
- Poor electricity supply
- Insufficient availability of working materials/equipments
- Equipping our outreach centers
- More than 70% of patients are less privileged

In conclusion, the hospital has come to stay, to serve humanity and as such need more supporters to achieve this goal.

You can partner with us, we assure you of using your donation judiciously.

Resumo

La artikolo prezentas la laboron de la St. Joseph Okulkuracista Hospitalo, nova malsanulejo en la Mgbirichi Ohaji / Egbeme LGA Imo Ŝtato de Niĝerio.

La hospital estas prizorgata per la katolika ordeno de la Kongregacio de la Filinoj de Maria kaj ofertas bazajn okulkuracistajn servojn en kamparana parto de Afriko. La artikolo prilumas la eblecojn de la hospitalo, kiu kunlaboras kun aliaj medicinaj institucioj en la ĉirkaŭaĵo, kaj la limojn de ĝia laboro kaŭze de manko de personalo kaj ekipaĵo por pli specialaj operacioj.

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Funding:

Remitters of funds from abroad should inform their bankers as follows:

United Bank for Africa PLC, Nigeria

Swift code: UNAFNGLA

Through: Deutsche Bankers Trust CO. Americas, New york, United states

Swift code: BKTRUS33

Routing no: 021001033

Account number: 04430446

For Further credit:

Beneficiary account number: 3001696496

Beneficiary name: DAUGHTERS OF MARY, MOTHER OF MERCY.

Beneficiary address: ST JOSEPH'S EYE HOSPITAL MGBIRICHI UBA branch, MBAERI STREET, OWERRI.



Fig. 3. Patients waiting to collect their medications



Fig. 4. 1st consulting room



Fig. 5. Theatre section