



**MENTAL HEALTH
FOUNDATION OF GHANA**

Mental Health & Well-Being Foundation

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER 2017

Preface

This is the third newsletter since the name change of the foundation from the Mental Health Foundation of Ghana to the Mental Health and Well Being Foundation. It is one of the many initiatives in co-branding and consolidation of the Foundation in 2016 and 2017 since our last conference in Cape coast in 2016 and ahead of our forthcoming conference in 2018..

The first of the post name change newsletters covered our third mental health and well being conference at the University of Cape Coast on 18 – 19 October under the theme Dignity in Mental Health, Psychological and Mental Health First Aid for All.

The second newsletter reported on suicide prevention skills training that MHWF offered in Greater Accra, Ashanti and Volta regions in April 2017. This was in response to an alarming spate of youth suicides in Ghana, which necessitated our training of individuals on intake and triage and practical ways of dealing with suicide and suicide prevention.

In this newsletter we take the opportunity to announce major core activities since the last newsletter; our forthcoming conference next year at KNUST, Kumasi; coming events in Melbourne and update on PhD scholarships in mental health research in Australia.

We thank our sponsors and all those who have donated time and resources in sustaining the high profile of mental health promotion of the foundation

President

Francis Acquah, etc.

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MHWF 2018 Conference

We are pleased to announce that the **4th Mental Health and Well-being Conference of Ghana** will be held in **October 2018** at **Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST)**, Accra Road Kumasi – Ghana

Our Keynote Speaker for 2018 Conference

Professor Thaddeus Ulzen MD

*Professor and Chair, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Medicine at University of Alabama
University of Alabama, College of Community Health Sciences University of Toronto*

Thaddeus P. Ulzen, MD, FRCP(C), DFAPA, is Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine at The University of Alabama College of Community Health Sciences. He is also associate dean for Academic Affairs for the College. Ulzen is a physician with special interest in child and adolescent psychiatry and has more than 30 years of experience. In 2002 Ulzen was awarded the Nancy C. A. Roeske Certificate of Excellence in Medical Education by the American Psychiatric Association. In 2007, he was the recipient of the Yale/John & Johnson Physician Scholar in International Health Award. From 2007 to 2008, he served as president of the Ghana Physicians and Surgeons Foundation of North America.international school.

The interactive workshops included small group discussions and the opportunity for participants to develop their own personal Wellness and Recovery Action Plans. Ulzen earned his medical degree from the University of Ghana Medical School. He completed residency training at the University of Toronto.

He is board certified in psychiatry by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. He is a visiting scholar at the University of Ghana Medical School and holds a faculty appointment at the University of Toronto. His academic interests include disruptive behaviour disorders, incarcerated adolescents, paranoid spectrum disorders, mental retardation and mental health consultation to primary care physicians and underserved geographical areas and the use of telemedicine in education and clinical service.



Our Conference Venue

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology



Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) is a university in Kumasi, Ashanti, Ghana. The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology is the public university established in the country, as well as the largest university in Kumasi Metropolis and Ashanti.

More details on our website soon

–www.mhwhf.co.uk

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send email to info@mhfgh.org

World Suicide Prevention Day Activities Sept-Nov 2017

To mark the world Suicide Prevention Day held on the 10th of September each year, the Centre for Suicide and Violence Research (CSVr) University of Ghana in collaboration with Mental Health and Well-being Foundation (MHWF) has outlined the following activities on the theme: take a minute, change a life, let's talk suicide out of Ghana



Activity Line-Up

ITEM	DATE	TARGET GROUP
Training and sensitization of traditional leaders	Sept 5	Queen Mothers in the Greater Accra Region
Community Interaction, Drama and Education on Suicide	Sept 9	DANFA Community
Training and Sensitization on Suicide and Mental Health	Sept 15	Religious Leaders: pastors, lay leaders, chaplains & counsellors
Media Engagement on Mental Health & Suicide Prevention	Sept 29	Broadcasters, Health Journalists, Story Writers and Editors
Re-training Police officers on Mental Health & Suicide prevention.	Oct 9	Personnel from DOVVSU, Crime Scene, Community Policing staff
De-escalation training	Nov 2017	To be led by Mr Kofi Mensah Morrison, Registered Mental Health Nurse in North East London Foundation Mental Health Trust.

Coming Events Melbourne Australia Mental Health and Well-being Suicide Prevention Fundraising Lunch

Raising funds for suicide prevention initiatives in Ghana West Africa

Date: Saturday 16th September 2017, 1.00 pm – 3.30 pm

“Smorgasbord African inspired lunch \$40 per person”

Venue: Location Polepole 267 Little Collins Street,
Melbourne, Vic 3000

To book: Visit Eventbrite.com.au

Our kind sponsors are:



Ph: (03) 9422 5439

President's Diary

12 and 13 May	Attend and presented a paper at the 10th Primary Mental Health Care Conference 2017, Canberra Rex Hotel, Canberra ACT.
19 June 2017	Attended ACMHN Victoria Branch - Victorian Branch
29 June 2017	Attended Mental Health Professionals' Network Epping Network Meeting
8 and 9 September	Francis is attending Singapore Mental Health Conference on The Art & Science of Wellbeing and Happiness at Max Atria, Singapore Expo
10 and 11 March 2018	Francis and Ms Patience Agyae have been invited to attend and present papers at the 4th Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Conference which is being held in London United Kingdom

Recent Publications of Foundation members and associates:

1. A Case Control Study of Subjective Quality of Life in Outpatients with Depression. Open Journal of Psychiatry, 2017, 7, 248-260.

Authors: Francis John Davou, Moses David Audu, Akinwande O. Akinhanmi, Musa Usman Umar, Tungchama Friday Philip, Maigari Yusufu Taru, Aishatu Armiya'u Yushau*.

**Director of the Mental Health and Well-being Foundation was awarded Fellow of the National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria, Faculty of Psychiatry.*



Dr Aishatu Armiya'u Yushau in the Middle

2. Randomized controlled pilot trial of supportive text messages for patients with depression. BMC Psychiatry BMC series – open, inclusive and trusted, 201717:286. Authors: Vincent I. O. Agyapong, Michal Juhás, Arto Ohinmaa, Joy Omeje, Kelly Mrklas, Victoria Y. M. Suen, Serdar M. Dursun and Andrew J. Greenshaw.

Update on PhD scholarships in Mental-Health Research in Australia Report from the University of Newcastle Australia 30th August 2017

Progress

Kenneth, Winifred, Gordon, Jennifer and Lady Afia have all settled and are progressing with their study design (not Lady Afia as she is only 11 months and needs to do undergraduate studies first). All have started meeting with their supervisors and have also had exposure to a number of high level academics including Deputy Vice Chancellor, Professor Kevin Hall, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Faculty of Health and Medicine Laureate Professor John Atkin, Professor Shirley Randell (leading academic on women and leadership in developing countries) <http://www.leadershipforwomen.com.au> <http://shirleyrandell.com.au/> Professor Anne Henry University of the West of Scotland (only Gordon) <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk>

Conjoint Appointment Applications with UoN

Application for Conjoint positions with the Faculty of Health and Medicine have been forwarded to Professor Thaddeus Ulzen, Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama (external supervisor to Gordon); Dr Kwaku Poku Asante, Kintampo Health Research Centre (external supervisor to Ken). Others to be considered shortly.

Memorandums of Understanding (MOU)

MOUs have been drafted with the University of Ghana and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) Kumasi. Gordon is currently linking the MD (Doctor of Medicine) UoN with KNUST for future collaboration.

Planned Presentation for International Mental Health Day

Kenneth, Winifred, Gordon, Jennifer and Chris (hopefully also a representative for the Foundation) will be providing a presentation on Tuesday 10th October (International Mental Health Day) on Ghana, Culture and Mental Health Reform. This will be both a celebration of Ghanaian culture and the wonderful opportunity for our PhD students to influence real change at the highest levels back home. It will also highlight the wonderful relationship between the Foundation and the University of Newcastle Australia. The presentation will be facilitated in our world leading research centre the Hunter Medical Research Centre in Newcastle. <https://hmri.org.au/> Will forward flyers when developed

Hunter Institute of Mental Health

Visit planned on the 18th September to the Hunter Institute of Mental Health
The Hunter Institute is a leading national organisation reducing mental illness and suicide, and improving wellbeing. The Institute has been delivering successful, evidenced-based mental health and suicide prevention programs that have made a considerable contribution to the mental health and wellbeing of many Australians over the Past 25 years. <https://www.himh.org.au/>

Associate Professor Chris Kewley, Faculty of Health and Medicine, University of Newcastle Australia.

Profiles of PhD Scholarship Recipients

Advancing Mental Health in Ghana through Academic Excellency PHD Candidates in Australia Universities studying in the area of Mental Health in Collaboration with the Mental Health and Well-being Foundation.

Ms Winifred Asare-Doku



Winifred holds a B.A. degree (Psychology with Philosophy) and MPhil in Clinical Psychology from the University of Ghana. She was, until recently, a Graduate Assistant in the Department of Psychology, University of Ghana where she was involved in faculty research and teaching. Currently, Winifred is studying PhD Psychiatry in the School of Medicine and Public Health, University of Newcastle, Australia. Her research interests focus on mental health, suicide, forensic psychology/psychiatry, and workplace programs.

Winifred believes that although Ghana has formulated very fine mental health policies, there have been some inertia on the part of governments in the implementation of policies to improve the psychological wellbeing of citizens and removing barriers towards accessing mental health care due to, stigma and discrimination. She asserts that Ghana's mental health landscape needs a lot of public mental health education to reduce stigma and also improve government's commitment in the area of funding and training in scaling up mental health services in the country.

Winifred is a member of Ghana Association for Suicide Prevention, Ghana Psychological Association and a research fellow of the Centre for Suicide and Violence Research, Ghana.

Dr Gordon M Donnir



Gordon is a medical graduate of the School of Medical Sciences, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana, where he obtained BSc in Human Biology and subsequently MBChB. He further trained and specialised as a psychiatrist with the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons Faculty of Psychiatry. He holds a Master of Business Administration from the China Europe International Business School. Until enrolling in a PhD Psychiatry program with the University of Newcastle, Australia, Gordon practiced in Ghana as a General Psychiatrist & Head of Department for the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital, Department of Psychiatry. He was instrumental in setting up, designing and implementing a psychiatry residency program for the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons.

He is an adjunct faculty member at his alma mater, the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology School of Medical Sciences, Kumasi, Ghana and a part-time lecturer with the School of Medical Sciences, University of Cape Coast, Ghana. He has taught alongside professors and psychiatrists from Harvard University, University of Alabama, and the Maudsley UK and fostered the training of residents from Ghana with institutions like Massachusetts General Hospital Psychiatry Residency Program (Harvard University) and Boston University Global Mental Health Division.

Gordon is a passionate and committed mental health educator in the area of establishing and maintaining Global Mental Health Training Programs in low-resource countries. His contribution to knowledge includes co-authoring a book chapter "Psychotherapy in Indigenous Context: A Ghanaian Contribution Towards Provision of Culturally Competent Care" in the "Handbook of Research on Theoretical Perspectives on Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Developing Countries". He also authored a handbook for first-line middle level mental health professionals, "Handbook for Primary Mental Healthcare: A Practical Guide" and has been involved in a number of completed and ongoing research projects. His current research and the focus of his PhD is looking to answer the question "how does the criminal justice and penitential systems recognise mental health disorders/challenges as integral component of some criminal behaviours in the delivery of justice and how does the system deal with this?". This seeks to help develop a model for establishing a forensic mental health system to support the criminal justice system in Ghana.

Gordon volunteers his time, skills and knowledge as a consultant and facilitator in collaboration with mental health NGOs in running outreach clinics and training programs throughout Ghana. He is a member of the Ghana Psychiatric Association, Ghana Epilepsy Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the World Federation for Mental Health, the Mental Health and Well-Being Foundation of Ghana and the World Psychiatric Association.

Mr Kenneth Ayuurebobi Ae-Ngibise



Kenneth is a research scientist with training in the Social Sciences, specifically a Bachelor Degree in Educational Psychology and an MSc in Population Based Field Epidemiology from the University of Cape Coast, Ghana and the University of The Witwatersrand, South Africa respectively. He is now a PhD Candidate (Psychiatry), at the University of Newcastle, Australia.

Kenneth has been working with the Kintampo Health Research Centre (KHRC) since 2006 as a Research Officer and later a Principal Research Fellow researching extensively into mental health and mental illness.

Previously, Kenneth was part of the field team that researched into the risk factors for schizophrenia, a case-control study in the catchments area of KHRC. He also worked on a research consortium study entitled “Mental Health and Poverty Project” which investigated the links between mental ill-health and poverty across four African countries, Ghana, South Africa, Uganda and the Zambia. Kenneth also worked on a multi-centre study involving five Health and Demographic Surveillance System centres: Kilifi, Kenya; Agincourt, South Africa; Iganga-Mayuge, Uganda; Ifakara, Tanzania; and Kintampo, Ghana, investigating the prevalence, causes and treatment outcome of epilepsy in sub-Saharan Africa. He was the principal investigator in a study assessing the level of burden experienced by caregivers of people living with mental disorders in the Kintampo municipality, Ghana. He also worked on a randomized Control trial aimed at testing the effectiveness of improved cook stoves (BioLite and Liquefied Petroleum Gas) introduced during early pregnancy to improve birth weight and reduce pneumonia in the first year of life. This study is a collaboration between KHRC in Ghana and Columbia University in the USA.

Kenneth has been actively involved in the publication of twenty academic papers (six as primary author and rest as co-author) in reputable peer reviewed journals. He has over the years contributed to the preparation of successful grant applications and small research projects at KHRC.

Kenneth’s current PhD research focuses on the implementation of the New Mental Health Act in Ghana. He will be specifically researching into the potential barriers and enablers of implementation of the Act in the Kintampo North Municipality within the Middle Belt of Ghana.

DONATIONS are always welcome at www.mhfg.org

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Mr Yaw Amankwa Arthur



Yaw is a professional teacher with experience spanning over eighteen years. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology, a Masters degree in project management and is in his second year of his PhD course researching into the mental health literacy levels of community leaders known as assembly members likened to councillors in Australia. He is a strong advocate for positive mental health attitudes and breaking down the stigma surrounding mental health disorders in Ghana and other countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Yaw’s PhD project entails engaging this group of community leaders in a mental health literacy program and evaluating the impact of this program on their knowledge about, and attitude towards mental disorders.

Ms Jennifer Peprah



Jennifer holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology and an MPHIL in Clinical Psychology. Until recently she was a lecturer with the Department of Psychology, University of Ghana. Her roles included research, teaching and supervision of undergraduate theses. She is currently a PhD student at the School of Medicine and Public Health, University of Newcastle, Australia.

Jennifer is motivated to making a change wherever the opportunity arises in mental health especially because it is a field that is still developing in Ghana. Her current research is in the area of suicide.

She is interested in suicide because even though the Ghanaian culture generally frowns on the act because of the beliefs about it and the stigma associated with it, it continues to be a problem and appears to be on an upward spiral. She strongly believes that mental health, even though an extremely important component when it comes to the overall health of an individual continues to be neglected and underdeveloped in Ghana. She feels it is time to do more culture specific research in the area to inform policy formation and to help reduce the stigma associated with the field.

Jennifer is a member of Ghana Psychological Association, Ghana Association for Suicide Prevention and a research fellow. She is involved in community service and voluntary work in the areas of rehabilitation for women with addiction problems and social skills training for street children, she is also a HIV/AIDS Pre-test and Post-test counsellor.

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