



CHC/PCAU PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER

PCAU Webinar

Stories of Hope, Comfort and Fulfillment in Palliative Care

Recently, the Palliative Care Association of Uganda (PCAU) hosted a moving webinar that brought together health professionals, storytellers and advocates to share what keeps them hopeful and fulfilled as they care for patients with life-limiting illnesses. The session was part of PCAU's series of activities leading up to the [5th Uganda Conference on Palliative Care](#).

Moderated by Sophia Matovu, a seasoned media personality in Uganda, the webinar focused on storytelling rather than medical definitions – an opportunity to listen to those on the palliative care front lines discuss their experiences and their resilience.

In her opening remarks, Sophia emphasized the importance of storytelling in palliative care. "Today we step away from the clinical definitions and hear the powerful personal stories of those who support patients, those who have reported on it and those who live it every day. I invite you to listen with open hearts and reflect deeply as we journey together."



Sophia Matovu

She shared her own encounters with palliative care stories from northern Uganda, including her coverage of the Road to Hope (RTH) program, which supports child caregivers. One memorable story was that of [a 17-year-old boy](#) caring for his blind, HIV-positive mother and his younger brother, also living with HIV. Through the RTH program, the family received a proper home and educational support for the children. "It was very touching," Sophia said. "At such a young age, he was forced to become a father figure, but the program gave them dignity and hope."

[Read stories from palliative care workers](#)

Celebrating Progress at the 5th Uganda Conference on Cancer and Palliative Care

The 5th Uganda Conference on Cancer and Palliative Care (Sept 10 – 12) brought together participants from over eight countries and recorded strong attendance: 330 participants on day one, 450 on day two, and 315 on day three. Leaders from government, civil society, academia and partner NGOs convened under the theme *"Embracing Uniqueness and Empowering Communities."* A total of 143 abstracts were submitted, resulting in 81 oral parallel presentations and 58 poster sessions. The program featured 12 parallel guest speakers, 17 plenary presentations and two legacy lectures – Prof. Charles Mark Lwanga Olweny on *The Evolution of Cancer Care and Treatment in Uganda*, and Prof. Anne Merriman on *Pioneering Palliative Care in Uganda and Africa*.



Mark-Donald Mwesiga

Messages from the conference co-hosts

Mark-Donald Mwesiga, Executive Director, PCAU

In his remarks, Mark underscored the vital role of civil society in shaping Uganda's cancer and palliative care landscape. He highlighted that the Palliative Care Association of Uganda (PCAU) – with 35 member organizations and about 1,800 individual members – has partnered closely with the Ministry of Health and the Uganda Cancer Institute (UCI) to extend care beyond hospitals, into communities and homes. Mark called for stronger government support for hospices and organizations that provide post-hospital care, particularly for patients whose goal is comfort rather than cure. He also launched the *Compassionate Communities Initiative*, envisioning every village in Uganda empowered to support people facing serious illness. Mark paid tribute to Dr. Samuel Guma of Kawempe Home Care and expressed gratitude to both local and international partners, including the Center for Hospice Care (CHC), for advancing palliative care in Uganda.



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Support the Training of Nurses to Transform Palliative Care in Uganda

In Uganda, where a majority of people in rural areas rarely meet a doctor, nurses are the backbone of healthcare. By supporting palliative care training for a nurse through the [Advanced Diploma in Palliative Care Nursing \(ADPCN\)](#), you help bring life-changing care closer to those who need it most.

This specialized one-year course equips nurses to become champions of palliative care, enabling them to establish palliative care units in remote health facilities. With only 11% of those in need currently able to access palliative care, your support can help close this gap and bring comfort and dignity to the lives of many.

Join us in making palliative care accessible to all. Your gift will transform the healthcare landscape, one nurse and one community at a time!

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