

Millennium Cities Initiative

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MILLENNIUM CITY STORY: SUCCESSES IN HEALTH

Kumasi Area Medical Professionals Learn to Conduct Obstetric Ultrasound, Dramatically Improving Maternal and Neonatal Care



Patients look forward to receiving ultrasound scans at Kumasi's Suntreso Hospital.



ISUOG's Professor Ann Tabor teaches Kumasi medical professionals to use the ultrasound machines.



Dr. Christian Bamberg, an ISUOG volunteer, supervises Patricia, a professional at Manhyia Hospital while scanning an expectant mother.



Dr. Nayana Parange of ISUOG works with a medical professional at Kumasi's Maternal and Child Health Hospital to scan an expectant mother.

OVERVIEW

The UK-based International Society for Ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynecology (ISUOG), which trains professionals in the use of life-saving ultrasound technology, has partnered with the Millennium Cities Initiative to further maternal and child health in the Millennium City of Kumasi, Ghana. Since 2010 ISUOG has conducted intensive annual trainings for doctors, midwives and nurses at three Kumasi hospitals, with hundreds of expectant mothers and other female patients benefiting from the screenings. A third level of training is scheduled for late May 2012.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Maternal and infant mortality rates remain dangerously high throughout much of sub-Saharan Africa and in many of the Millennium Cities. Obstetric ultrasound, which can be used to detect at-risk pregnancies and identify the need for additional care, can help reduce maternal and infant mortality rates.

In Ghana, pregnant women are actually covered for two scans through the National Health Insurance Scheme, yet many Ghanaian medical facilities lack professionals trained in the use of ultrasound technology. ISUOG has endeavored to change this by training medical professionals to operate three state-of-the-art ultrasound machines, generously donated by Siemens as part of this partnership.

ACTIONS TAKEN

ISUOG held its first ultrasound training in September 2010 at Kumasi's Suntreso Hospital, the site of one of two Israeli-built neonatal units and a venue for MCI's neonatal resuscitation training program, sponsored by Johnson & Johnson, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the non-profit AmeriCares. Medical professionals were taught to conduct ultrasound in the first and second trimesters of pregnancy, ultrasound of the uterus and ovary and ultrasound during labor, as well as how to detect the placenta and measure the amniotic fluid.

In May 2011, ISUOG sent a team of six professionals to work with many of the same doctors, nurses and midwives. The first day of this training, held at Kumasi South Hospital, the site of the other Israeli-built neonatal unit, featured live demonstrations focused on a handful of obstetric cases. On the second and third day of training, the trainers split up, covering Manhyia District Hospital, Maternal and Child Health Hospital and Suntreso Hospital. These days were filled with hands-on instruction – from administrative tasks, such as entering patient information into the machines and writing follow-on reports, to conducting basic scans. The ISUOG trainers taught their trainees to focus on typical measurements such as vitality, presentation, amniotic fluid levels, placental location and biometry. Together, the ISUOG team and the trainees were able to detect cases of uterine myoma, premature ovarian failure, intrauterine growth restriction and other conditions requiring specialized care.

RESULTS ACHIEVED

Hundreds of women and expectant mothers have already been screened in the course of the ISUOG trainings, and several of these screenings have resulted in the detection of cases requiring further care, an important step toward ensuring that expectant mothers have a safe, healthy pregnancy and delivery. MCI, ISUOG, and our local partners, the Kumasi Metro Health Directorate, Ghana Health Services and Ministry of Health, firmly believe in the importance of these potentially life-saving ultrasound trainings. MCI is deeply grateful to ISUOG for its efforts and we look forward to the team's next trip.