

Rhon Phiri



Dental Surgery (BDS)

Prior to the start of the dental surgery course in 2019, there were just 36 registered dentists throughout Malawi, a country of 19 million people. There are now more trainee dentists in Malawi than qualified dentists, representing great hope for rectifying this situation and building capacity for oral health services.

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Background

Rhon is from the northern region of Malawi, Nkhata Bay. He was brought up by his mum following the death of his father in 2008. He is the last born in a family of 4 children. His older brother passed away when he was young. His mum runs a small-scale business selling ground nut flour which earns an income of approximately US\$1 – US\$5 per day and is used to sustain the family's basic needs. He has been able to pay for school fees and upkeep using the government loan. He will be required to pay this back following graduation with fluctuating interest rates. It is not always possible to receive a government loan and he is at risk of dropping out due to financial challenges.

School

In Malawi, primary education is free and lasts 8 years. Secondary education lasts 4 years and is not free. Rhon attended a government secondary school where his fees were affordable. He achieved **10 points** in the Malawi School Certificate (MSCE). In Malawi, student points are calculated by adding the 6 highest subject points together. The better you do, the lower the score; 1-2 points = distinction; 3-4 points = credit; 5-6 points = pass. Rhon did extremely well to achieve **10 points!**

Why Dental Surgery?

"To be part of a team involved in making the healing process of patients as smooth as possible providing health services that are otherwise inaccessible to most of the people in most of the country. I am very much interested in cleft lip and palate surgery since these kinds of services are not accessible by poor Malawians due to lack of equipment and qualified personnel."

THANK YOU for supporting Rhon with his education to become a dentist!