



“As 2023 comes to a close, I’ve been reflecting on the year we’ve had. The devastation of losing a member of our team during Cyclone Freddy and the small-scale humanitarian efforts we initiated in the immediate aftermath feel like they happened in another life. Malawi has faced many challenges this year. In recent weeks the country experienced a devaluation of 44% without warning overnight. I woke up, angry, confused & worried – yet we have forex, our situation is better than many. I can’t imagine the emotions of Malawians who saw their savings diminish in value overnight – how much more can Malawi absorb? Futures are threatened and seem more uncertain than ever. I don’t know what lies ahead for Malawi but we remain committed to supporting scholarships for disadvantaged students & those vulnerable to dropping out of their courses due to poverty. Developing our medical elective initiative and Chichewa language lessons have given me hope for a sustainable funding future. Guardian visits for prospective students involving our alumni have strengthened our systems & processes. Our ambitious target for the Big Give shows our plans for a prosperous 2024. Help us support the future medical workforce in Africa, by donating via our Big Give campaign page – your donation will be DOUBLED! In the words of William Stones at our Global Gathering, *‘Medic to Medic is a considered and well-structured way of making a small but useful contribution’*.”

Tamsin

Big Give – DOUBLE your donation

The annual Big Give Christmas Challenge is upon us. From November 28th – midday on 5th December we have the opportunity to double your donations! We have a target of £15,000 – our most ambitious target yet! This will have a massive impact on our partners and beneficiaries in Malawi. To make a donation please visit our campaign page:

<https://donate.biggive.org/campaign/a056900002RXsu5AAD>

If we reach our target, 50% of funds raised will support student scholarships and the remaining 50% will be dedicated to starting our Walani psychosocial support helpline accessible to ALL trainee health workers in Malawi feeling overwhelmed or in need of mental health supports.

A message from Tiwonge at St John’s Institute for Health

“As I reflect on my journey through college, I am compelled to express my sincere gratitude for the incredible support provided through the Medic to Medic scholarship and student allowance. It has had a transformative impact on my life, both academically and personally. Your unwavering support has been a beacon of hope, enabling me to pursue my dreams of becoming a healthcare professional despite the challenges life has thrown my way.

“As a student from an underprivileged family, the financial support provided through the scholarship and student allowance has been nothing short of a lifeline. Without this assistance, navigating the complex journey of medical education would have been an insurmountable task. Your belief in my potential has propelled me forward, and I am sincerely thankful for the opportunities you have provided.

“Over the past 12 months, I have witnessed a significant lift and improvement in various aspects of my life. I am currently in the last semester of my second year, and the experiences and knowledge gained have been truly enriching. The practical exposure during my allocations at Mapale Health Centre, Mzuzu Central Hospital, and St. John’s Institute for Health has been invaluable. I have completed four tasks in ophthalmology, sexually transmitted infection (STI), family planning, and mental health, each contributing to my growth as a future healthcare provider.

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Chichewa Lessons

Malawi is home to a diverse network of local languages and dialects with Chichewa being the most widely spoken. We started our Chichewa language lessons earlier this year. This initiative enables medical students and others visiting Malawi to undertake some preparation in local language and culture specifically directed at learning phrases and words that may be most useful for the hospital context. We've already got a Chichewa handout, YouTube video and podcast for pronunciation, but for those wanting lessons we can organise these too!

We ask for a requested donation of £5 per lesson which is split 50:50 between our general fundraising and the student tutor. This provides our community with additional opportunities to earn income above their student allowances distributed twice per year.

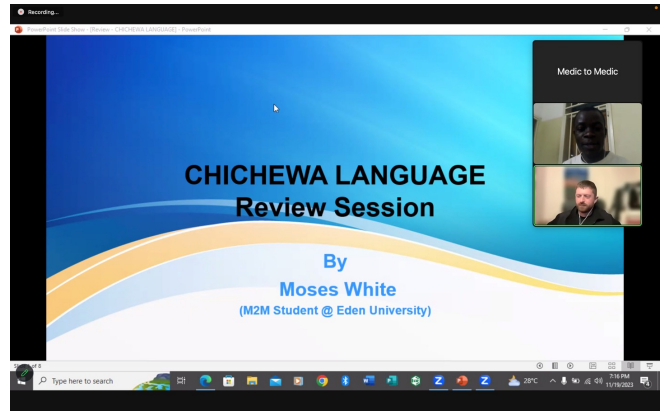
As a Chichewa student, you will be linked to a tutor from our student community who is given some guidance and recommendations on topics to cover. Lessons are hosted over Zoom and recorded (should you wish) with the unlisted (private) YouTube link sent to you afterwards for revision. So far, we've had 4 elective students undertake lessons (ranging from 1 lesson to 12) with positive feedback from both elective students and student tutors. Here's what **Ben Troth**, a 2023 elective student had to say about this initiative:

"Local language skills are important to me, and I was surprised that Welsh (my second language) is on a well-known app, whereas Chichewa, spoken by ten times the number of people, isn't available."

"I had been given a pdf of Chichewa phrases prior to my time at Nkhoma, which had the M2M email on it. When I contacted Tamsin, I was matched with Moses, and very soon after, well-prepared lessons with PowerPoints ahead of time were booked. I was able to do two lessons a week, and the progress made with a native speaker has been very helpful."

"The benefit from directing money towards M2M students over spending money on apps/multinationals can't be understated. In the elective debrief with the university I will be suggesting that all students should be undertaking Chichewa lessons as I can't see how you could progress without native speaker input. I hope in the interim others are able to have lessons and benefit from the pool of tutors M2M have available at a very reasonable cost."

As well as Chichewa, we have medical English handouts in Chiyao & Tumbuka (Malawi), Nyanja (Zambia), Swahili (Kenya & Tanzania), Wolof & Pulaar (Senegal) and a French version is also in production.



Medical English handouts can be found on the resources section of our website and for those wishing to have virtual lessons in Chichewa, Chiyao, Tumbuka, Nyanja, Swahili, Wolof, Pulaar &/or French please get in touch – info@medictomedic.org.uk



Global Gathering 2023



Thank you to all those who attended our online Global Gathering on 25th November and thank you to all our panelists who shared their stories and experiences! For those who were unable to make it, it was recorded! You can listen &/or watch on:

YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VrBUfdVvlZo>



Spotify:

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/4TvwbiclSy0HxIWDEC1q48>



Our guest speakers included:

- **Peter Samuel** – Nurse Midwife Technician at Nkhoma College of Nursing takes us through basic greetings in Chichewa at 5.26 minutes
- **Innocent Kwakwala** – BSc Palliative Care Nursing at Kamuzu University of Health Sciences tells us about his educational journey in Malawi at 14.29 minutes
- **Prosper Mtambo** – Pharmacy Assistant graduate of 2022 talks about her educational journey at 36.28 minutes
- **Kennedy Gama** – Dean of Students at Malawi College of Health Sciences, talks to us about the problems facing students at this college at 1 hr 36 seconds
- **William Stones** – Medic to Medic trustee shares with us about his relationship with Malawi and his work in Global Health at 1 hr 21 minutes

Our online Global Gathering takes place annually around November. Follow us on social media for future details.

Since our last newsletter:



8 new students supported

9 Equipment packs given

6 Tablets distributed



Guardian Visit Interviews

Over the last 2-3 months, we have developed a new step in the assessment of prospective students for Medic to Medic scholarships – guardian visits. Guardian visits enable us to meet the student's family, explore the student background in depth and explain to the family the scope of the scholarship with opportunities to answer questions. Those conducting guardian visits are our alumni community, enabling them to give back and provide feedback on our systems and processes.

"I volunteered to be part of the guardian visit interviewers because I saw an opportunity to be involved on a deeper level with Medic to Medic. I also saw an opportunity to appreciate on a personal and practical level the home situations of students who apply for scholarships. We underwent virtual training which among others was designed to share insights on some harmonized definitions of being a needy student, especially in the Malawian setting."

"The training was so rich as it provided a platform for the volunteers to share their experiences that were diverse. It was this diversity that exposed the volunteers to a wide range of perspectives and align us to a common understanding of the meaning of being needy. The training helped us also to create a guardian interview assessment form."

"The visits in a way accorded me an opportunity to view life with a different kind of lens. It has helped me to know a deeper context of the struggle that an average family has to go through in order to keep a child in school. The guardian visits I have carried out had pretty much the same presentation. Both families had humble homes. A simple look at the houses would obviously give anyone a picture of what the families are like. It was tempting to skip asking some questions because I already knew the answers, but I had to ask anyway. This speaks of the depth of the poverty some students endure in order to finish their studies and the high level of expectations awaiting them when they qualify."

By Maurice Mwehiwa

Medical Electives



Bosco & Kevin, elective students at St John's Hospital in Mzuzu giving donations to Dr Isaac, a Medic to Medic alumnus.

When you organise a Medical Elective through Medic to Medic, we organise your medical council registration, provide advice on donations of equipment and organise a project for you at your hospital site. There may also be opportunities to get involved in school talks and teaching at the colleges that we partner with AND with your elective fee, we are able to support one student in Malawi with a scholarship for one semester. These are just some of the ways our electives have a positive impact. Download our Elective Leaflet from the "Resources" section of our website to find out more!

Nominate us!



Wishing our friends and supporters a peaceful festive season!

Please nominate us to win £1,000 today!



Help us be in with a chance to win £1000 in unrestricted charity funds by nominating us via this link. Our charity number is 1149904.

<https://movementforgood.com/#nominateACharity>

Carol singing at Christmas

We're Carol Singing at Pimlico Tube station on the 9th and 16th December & at Trafalgar Square on the 13th December – would you like to join us? Get in touch – info@medictomedic.org.uk





Email: info@medictomedic.org.uk

For comments, questions and errata regarding this newsletter, please contact the editor at the email address above. Every effort has been made to credit contributors to this newsletter. Where omissions have occurred, please advise and they will be rectified at the earliest possible opportunity.



Medic to Medic



@MedictoMedic



tamsinlillie

www.medictomedic.org.uk

Registered UK Charity No. 1149904
NZ Charity No. CC58085. Malawi CONGOMA
registration No. C1609/2022

Medic to Medic was founded in 2007 to address the problems of training and retaining medical students in some of the world's poorest countries.

For our first country, we chose Malawi. Like so many sub-Saharan countries, Malawi is desperately short of doctors. It has just two doctors per 100 000 people. The UK has over 230 per 100 000.

Medic to Medic helps by supporting poor but bright students through medical school, who might otherwise drop out. We cover their tuition fees and give them allowances for equipment and books. We can link students to mentors, who provide holistic support.

Our scheme to support medical students has been so successful that we now also support physiotherapists, pharmacists, nurses, mental health workers, clinical officers, optometrists & audiologists in Malawi.

Most of our donors give just £5—20 per month. If you feel you can support a student, please visit www.medictomedic.org.uk to set up a direct debit online.

You will be linked with an individual student and receive regular updates from them on their progress. You are welcome to enter into email correspondence with them and many of our students find this very motivating. Please note that although you will be allocated a particular student, our donations are pooled so that no student is disadvantaged if a donor needs to withdraw.

Keep Updated!

Follow our blog to keep updated with our latest news and activities:
<https://healthprofessionalmalawi.wordpress.com/>



Listen to our Podcasts!
On Spotify: "Malawi Matters"
<https://anchor.fm/medic-to-medic>

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"I am excited to share that I am currently at Mzuzu Central Hospital for my third allocation, focusing on minor courses. This opportunity allows me to further hone my skills and make a meaningful contribution to the health and well-being of the community. The hands-on experience gained during these allocations is shaping me into a more competent and compassionate medical professional.

"On a personal note, I come from a family of five children, and tragically, my parents passed away some years ago. Since then, I have taken on the responsibility providing basic resources for my family. The Medic to Medic scholarship has not only supported my academic journey but has also played a crucial role in sustaining my family during challenging times.

"Once again, thank you for being a pillar of support in my academic and personal journey. Your commitment to fostering the education and development of aspiring healthcare professionals is changing lives, and I am honoured to be a beneficiary of your generosity."

We couldn't do this without you. Thank you for supporting us.



Recycle old coins & bank notes of any currency, stamps, jewellery (including damaged and costume jewellery), mobile phones, cameras and gadgets and raise vital funds for us! We can send you a postage label! It's simple!

Shopping online? Register with easyfundraising.co.uk. For every online purchase, the retailer will give a small donation to your chosen charity at no extra cost!



A travel company that lets you donate a portion of your holiday price to the charity of your choice, completely free!



The free app that uses the latest technology to round up your total daily transactions to donate to a charity of your choice.