

The School of Pharmacy started in 1974 as a Department within the Faculty of Medicine, this was in response to a presidential decree instructing immediate establishment of a department of pharmacy whose mission would be to train pharmacists at undergraduate and Postgraduate levels. This was necessitated by the realization that Kenya needed to upgrade her Pharmaceutical education and services to international standards. Before then, all Kenyan pharmacists were trained outside the country. This training approach did not allow for training of adequate number of pharmacists to meet our national pharmaceutical healthcare manpower demands in the public and private sectors. Thus, pharmaceutical services were run mainly by semi-skilled personnel and foreigners.

The Department was initially located at the Chiromo Campus and was subsequently relocated to the Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) campus in 1976. In 1988, it was given additional space in old KNH (formally King George Hospital) wards to accommodate offices and laboratories and this still remains the physical location to date. The location of the School of Pharmacy within the Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) complex provides a favourable environment for training, research and practice in Pharmacy, due to the wide variety of challenging health issues by virtue of the referral status of the Hospital. Additionally, the presence of all cadres of health professionals provides an ideal environment for team training and working as recommended by the World Health Organization.

Special thanks to Professor Kihumbu Thairu, the then Dean Faculty of Medicine, among others, who were able to recruit a core of local staff headed by Professor Charles K. Maitai who together with a complement of expatriates were able to run and develop the Department.

The growth of the department continued to be focused and steady in terms of staff recruitment and skills development, student enrollment numbers, scope of research and innovation and community service activities.

#### Previous Chairmen of the Department of Pharmacy

1. Professor Charles Maitai
2. Professor Muriuki Gichuru
3. Dr. John Ogeto
4. Professor Anastasia Guantai

The need to upgrade the Department into a Faculty status was raised as early as 17th October 1983 when the first meeting on this issue was held between the staff and the Dean of Medicine, Prof. Nimrod Bwibo. This dream was realised twelve years later, thanks to the efforts of Prof. A. N Guantai the then chairman of the department. On the 3rd of July 1995 the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Francis Gichaga launched the Faculty of Pharmacy with three constituent departments,

- Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry founding chairman Prof. Isaac.O. Kibwage
- Department of Pharmaceutics and Pharmacy Practice founding Chairman Prof. Gilbert O. Kokwaro
- Department of Pharmacology and Pharmacognosy founding Chairman Prof. Julius Mwangi

The founding Dean was Prof. Anastasia N. Guantai.

In the year 2006, during the rationalization of University functions, the faculty was re-categorized as a school with an elected dean as its administrative and academic head. The school retained its departments.

The first batch of 28 students was admitted on 30th September 1974 to pursue a four year Bachelor of Pharmacy (B. Pharm.) degree of the University. Between 1974 and 1997 the student annual intake for the Bachelor of Pharmacy programme ranged from 20 – 40. These were government sponsored students (Module I). With the introduction of the private sponsored programme (Module II) in 1998 the numbers increased to double with the 2011/2012 intake standing at 106 students. To date the School of pharmacy has trained a total of **1097 Pharmacists** at 1<sup>st</sup> degree level and **41 specialists** at postgraduate level.

Perhaps one measure of success of the School of Pharmacy is contribution to capacity building in teaching, research and service both for public and private sectors whereby over three quarters of the personnel are our former graduates. Currently the School graduates about 70 Bachelor of Pharmacy students per year. In addition the School as six postgraduate programmes at masters level and PhD programme opportunities in all diverse areas of Pharmacy.

In addition to training and research, the school offers services through three specialised groups;

- a) Drug Analysis and Research Unit (General and Contract Analysis, Analytical method development, pharmaceutical quality assurance and good manufacturing practices)
- b) Mitishamba Drug Research Centre (Toxicology of, and herbal medicines development)
- c) Pharmacy practice Centre (General community pharmaceutical care)

The current physical facilities for the School of Pharmacy total to about 1975 M2. It is estimated that the school will in future expand to at least 5012 M2 in order to cope with increasing student population, and also be well equipped for competitive research and consultancy activities. The expansion project is underway to provide an ultra-modern customized facility that will cater for teaching, research and service the need of the school in this age.