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Swaziland: A Journey into Culture and Health Care

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Swaziland: A Journey into Culture and Health Care

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Global Health

- Better understand pediatric health around the world
- Appreciate different practices in health care
- Appreciate how to practice health care in low resource settings
- Gain understanding of how culture influences medicine in a different country
- Better understand HIV and how it is managed in a different country



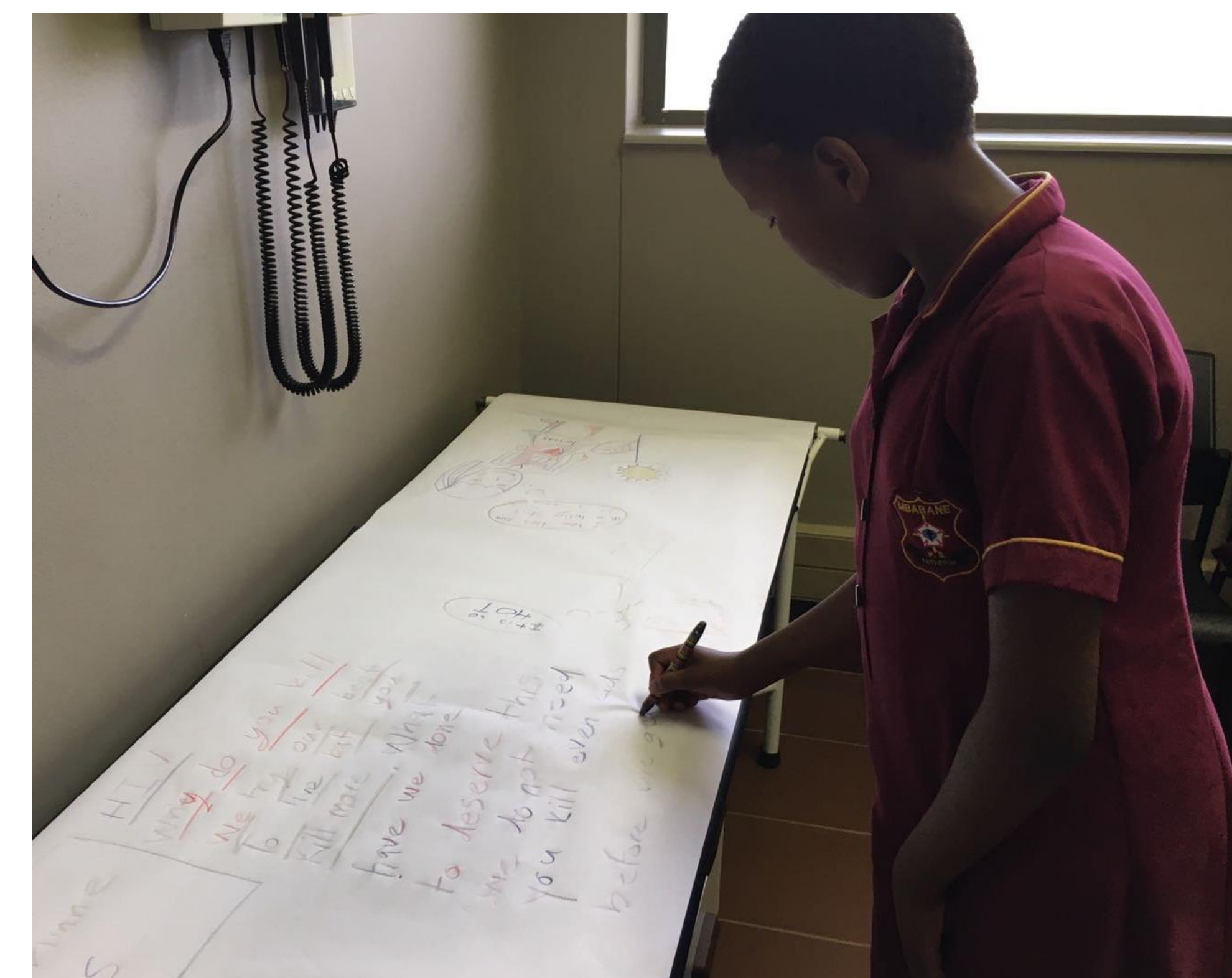
BIPAI Clinics

- Baylor International Pediatrics AIDS Initiative at Texas Children's Hospital
- Location: Mbabane with 3 satellites
- TB screening and treatment; HIV and AIDS treatment and care; child and adolescent health care; maternal health care
- The largest pediatric antiretroviral provider for children with HIV in Swaziland
- Lead partner with the Swaziland Ministry of Health in country-wide HIV early infant diagnosis program
- In 2010, established adolescent support groups or Teen Clubs to provide fun educational activities to empower HIV-positive teens
- *BIPAI clinics pictured above and group of BIPAI doctors pictured below*



Swaziland

- Landlocked country located in Southern Africa with diverse topography
- Speak language of Siswati, but most speak English
- Ruled by King Mswati III who appoints prime ministers
- Highest HIV infection rate in the world and lowest estimated life expectancy
- Many practice polygamy
- Developing country with small economy



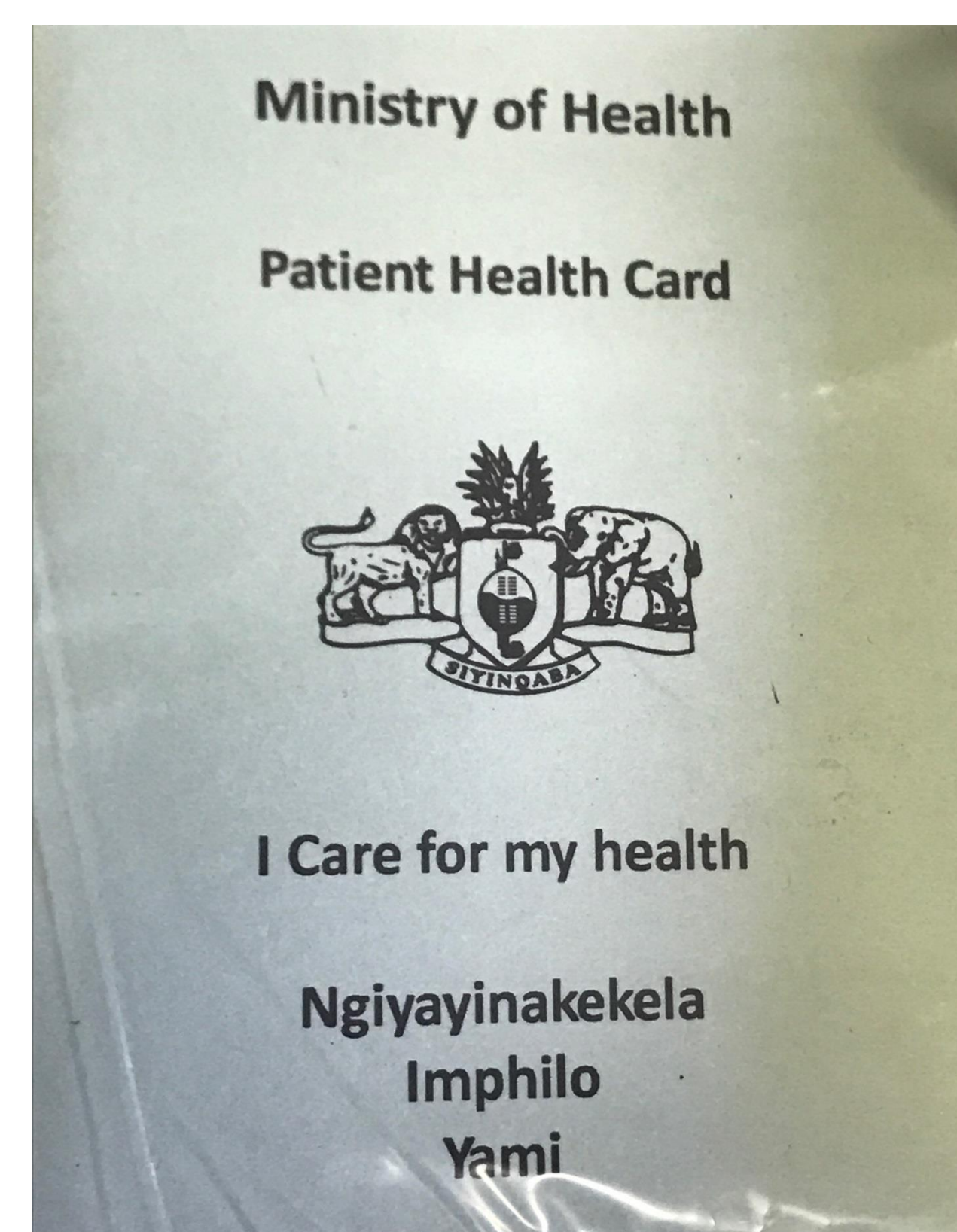
African Adventures

- Swaziland offers a rich African culture with native food such as pap or a maize based porridge as pictured below
- Bordered by South Africa and Mozambique
- South African Safari adventures in Kruger National Park with sightings such as a group of male lions as pictured above and riding in Safari vehicle to the right



HIV in Swaziland

- In 2015, almost 30% of adult population with HIV and 67% of adults on antiretroviral therapy (ART)
- Cultural stigma: many will keep HIV status a secret even from sexual partners
- Patriarchy and polygamy: Men often dictate women's reproductive and sexual health
- Heterosexual sex accounts for 94% of transmission
- Initiatives for better HIV testing and preventing mother to child transmission
- Free antiretroviral treatment since 2003
- *HIV handbook pictured to the left where patients would record health visits and keep track of ART therapy*



Reflection/Return Appreciation

- Gained insight into how cultural practices influence health care and chronic diseases
- Realized the importance of policy and advocacy as a nation to make long term changes in health care
- Learned the barriers of working in a low resource clinic and working to problem solve with available tools
- Plan to work as an advocate for the underserved children of Kansas City on an individual level as well as a national level

