

## **Background:**

Preterm birth complications remain the leading cause of death among children less than 5 years of age, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). In Tanzania, neonatal diseases is the leading cause of death, irrespective of age or gender. Each year, more Tanzanians die from neonatal diseases than HIV, tuberculosis, pneumonia, motor vehicle accidents, diabetes, stroke, cancer or even heart attacks.

## **ALMC Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU):**

Acknowledging the burden of neonatal deaths in Tanzania, the Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at ALMC is a 22-bed unit that is dedicated to providing care for critically-ill premature and term babies. With a full range of advanced newborn support and one nurse per 2-4 babies, the NICU is able to achieve a survival rate of >92%. Nearly 85% of their babies born <1500 grams survive through the basics of respiratory support (bubble CPAP) with pulmonary surfactant, thermoregulation and proper nutrition. This outcome represents the highest level of care available in Tanzania, and among the most advanced in East Africa.

The ALMC NICU provides a full range of advanced newborn support, including overhead warmers, temperature-regulated, humidified incubators, phototherapy lights and fiber optic blankets (“Biliblankets”) for treating neonatal jaundice, respiratory support (continuous positive airway pressure and oxygen blenders), pulmonary surfactant, cardiorespiratory monitors, umbilical venous catheters, advances in bedside laboratory tests (blood gases, chemistries, CRP), improved nutrition support, and a wide array of neonatal medications.

### **Hospitalization in the NICU includes:**

1. Admission and exam by a pediatric registrar physician, NICU nurse, and consultant specialist.
2. Around the clock monitoring by NICU staff who are present 24 hours a day.
3. Laboratory, imaging, and technological support, including point of care laboratory testing.
4. Each mother is provided with a bed with meals in the hospital, for round the clock availability to the NICU.

## **ALMC NICU Videos:**

**Every Baby Counts, No Matter How Small** <https://vimeo.com/393643562>

The story of one NICU in Tanzania, making a difference in premature and critically ill babies.

**Every Breath Counts, Every Mother Counts** <https://vimeo.com/377935597>

The story of a little baby surviving in Tanzania, with the help of her mother and the NICU team at Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre.

**Every Breath Counts: ALMC NICU** <https://vimeo.com/247674958>

**Tiny Miracles** <https://vimeo.com/307454797>