

Chat log from 25th January 2021 Malawi CPG/APPG meeting looking at Covid-19 in Malawi:

www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/news-events/past-events/worsening-covid-crisis-in-malawi-joint-malawi-cpg-appg/

- **Joanna Keating:** Dear all. In line with Scottish Government guidance, confirming for minuting, that Joanna Keating and Tasha Boardman, both SG International Government civil servants, are attending in observer capacity only, with our Minister Jenny Gilruth, and not as CPG members. Joanna
- **Jade Stein, SMP (She/Her):** Good evening everyone. Jade Stein, Media and Communications Officer, Scotland Malawi Partnership.
Please feel free to tag us this evening, (and of course, in the future) @ScotlandMalawi
<https://twitter.com/ScotlandMalawi>
You're also always welcome to share news of your Scotland/Malawi focussed work with us to jade@scotland-malawipartnership.org, for promotion support.
Warm wishes,
Jade.
- **Kondwani Munthali:** thanks will do
- **Ann Phoya:** Good evening, every one. We can not see the slides.
- **Alan Laverock:** I see them fine, Jade
- **Paul Shaw:** Is the median age range of deaths 35?
- **David Sirmequa:** The median age is for the infected.
- **Harry Wala:** I guess the reason for more nurses and lap people affected is because there are more of them, not necessarily more exposure
- **Carol Finlay, Church of Scotland:** Question - I am hearing that many people are dying in the rural areas - not always in hospital - what sort of health surveillance are you using to identify cases. I notice that you did not mention the Northern region in terms of bed capacity for Covid patients...is there provision there?
- **Rosie Woods:** Q (similar to Carol's): What are the plans for the isolation centres for the northern region? I am aware there is an isolation centre in Nkhata Bay and Mzuzu
- **Bob Scott:** It is more expensive for the family when a relative dies in hospital. It costs more to transport a cadaver in a truck, than a passenger in a mini-bus.
- **Susan Flynn:** Susan Flynn - read that Police in Lilongwe are beating people who don't wear masks. Is this really necessary? Hopefully a different approach can be used.
- **Dr Arie Glas:** Arie Glas - More important than the number of isolation beds, is the number of beds with oxygen provision.
- **Mohamed Tayub:** The last three days have shown a decline in the number of positive cases in malawi May you give us some insight into this
- **Muthi Nhlema:** it would good to know the median age of the infected and those who have succumbed to the virus. Can you also confirm the cases of equipment theft from hospitals, e.g. oxygen cylinders? If these are true, how are you dealing with these?

- **Jenni Barr, Dunblane Likhubula Link:** We have partners in the rural Likhubula area (Mulanje) who are asking for our help to fund cloth masks (to be made in Malawi) especially for children to let them attend school. Presumably it is proving difficult to supply masks widely, especially in rural areas?
- **Lord Jack McConnell:** Alasdair/David - my apologies, I must go to the debate. My very best wishes to both Ministers and good luck to Malawi through these weeks. Jack
- **Chimwemwe Sakunda Ndhlovu:** ofcourse our health workers are really doing a good job within the limited mean at present, they much really be commended
- **Juliet Saunders:** is there enough oxygen being generated by the existing plants, assuming sufficient cylinders were sourced?
- **Blessings Kachale:** what are the plans of government to man those isolation centres being opened? Am told there are nurses and clinicians who graduated some 2 years ago but that government has no money to recruit them.
- **Maya (Reprieve UK):** Thank you for your very informative presentation Honourable Minister. There have been a high number of confirmed Covid-19 cases in Zomba Central Prison, and also confirmed cases in Maula Prison, Domasi Prison and Kasungu Prison. As Malawi's prisons are still very overcrowded, all prisoners are now highly susceptible to the virus. Could you explain what steps are being taken to mitigate the spread of the virus within the prisons, and identify vulnerable prisoners, particularly the elderly and the sick? In particular what steps are being taken to reduce overcrowding and release vulnerable convicted prisoners and prisoners on remand?
- **Vessium:** our office has been going round schools to make sure that students with disabilities and special needs are being supported accordingly on C19 issues in the schools where there are boarding facilities - Vessium Chikhoza- SNE officer Lilongwe
- **Paul Shaw:** Has vaccine been offered by the International community?
- Margaret Wazakili: Question for the Honourable Minister of Health: I am Dr Margaret Wazakili, Physiotherapist. Thanks for this informative presentation. Internally generated prevention and treatment measures such as Breathing exercises, effective coughing techniques etc are missing from the public health messages, or have I missed something?
- **Edgar Kapiza Bayani:** Community Energy Malawi in partnership with University of Strathclyde are looking at sustainable solutions of oxygen supply and backups for isolation centres
- **Susan Flynn:** I understand that the vaccine will arrive in April/May. Does the Malawi Government have a strategy to ensure that it will be used equitably? This seems important
- **Nokia 2 V:** why are CBOs not used in combating COVID19 as it was with HIV
- **Thomas Nkhonjera:** I wonder the criteria the Government has used to administer urban Covid-19 cash transfer of Mk35,000.00 per household for the next three months. These are millions of money to help our hospitals to curb the current challenges. Is this not a political in nature than equipping health systems?
- **Edward Msiska:** Thanks for the nice presentation Madam minister , Malawi. I just wanted to know if there are strategies and frame work that has been put in place to break and overcome the propaganda and myths behind the covid 19 vaccines . Before closure of school, there were some noise in primary schools and pupils run away from classes for fear of receiving the vaccines. In the

communities and nation at large, people are not ready to receive the vaccines.....what are u doing to overcome all these propaganda...@Edward Msiska, MaSP youth ambassador

- **Antonia Ho:** Will Malawi have access to the 270 million doses of covid vaccines secured by African Union/African CDC, which is in addition to the COVAX allocation?
- **Joyce Nicoll:** consideration has there been of the effective role of a "muckle clean" policy in parallel to living alongside..? Ventilation is key to keeping down concentration of germs...air conditioning is a risk. Also UV light helps kill the germs. TB studies show effectiveness of placing patients in daylight and with open air to dilute the concentration of germs. Rural Malawi may benefit from looking at this. USA/Japanese studies of 2020 showing benefit of UV light to kill germs. More details available. Thought I would raise these behavioural items as additional aids. Happy to discuss. Kindly..Joyce
- **Paul Shaw:** Think you need to translate the Burns quote Minister :)
- **Gome Mkandawire:** I appreciate the presentation which spells out the big picture. The measures are commendable. The challenge is implementation and the speed to cope with the situation. I second the suggestion of using CBO's in the rural area.
- **Shupo Kumwenda:** hi everyone
- Joyce Nicoll: availability of soap?
- **P. Soka:** There is need for partners (local and international)to also support the mission hospitals in disseminating information to the rural masses on preventive measures as most of the masses in the rural have very little information on preventive measures
- **Joyce Nicoll:** turmeric also a natural disinfectant...
- **Joyce Nicoll:** they may lack info re covid but actually have many cultural skills and knowledge..just need to join the dots....
- **Richard Simpson:** since the advance purchases by rich countries exceed their populations will UK and other supply preferentially to partner countries like Malawi
- **Joyce Nicoll:** also write a joint letter to the 10 wealthiest men asking for underwriting of a national & African region plan?
- **Lucy C.K. Chitembeya:** Why are we seeing vaccinations available to African Countries labelled all African Countries and yet not for Europe, Canada, UK and neither USA. why are these vaccinations labelled as such. What is the Malawian strategy in vaccinating the masses and what are the current strategy to reduce the spread of the virus and the improving availability of PPE to the masses and the healthcare facilities
- **Paul Shaw:** I understand Canada has 4 times the amount of vaccine it needs
- **Ann Phoya:** Thank you SG for providing some funding towards the Malawi COVID Response. MaSP will be keen to follow up on use of these resources. Can UNICEF Malawi office be requested to share information on how the money is being channeled to the Govt system to address the needs highlighted by the Hon. Minister of Health
- **Edwin Gollie Makaranga Ngwira:** What immediate and urgent measures have the Malawian Government through the Ministry of Health put in place to alleviate the oxygen crisis in the Northern Region of Malawi among other challenges facing the region in all basic needs in

the entire clinical settings and hospitals in the Northern Region to make sure there is an even distribution of much needed support arriving in the country among all regions in the country?

- **David Sirmequa:** Thank you Hon Minister for the good and informative presentation.. But looking at Information dissemination to the rural masses we seem to be far from reaching the communities with the right information hence many people not putting on masks. (Q1) Are there any plans in place to reach out to these people. (Q2,) We have heard people using different herbs and leaves as a cure for Covid19, as a country are we doing any research to utilize some of the said herbs as we await for covid19 vaccine??
- **Nokia 2 V:** How best will the idea vaccination reach people in remote areas in Malawi as there are strong reports that people are not ready for vaccination
- **Muthi Nhlema:** Honorable Minister, Thank you for your presentation. In your own words, what does "Build Back Better" look like for Malawi's heath care system?
- **Richard Simpson:** the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine is 1/5 of Moderna and 1/3 of Pfizer and is much easier in storage so is there anything could be done to support AZ ramp up production
- **Linga Mihowa- Oxfam in Malawi:** We need the people's vaccine! Lets remove the inequalities!
- **Emily Phillips:** What training is being given to Healthcare workers to ensure they are not a vessel that transmits the Covid-19 themselves? I recently observed a funeral service virtually and was dismayed to see one of the Healthcare staff that was in and out of the makeshift morgue and helped to carry the casket to the Hearse standing very close to other people at the cemetery, wearing the same PPE he had on at the mortuary and no social distancing at all. It was so sad to witness that.
- **Liz Murray - Global Justice Now:** If you're in the UK, please help us put pressure on to the UK government to support the South African and Indian proposal to the WTO to waive intellectual property rights by signing and sharing our petition <https://act.globaljustice.org.uk/covid-19-stop-big-pharma-monopolies>
- **David Hope-Jones:** HERE IS A LINK TO THE HEALTH MINISTER'S PRESENTATION: https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/files/1016/1160/0380/COVID-19_Pandemic__Malawi_Update_250121.pdf
- **Stephen Doughty:** Just to send my sincere best wishes to the Minister and my deep condolences on the loss of her colleagues. I am taking up a number of the issues she has raised in the UK Parliament with the Africa Minister and others, and agree very much with the comments on the need for global equity on vaccines and wider global investment in public health in all it's aspects. I am liaising closely with the AU CDC and others. Stephen Doughty MP - Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and Development (covering Africa).
- **Joyce Nicoll:** why is Kenya rate going down. PLus what was happening in week 32 ish in Malawi compared to the surge in start January?
- **Joyce Nicoll:** Can PPE be done as a community employment initiative. With articles made being sterilised in UV chamber before being distributed?
- **David Hope-Jones:** CLICK THIS LINK FOR THE 'GLOBAL JUSTICE NOW' PAPER ON COVID VACCINE ACCESS IN MALAWI: <https://www.scotland->

malawipartnership.org/files/9916/1159/6369/BRIEFING_Obstacles_to_equitable_access_to_Covid_vaccines.pdf

- **Gertrude Chirambo:** What is Govt doing to
- **Chimwemwe Sakunda Ndhlovu:** Vaccine for all!!! End inequalities
- **Joyce Nicoll:** The word is that the UK vaccine might not treat the South African form...what is actually needed in Malawi?
- **Donald Robertson:** Thank you to all our speakers so far. Very compelling from Nick. An aside but considering that Glasgow hosts COP26 this year, what message does the inequitable rollout of vaccine send for tackling climate change? A lot of work to be done in both areas.
- **Enock Bamusi:** What assurance is Malawi Govt giving to people about the safety of the vaccine in light of all the conspiracies going round, especially that there is vaccine specifically for Africa which cannot be used in western countries, and that Africa is / will be used as a guinea pig for the vaccine?
- **Gertrude Chirambo:** Hon. Minister what is Govt doing on rumours of staff stealing life saving equipment. What measures are in place to avoid such
- **Joyce Nicoll:** rural Scotland - a main transmission was showing up as being the paramedics and the hospital transport. Need for keeping these clean very important. There is UV light for ambulances, plus ordinary timely cleaning also helps.
- **Jailosi Gondwe:** Are oxygen concentrators of any use particularly in the rural health units?
- **Joyce Nicoll:** We need to also consider what Scotland did not do well and see if that has any lessons for Malawi
- **Joyce Nicoll:** Plus focus on local strengths
- **David Hope-Jones:** CLICK THIS LINK FOR THE MALAWI HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION PAPER:
https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/files/8916/1158/8207/MHRC_Statement_on_Escalating_Cases_of_Covid-19_in_Malawi_Comm_-Final.pdf
- **Alexander Sukali:** The unavailability of an Oxygen Plant in Mzuzu is worrisome news. Are there plans to acquire one, and if so, what support is required?
- **Emily Phillips:** What measures can the MW Govt put in place to break the Culture/tradition of attending funerals in large numbers, holding vigils especially during this pandemic.
- **Edgar Kapiza Bayani:** Hon Minister Chaponda there have been social media reports on lack of power back ups in hospitals sometimes leading to loss of life when power goes out. How is the power situation in isolation centres and how prepared is COVID response strategy on this?
- **Willan Kalinda:** The Making of masks should not take much of time being in pipeline.. the situation is out of hand now and as Malawian, I feel like there are more people with covid-19 than numbers we have today simply because there's lack of testing kits across the country.
so Hon. Minister, Malawi Govt should speed up whatever process that is there to protect Malawian.
- **Heather Cubie:** Minister Gilruth, Glasgow/Scotland helped provide Blantyre with extra oxygen capacity during first lockdown. Could Scotland offer similar to Northern region given there is a lot of involvement from Scotland in the North? A very specific tangible help.

- **Elaine Smith:** Apologies everyone as I have to leave to attend another meeting at 7. Thanks to all the contributors and I hope we can take action to assist from the CPG.
- **Beatrice Kabota:** Malawi Minister, why is the task force changing directive in terms of schools, first directive was all student in boarding school should remain in schools until they are tested, those who found negative can go into their homes. Just after few days, asking them to return to school. Are you not confusing parents and guardians considering economic challenges, since the date of opening school is not yet known, why have you changed by asking student to return?
- **Muthi Nhlema:** EU has just announced an investment of 56.6 Billion MWK towards the COVID response effort in Malawi
<https://twitter.com/EUinMalawi/status/1353742283649253376/photo/1>
- **Joyce Nicoll:** wonderful
- **Joyce Nicoll:** thank you
- **Linga Mihowa- Oxfam in Malawi:** Great Support from the EU
- **Paul Shaw:** Ah, the EU, if only we still belonged to it
- **Nick Dearden:** very good point. yes in some ways this is a very tragic rehearsal for how we deal with climate change
- **Linga Mihowa- Oxfam in Malawi:** Great presentations from Minister Hon Khumbi and Ms Habiba
- **448357:** Thank you for your presentation honourable Minister. There are reports that people are being denied testing when they go to the hospital even after they note signs and symptoms of C19. What practical measures has the government put in place to make sure that all people have equal access to help in the hospitals?
- **Neil Merrylees:** Is there any reason why we in the UK could not share some of our vaccine supplies with Malawi? Massively over-ordered. Evidently UK is vaccinating >400,000 people a day. Therefore a few days supply from the UK could make a big difference. Aware regulations etc and cultural aspects need to be taken into account, but could we not do something more directly?
- **Nyomi:** Some European leaders took COVID-19 vaccines first to prove they were effective
- **Willan Kalinda:** Great to hear from you Dr Mathews.
- **Joyce Nicoll:** wonderful to hear praise for folk at the frontline of decisionmaking care
- **Rachel Phillips:** so powerful to hear from you Matthews Mtumbuka... ZIKOMO
- **Joyce Nicoll:** There are fingertip oxygen monitors...this could be available in each community and help get better early detection..
- **Heather Cubie:** So glad Matthews that you have made good recovery and wonderful that you were able to speak this evening. Your plea re oxygen confirms my thinking that Scotland should help here!
- **James Gondwe - CYD Malawi:** Thanks Dr. Mtumbuka for sharing your experience. This is some positive news that we need to hear in these difficult times. Thanks to all the health workers and everyone who are working tirelessly to fight covid-19.
- **Joyce Nicoll:** thank you too
- **Linga Mihowa- Oxfam in Malawi:** Thanks Dr Mathews!

- **Stephen Doughty:** very powerful contribution . thank you.
- **Philippa Whitford:** what about O2 concentrators?
- **Chimwemwe Sakunda Ndhlovu:** thanks for sharing your personal experiences Dr
- **Mary Popple:** Thank you Dr Matthews for your frontline and personal information.
- **Paul Shaw:** Matthews - are COVID symptoms widely known, even in rural areas?
- **Lucinda Rivers:** An update from COVAX (WHO/GAVI and partners) - an agreement was finalised on Friday with AstraZeneca for 170 million doses of the AstraZeneca/Oxford candidate, and a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Johnson & Johnson for 500 million doses of the Janssen candidate, which is currently being investigated as a single dose vaccine.. These deals are in addition to existing agreements COVAX has with the Serum Institute of India (SII) for 200 million doses – with options for up to 900 million doses more – of either the AstraZeneca/Oxford or Novavax candidates, as well as a statement of intent for 200 million doses of the Sanofi/GSK vaccine candidate.
In addition to this, COVAX also has – through R&D partnership agreements – first right of refusal in 2021 to access potentially more than one billion doses (based on current estimates from the manufacturing processes under development) that will be produced, subject to technical success and regulatory approval, by candidates in the COVAX R&D Portfolio.
- **Edwin Gollie Makaranga Ngwira:** Thank you Dr. Matthews Mtumbuka for sharing your experience and the ordeal you went through to secure the oxygen cylinders.
- **Lucinda Rivers:** Hopefully this will mean more than 20% of Malawians will receive the vaccine by the end of 2021
- **Matthews Mtumbuka:** Thanks all for your kind words
- **Gome Mkandawire:** Thanks Dr. Mtumbuka for your candid communication and exposure of the challenges faced due to logistical issues.
- **Shupo Kumwenda:** we are asking the team to look on people who are in community as now people they are suffering and they have no information on covid 19 they dont put trust on hospitals we need to work hand in hand with the community based organisation pump more funding to the CBOs so that they should spread message to communities
- **Matthews Mtumbuka:** We do have O2 concentrators but with COVID if your situation is very bad the concentrator is not powerful enough. In my case I needed O2 cylinder Friday till Tuesday and was moved to concentrator on Tuesday night and weaning down slowly till Friday
- **Matthews Mtumbuka:** Paul Shaw - I doubt everyone knows the symptoms well...even in cities many take long to discover they are possibly infected. They think its malaria or usual flu
- **Joyce Nicoll:** the use of blood oxygen level indicators may assist on differentiating in the layman's eye?
- **Rachel Phillips:** if we want to donate to KCH oxygen supply what's the best way ?
- **Nokia 2 V:** On civic education, ministry of health should join ministry of education and make teachers who are out of school now to assist in civic educating the masses.
- **Edwin Gollie Makaranga Ngwira:** My worry is with the people from entire Northern Region which doesn't have an oxygen plant. The patients relying on oxygen transported from Lilongwe. If Dr. Matthews who is in Lilongwe had experienced the shortage of oxygen right away where the

entire Nation relies upon. What more for the people of the Northern Region who have literally, nothing. Can you anticipate the catastrophic consequences if not immediate and urgent support is delivered in the Northern Region. This is a disaster for the people of Northern Malawi.

- **Joyce Nicoll:** thank you Joyce
- **Shupo kumwenda:** thanks to our friends who are sending support to us for the people who are in the village for masks soap and awareness
- **Linda Dembo:** Hon Minister of Health, just thinking of all the food that is still being sold on the streets, could we have restrictions on these? the fresh salad, chips, maize. I am just thinking this can lessen contact
- **Alberto Gregori:** the lack of oxygen manufacturing capacity can be most quickly and effectively dealt with by using Oxygen concentrators. These are available as high quality units from suppliers like MedicaAid International at low cost and with added disposables. Frequently the concentrators available are poor quality and not properly maintained and so less effective. This is also a much greener alternative, retaining cylinder oxygen for the most unwell.
- **P.Soka:** Joyce thank you for your call for support to the rural communities
- **Habiba:** We need accountability institutions to be involved in accountability. The Ombudsman for example is a key institution in this too.
- **Nokia 2 V:** Thank you all presenters
- **Emily Phillips:** Great presentation Joyce Jumah Phiri
- **Susan Flynn:** In Blantyre we channelled our Appeal money through Gift of the Givers Foundation and they ensured its distribution to the community health services and most vulnerable patients
- **Chimwemwe Sakunda Ndhlovu:** u hv captured it well Joyce
- **Hanna:** Great presentation Joyce
- **Joyce Nicoll:** why did Kenya numbers go down?
- **Alistair:** Statistics will be used to chart the progress of Covid-19 and in Mw these will be from the Ministry of Health's Health Management Information System. So let me mention that when Paul Lihoma and I were undertaking research on medical record keeping and the HMIS, we discovered that when clinics are very busy they sometimes create no records at all. This means there is no input data for the HMIS. Accurate record keeping may not be very heroic but inaccurate / incomplete records have serious consequences, Alistair
- **Donald Speirs:** What would be the aid today, which Scotland/UK could provide, with that would save the most amount of lives today?
- **Tione Kaonga, UMODZI Consulting:** What is govt doing about the unreasonable prices of drugs in most pharmacies caused by covid-19?
- **Milly G. C:** Thank you to Ms Habiba Osman and Ms Joyce Phiri for mentioning the very important issue of Mental Health during this Pandemic. More support should be rendered in this area.
- **Rachel Phillips:** Dr MM- did you get dexamethasone in KCH? is that readily available?
- **Sheila Tobie:** on Civic Education the Malawi UK Military Community (MUMCO) have brilliant ideas that can help in the Rural areas we will need your support to execute this

- **Joyce Nicoll:** Alistairs point is important re record keeping. Maybe it could be done remotely by phone with a Scottish/other health record reporting centre doing the spade work of feeding in the dat, to free up frontline time
- **Lucy C.K. Chitembeya:** What's going on that we do not ventilators and especially neither medical personnel whom are trained in using ventilators. For example Kasungu District Hospital, lack such medical personnel with proper training in ventilators and cant actually have ventilators there. What are the plans in having isolation centers in all district hospitals so people are assisted locally and even in local medical clinics
- **Nyomi:** Do you feel good practice waste management and the control of waste can reduce the spread of the virus? Are their any measures in place for this?
- **Nokia 2 V:** Nokia TV,it's me Peter Mchenga. Sorry for appearing that way
- **Lucy C.K. Chitembeya:** There need to be civic education on what is covid-19 pandemic, its consequences and what needs to be done to curb the spreading of the virus in our communities.
- **Damien Frame:** Strathclyde University, Community Energy Malawi and the Polytechnic Design Studio in Blantyre have been working with international oxygen access initiatives recently. Focussing on oxygen concentrators and resilient energy supply for rural health centres. Looking for collaborators to take this forward!
- **Chimwemwe Sakunda Ndhlovu:** this sensitisation on the vaccine should start now before it is here. But not mush is being done on this
- **Linga Mihowa- Oxfam in Malawi:** The Ministry of Civic Education has got to step up urgently to support the mass popularisation of the right messaging on the Vaccine.
- **Muthi Nhlema:** Some work I have been part has shown that people are aware of COVID and how its spread. The problem is sustained practice which can be internalized through awareness raising and, mostly, enforcement.
- **Chim Musicha:** On the issue of civic education..I think there's a tendency these days to only concentrate on using social media and television..but this has a limited reach.. probably 20% if that. we will need to do more and go bold. reach people in markets etc.
- **Joyce Nicoll:** Please do consider also reducing the concentration of the germs available to infect people. ie do a parallel Muckle-clean strategy...(i) clean surfaces etc (ii) ventilate air (iii) Daylight exposure and also other forms of UV light exposure to kill germs in the air...
- **Rachel Phillips:** surely better to concentrate on the basics like oxygen supply and vaccines and mass education over complex ventilators ?
- **Habiba:** Scottish partnership can also assist bring in experts for online counseling for our health workers! They are stressed and it is too overwhelming for them. This is an urgent need too
- **Tamsin Lillie:** Found this petition: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/565462>
- **Joyce Nicoll:** Happy to help...background in clinical psychology..
- **Tamsin Lillie:** Asking UK government to donate surplus vaccines to poorer nations: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/565462>
- **Matthews Mtumbuka:** Rachel Phillips - I doubt I was given DEXAMETHASONE - but was given a solid package.....I am told it is around in scarcity and some are getting it am told.

- **Joyce Nicoll:** Are there old traditions which can be reawakened , which would help "substitute" for usual graveside gatherings?
- **Lucy C.K. Chitembeya:** Is 300 beds in Lilongwe at Bingi International Stadium Covid-19 treatment center enough for such a great community the KCH carters to and being the main central referral hospital for the country. We may need more than that
- **Susan Flynn:** Chifundo is based in Chester UK and Chanasa in Malawi. 50 Chanasa women in Blantyre sew. We have already made 2000 masks for vulnerable patients and 1,4000 for school children. We can make them if we have a bit of financial support as we are a very small charity
- **Rachel Phillips:** I thought dexamethasone was cheap? and meant to be very effective? also you mentioned that they have you something to prevent clots which is a big problem in COVID patients... were you put on an anticoagulant?
- **Habiba:** Hasn't the MoH said that we now treat every death now as a Covid-19 death? I think the funeral culture. I think that was a tactical decision as it is causing the virus to spread.
- **Rachel Phillips:** sorry that was to Dr MM Thankyou !
- **Milly G. C:** Cultural practises vs Covid regulations in this aspect. Let's educate each other and maybe raise more awareness to our elders/ chiefs etc. Funerals are becoming super spreader events sadly.
- **Rachel Phillips:** great point Milly GC ... very sad indeed if funerals lead to more funerals. are local chiefs and elders taking steps to lead new practices?
- **Donncha Mullin:** I second Millly GC's comment re. mental health. Harm to mental health is a hugely important factor of this pandemic. The stress and mental strain to the public, patients and health staff is massive. The Scotland-Malawi Mental Health Education Project (SMMHEP) have coordinated the production of a free mental health guide to support frontline workers – Malawi Quick Guide to Mental Health – which have been distributed to over 600 health centres around Malawi but can be accessed now freely at <http://www.smmhep.org.uk/content/press-launch-malawi-quick-guide-mental-health> - mobile phone app in development. This was a collaborative effort between SMMHEP, UNIMA College of Medicine, St John of God's, Malawi Ministry of Health, and Mental Health Users and Carers Association (MeHUSA).
- **Joyce Nicoll:** thank you Antonia
- **Edgar Kapiza Bayani:** @Damein Frame you raise a very important aspect. While we need short term solutions on professional grade oxygen concentrators , ours is a long term solution that must be taken forward as well. Willing partners are welcome.
- **Milly G. C:** Ms Habiba Osman maybe if you can respond to Rachel Philip's question on the issue of cultural practises and raising awareness?
- **Muthi Nhlema:** CARE, in partnership with other NGOs, are pushing a COVID19 response effort in 54 health care facilities (HCF) across 7 districts. They collected data on community knowledge of COVID 19, water and sanitation conditions at the HCF and knowledge around COVID19 among health care workers. Here is a sample of the online report they are using for Blantyre HCFs: https://share.mwater.co/v3/console_link/c05dc9fc15740e4b6f7f7fa0dc3f9ac?share=afdf28d1ce164d478697ab8484251c64 . if you are interested to access this information please contact CARE and ask for Lemekeza Mokiwa: Lemekeza.Mokiwa@care.org

- **Emily Phillips:** What could be the reason for more deaths from the Covid-19 being men as opposed to women? Is there any scientific explanation to this? Or could we say women are more likely to disclose other underlying health issues that Clinicians are able to manage these alongside the Covid as opposed to men not disclosing such health issues?
- **Habiba:** Emily, we need more studies indeed because more men have died compared to women. I also think its to do with behavior habits of men not seeking help early and even using the local remedies that women religiously. It is cultural I suppose. Steaming as an example, may not be seen as manly.
- **Matthews Mtumbuka:** Rachel - yes anticoagulant was given to me within 1 hour of presenting myself - and I think repeated etc.....
- **Joyce Nicoll:** Oximeters could be made available in each community to aid earlier diagnosis & self isolation
- **Muthi Nhlema:** @emily Philip I don't know the scientific reason for this, but as a Malawian man, I can say Malawian men are emotionally less resilient to major shocks and changes as compared to women. This is due, in part, due to the fact that most cultures place the burden of community building to women which places them in situation where they develop thick skin and stronger coping mechanisms than men.
- **Joyce Nicoll:** long term improved infrastructure including roads & airports esp in North could be part of the covid resilience
- **Matthews Mtumbuka:** Emily..... in absence of science my hypotheses for more men dying are (a) women tend to have bigger natural immunity check even life expectancy (b) women accept COVID results better - men are scared and in denial and so stubble to be stable calm and fight the disease.
- **Lea and Amy:** Only helpful to have pulse oximeters if you then have oxygen available for those who need it. Knowing that someone has low oxygen saturations isn't helpful unless you can treat with oxygen
- **Muthi Nhlema:** so basically patriarchy oppresses women but depresses men
- **Mia Crampin (Malawi):** Given the shortage of oxygen, important to use objective measures to identify those that will benefit most to referral to the isolations centres that do have o₂
- **Mia Crampin (Malawi):** There is also a problem referring people with suspected COVID and contacts to travel to seek COVID test as invariably they travel on public transport and this increases transmission.
- **Mia Crampin (Malawi):** Ideally testing would be done in community settings where possible to avoid travel
- **Margaret Wazakili:** Did you know that people can improve lung capacity and improve immunity through breathing exercises? We can speed up recovery rate and reduce the number of people who progress to hypoxia. The discipline is to teach the techniques before infection, during the disease process and after recovery. This would ease the current pressure on the medical system. Margaret Wazakili
- **Hon Esther Jailoss Jolobala:** Just recently the ministry of health released the list of testing sites per district, where we have seen Machinga being the only district having one testing site, would the minister of health explain why is it like this.

- **Joyce Nicoll:** Thank you so much Arie & to your team for all your heartfelt and hard work...
- **Brenda Malinki:** Thank you for the conference. Unfortunately, I am out of time and have to leave.
Stay safe everyone.
- **Lesley Hill:** for those interested in gendered impacts for men and women... and that masculinity enactment which impacts on health outcomes/deaths generally also applies in Covid 19.... Men taking less care of themselves, also impacts on care of others, when they avoid to take safety measures to prevent infection and transmission.
[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)30526-2/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30526-2/fulltext)
- **Habiba:** Scottish Police have been supporting Malawian Police in a great way and I think they can also assist the Police in handling or managing Covid-19 response
- **Linda Fabiani:** I am sorry I have to leave. Please keep me informed David and Alasdair. Thank you. Linda
- **Habiba:** A holistic approach is so critical that also considers innovations like mobile health clinics where there are not enough health treatment centres just as what MP Jolobala has stated as some districts are more populated and infrastructure is poor.
- **John Barker:** TRIPS a massive problem, needs much more pressure
- **Joyce Nicoll:** Might be scope to take a legal case to the UN under the optional protocol on iCESCR (covenant on economic social & cultural rights) re the withholding of Intellectual property
- **Rachel Phillips:** in the early 2000s SA took big pharma to court to get ARVs off patent... why do we have to learn this the hard way again?? sad that UK government not pushing for off patent vaccines
- **Joyce Nicoll:** UK refused to give Uk citizens access to this...but Malawi has access!!!
- **Cathy Ratcliff, EMMS:** As EMMS, what we can offer is outreach through our 5 Malawian partners, to 26 rural health facilities, in every district of Malawi.
- **Heather Cubie:** Thank you so much to all contributors for such helpful and heartfelt contributions. As Chair of SMP I am convinced that SMP can help and be agile in so doing in the areas of support and advocacy covered by David in his summing up. So thank you to busy Ministers and MPs/MSPs for participating, our Malawian friends, SMP staff for expert admin and to Dr Allan for chairing this joint CPG/APPG.
- **Joyce Nicoll:** Malawi could take the lead for developing countries in such a legal action...
- **Dr Arie Glas:** Mulanje Mission Hospital is open to work with those working on oxygen projects.
- **Joyce Nicoll:** Uk etc have ratified this other half of international human rights...now hold it to account
- **Rosie Woods:** Can the Malawian government please announce officially that Masks can be sold without VAT? So that local organisations can manage to provide them at a lower cost, both to individuals and on behalf of donors
- **John Barker:** Pharma lobby explains a lot. Double counting, pay for delay, evergreening, monopoly pricing. Follow the £ for clues...Many thanks for an opportunity to take part.
- **Joyce Nicoll:** law- unjustified enrichment re double paying for vaccines...all part of a legal case that Malawi could take

- **Kondwani Munthali:** Rosie woods all Covid equipment is tax free
- **Edwin Gollie Makaranga Ngwira:** It was a very good meeting!
- **Lucy C.K. Chitembeya:** Oxygen is readily available in the country currently which is absurd
- **Jill Brown:** A very interesting meeting. Can you share the link to the recording? Thank you
- **Pansi Katenga Ipas Malawi:** Our Minister has presented the needs very well. Complimenting this risk communication strategies using a range of platforms including community radios.
- **Edwin Gollie Makaranga Ngwira:** good night
- **Chrissie Hirst:** Thanks to all speakers and organisers!
- **Matthews Mtumbuka:** Thanks everyone
- **Muthi Nhlema:** good night
- **Nyomi:** Education, awareness, and sanitation points, managed by school leaders, TAs, churches and other livelihood community groups.
- **Tanja Hendriks:** thank you!
- **Lucy C.K. Chitembeya:** Thank you very much & GOD Bless!
- **Esnath Magola:** Many thanks goodnight.
- **Nyomi:** Thank you
- **Fiona Anderson:** Thank you everyone. Stay safe.
- **Lorna McD (Tearfund):** Thanks everyone - really informative!
- **Emmie:** Thanks all
- **Tiwonge Gawa:** thank you
- **Maureen Watt MSP:** Thank you David and all at SMP/MSP and Alasdair for chairing
- **Mphatso Sapangwa - MaSP:** Good night
- **Eve Broadis Fair Trade Scotland:** Thank you, very good meeting.
- **Edwin Khundi:** Thank you all
- **Sheena Nicolson:** Thank you David and every one
- **Sheila Tobie:** Thank you all , have a good night and stay safe.
- **Linda Dembo:** Thanks David
- **Juliet Saunders:** thank you for a very interesting meeting. As a Scot/Malawi born/bred and resident we really look forward to taking the discussed issues forward. Malawi's long running health gaps have certainly been highlighted by the COVID pandemic and need urgent address.