The caregiving paradox

The most humane of sentiments, to grieve and hold the just-deceased, is how the Ebola virus spreads to next of kin and friends.
The caregiving paradox: “Kinsfolk, Do not touch the body of the sick who have Ebola”
Isolation compound for Ebola suspects, Yambia, S. Sudan

The isolation ward housed up to eight patients at any one time. Over the course of the outbreak, more than 25 people were cared for in the ward by around 15 medical staff. A low perimeter fence allowed the patients to see and talk to their family and friends from a safe distance.
Care-giving: the spouse holds hand of her husband while orthopedist sets the fracture and massages muscles. Husband is a palm nut cutter and wine tapper whose security belt broke and he fell 30 feet to the ground, sustaining triple fractures.
Therapy management—
with healer Madeko
Resources, choice, and efficacy in therapy management

Who makes decisions in Central African healthcare seeking? Often it is the family and kin of the sufferer, the “therapy managers” or “therapy managing group.” Here, at Kimpese Hospital in Lower Congo, they are gathered in the hospital grounds with provisions for their kin-patients in the wards.
The family of this man with an injured foot has come to be with him at the hospital. They have brought food and drink to share with him.
Therapy management in Lower Congo--Mangembo market

A large market near the hospital offers food, clothes, and other goods need by kin therapy managers for their brother, sister, father or mother who is a patient in the hospital.
Kin care alongside Hospital Nursing
Nursing care, Well-baby clinic
Caregiving and Therapy Management in “A History of Madness”
The case of Nzita Ann, urban mother/ wife: Onset of problems

Chapter 5: Nzita’s case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. July 1968</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abdominal pain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treatment in Kinshasa dispensary</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. September 2, 1968</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Odd behavior (e.g., inability to prepare meal, continual calling cry) ***</td>
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<td>&quot;too many ideas&quot; (not serious)</td>
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<td>Consultation with prophet Kuniema Jacques (no improvement)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>&quot;too many ideas&quot;</td>
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<td>(not serious)</td>
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<td>Herbal treatment from nganga (no improvement)</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Odd behavior, (e.g., burning clothes) ***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thinking too much</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insomnia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anorexia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treatment at medical dispensary in Kinshasa with intravenous injection (improved)</td>
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</table>
More troubles for Nzita

CHAPTER 5 (Continued)

5. December 30, 1968
- odd behavior
  ***
- anorexia
  (refusal to eat for 4 days)
  ***
- insomnolent nights
- treatment at medical dispensary in Kinshasa, intravenous infusion (improved)

6. Late January 1969
- odd behavior
  (e.g., refusal to make bed)
- return to village with husband

7. Late January—February 7, 1969
- odd behavior
  ***
- concern for maternal aunt’s health
- maternal clan meeting

8. February 9, 1969
- odd behavior
- sporadic recognition of close kin
  ***
- young man in family “playing with a fetish”
- prophetess Mama Marie consulted; clan reunion recommended
Nzita’s split therapy managing group

- odd behavior
  ***
- young man
  “playing with fetish”
- reunion of clan;
  confession of
  kin to patient;
  letter written to
  Kinshasa kin
  (decision to consult
  “fétiqueur”)
  ***
  Pastor in
  family dissents—
  recommends
  hospitalization

10. February 10, 1969
- odd behavior
  ***
- madness
  (lauka)
- Bilumbu
  consulted;
  medication
  until the 20th

- odd behavior
  ***
- unconsciousness
  ***
- Suspicion
  of meningal
  inflammation
  (unconfirmed)
  admission and
  observation in
  Nsundi dispensary;
  lumbar
  puncture (negative)
  and general exami-
  nation
  ***
  continues to
  take Bilumbu’s
cure in hospital

12. March 2–6, 1969
- odd behavior
  ***
- “head turned”
  because of
  “eye worms”
  ***
- clan problems
  
- four separate
  séances of
  nsamba cuts,
  herbal wash and
  drink
Who makes the therapeutic choices in Nzita’s case?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision-Makers</th>
<th>Episode</th>
<th>Case</th>
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Note: 'x' indicates involvement, '?' indicates uncertainty.
Therapy management: Simple combinations of persons, roles, and relationships

1. Self-treatment

2. Dyadic formation of group: sufferer and kinsmen

3. Kinsmen and specialist

4. Sufferer and specialist

5. Sufferer, kinsmen, and specialist

6. Sufferer and kinship factions
Therapy management: Complex combinations of persons, roles, and relationships

7. Sufferer, kinship factions, and specialist

8. Complex formation of therapy managing group: sufferer, kinship factions, non-kin factions, and specialist

a sufferer  
b kinsmen  
b₁ b₂ kinship factions  
c specialist or professional  
d non-kin  
d₁ d₂ non-kin factions
Infirmier graduates, Lower Congo Swedish Covenant Mission, with Dr. Mattsen, 1930s-40s
Midwife Aides, Kibunzi Swedish Covenant Mission, Lower Congo
Therapy management—
to diviner Mama Marie
Therapy management—the interclan reunion
The Kin group meeting episodes marked with an asterisk indicate that the kin groups sought the assistance of a inspirational diviner or *ngunza* to sort out the issues and to determine the appropriate next step.
# Kongo healers' roles & therapies

| Roles                          | Pills | Hospitalization | Injection | Rehospitalization after interruption | Surgical procedures | X-ray | Plants on skin | Minsamba cuts in skin | Plant medication by mouth | Charm prepared | Referral to hospital | Plant cure, unspecified | Referral to settle conflict | Cupping horn | Singing, chants (liturgy) | Advice | Examination of maternal kin | Examination of kin, unspecified | Examination, unspecified | Retreat | Confession of kin to sufferer | Confession of sufferer to kin | Prayer | Prospective or actual move | Dream analysis | Holy water by mouth | Blessing | Payment refused | Referral to nganga | Examination of paternal kinship | Ritual bath | Anointing of oil | Laying on of hands | Payment | Return to village | Confession of third party | Confession of non-kin |
|-------------------------------|-------|----------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|-------|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|--------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Hospital                      | 6     | 6              |           |                                     |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
| Dispensary                    | 7     | 7              | 4         | 2                                   |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
| Village Nurse                 |       |                |           |                                     |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
| *Nganga mbuki*                |       |                |           |                                     |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
| *Nganga bilau*                |       |                |           |                                     |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
| *Nganga nkisi*                |       |                |           |                                     |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
| Prophet (*ngunza*)            |       |                |           |                                     |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
| Prophet with Interclan        |       |                |           |                                     |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
| Prophet with Intraclan        |       |                |           |                                     |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
| Prophet with Nuclear Family   |       |                |           |                                     |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
| Interclan reunion             |       |                |           |                                     |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
| Intraclan reunion             |       |                |           |                                     |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
| Nuclear family (F)            |       |                |           |                                     |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
| Non-kin (friends, neighbors,  |       |                |           |                                     |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
| job peers, etc.)              |       |                |           |                                     |                     |       |                |                       |                          |                |                     |                             |                                 |             |                             |        |                          |                          |                      |              |                             |                          |                 |                 |                   |         |                |                  |                  |
Nurse as Lineage Headman
Nurse in Politics:

Head nurse at local Mission Dispensary (left) demonstrates oratorical and power-charm talents in closing moments of huge conflict settlement between two clans.
“The Nurse,”
Kalela Dance,
Zambia:
Guardian of
Hygiene; Witch
finder;