

## President's Summary

### MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING FOUNDATION ACTIVITIES 2021/2022



On February 12, 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) announced the official name for the novel Coronavirus disease as COVID-19. 19 signifies the year, 2019, the year it was identified.

The sudden change of the world began; we learnt a new language as terms such as 'pandemic', 'social distancing', 'isolation' and 'PPE' (personal protective equipment) became commonplace and a new way of staying safe emerged as we were advised to wash our hands, wear a facemask, use hand sanitizer, and stay at home. Countries closed their borders and even moving between the states and counties of your own country became outlawed.

Then on March 11, 2020, WHO declared a pandemic due to COVID-19 infections growing at a rapid rate and death rates increasing in unprecedented numbers. Offices, companies, schools, and activities such as attending church, mosques, weddings, and funerals had to stop with immediate effect.

However, throughout the complexities and challenges, the work of the Mental Health and Well-being Foundation has continued albeit at a lesser than desired pace and reach. In this report we showcase some of our major successes that, through the dedication, passion, and tenacity of our global family of volunteers have come to fruition. The achievements are tangible; they can be seen, felt and experienced. What is not so obvious is the long hours spent researching, planning, designing, negotiating, and liaising with multiple individuals, companies, and organisations to bring a project to completion. It's been a long, hard couple of years, and we have been unable to see each other, and we don't yet know how long this new normal will last. From the bottom of my heart, I respect and thank each person involved in the Foundation and wish you all safety and health year.

### CARE-P AND MHWBF JOINT ACTIVITIES

Refurbishment of the VIP Ward – Accra Psychiatric Hospital Ghana – West Africa  
Funding body: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australia Dr Francis Acquah, Associate Professor Chris Kewley, Dr Yaw Amankwa Arthur, Patience Agyae.

**Project completed**

#### ❖ Strengthening our relationship with CARE\_P @UON

- **ADF INFORMATION AND SUPPORT RESEARCH GRANT**
  - Led Dr Janet Dzator 9/6/2021 – **Unsuccessful application**
- **Project Sunrise – Project Sunrise seeks to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for young African people in Victoria.** Project Sunrise is an Alcohol and other Drugs Initiative funded by (VACAP) Victoria African Community Action Plan.

State of Victoria has funded this project. Substance use, including both alcohol and drug use, is identified globally as a key issue affecting youth populations. The African Australian Welfare Bureau Inc., Odyssey House Victoria, Youth Support & Advocacy Services (YSAS), and the Positive Mental Health Program (PMHP) are delivering a culturally strong, evidence-based, and innovative outreach service and education program, that is designed to deliver the objectives of the Victoria African Community Action Plan (VACAP).

CARE P to Evaluate the project, an offer of \$22,000 inc GST. Team: - Led Dr Winifred Asare -Doku, Dr Janet Dzator, Dr Gordon Donnir and Francis Acquah **in progress**

- **Paving the Way Project**

<b>Project title:</b>	Building and Construction Pathways Project
<b>Project location</b>	Braybrook, Victoria Australia
<b>Grant amount requested</b>	\$9,800*
<b>Anticipated start date:</b>	1/8/2021
<b>Anticipated end date:</b>	31/3/2022

\*Mental Health and Well-Being Foundation auspice the project. 15% of funding will go toward Foundation activities:

Our project is aimed at African youth from the Flemington and North Melbourne estates providing them with the opportunity to develop and attain the basic skills to enter the building and construction sector. The program is aimed at attracting twenty (20) youth from the above housing estates and provide them with the pathway possibilities to enter the building and construction sector in Victoria in a variety of roles including builders, carpenters, concreters and eventually Project Managers, Business owners and tradespeople. Led by Francis Acquah & Rohan Robinson:- **Project in progress.**

Alcohol and Drug Foundation – Local Drug Action Program

<b>LDAT name</b>	Northern LDAT
<b>CAP number</b>	00000472
<b>CAP name</b>	<b>Fundi Homework Club <a href="http://www.fundi.com.au">www.fundi.com.au</a></b>
<b>CAP amount</b>	\$23,292*
<b>Objective 1</b>	By June 2021 with the support of 4 African tutors and 10 volunteer teachers, the LDAT will create a safe online learning space for 30 African students between 5-18 years of age and their parents/carers over 40 weeks/4 terms in the aim of increasing feelings of connection and learning opportunities for program participants.

\*Mental Health and Well-Being Foundation auspice the project, 15% of funding for Foundation activities. Francis Acquah & Peter Uzande: **In progress**

**CALD communities impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic Phase 1.**

The Foundation received \$5,500.00 (including GST)

The Department is funding this activity to address immediate needs in CALD communities impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The CALD Communities Taskforce, through Multicultural Affairs at the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, is providing funding to enable multicultural organisation to partner with government to deliver

emergency relief and directly engage with communities impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Funding is to enable to multicultural organisations to support culturally and linguistically diverse (CALO) communities across Victoria who are currently impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The project as follows:

- **Mental Health and Socioeconomic Wellbeing of Africans in Australia (16/6/2021)**
  - Joint project with CARE\_P, Professor Vincent Agyapong (CD \$10,000) and the Foundation some initial funding from the Australia – Victoria State - \$5,500.

Led by Dr Winifred Asare Doku, team including Dr Janet Dzator, Francis Acquah, Dr Gordon Donnir, Prof Vincent Agyapong: - **In the process of analysing the data.**

### **CALD communities impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic Phase 2.**

Completed 28/07/2021

Received \$5,500.00 (including GST)

The Department is funding this activity to address immediate needs in CALD communities impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The CALD Communities Taskforce, through Multicultural Affairs at the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, is providing funding to enable multicultural organisation to partner with government to deliver emergency relief and directly engage with communities impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Funding is to enable to multicultural organisations to support culturally and linguistically diverse (CALO) communities across Victoria who are currently impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The project as follows, Food Items distributed to African Community members and mental health clients to support during COVID locked downs and provided education about how to seek mental health support.

**Project completed and acquitted.**

### **CALD communities impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic Phase 3.**

Completed 17 January 2022

Received \$11,000.00 (including GST)

The Department is funding this activity to address immediate needs in CALD communities impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The CALD Communities Taskforce, through Multicultural Affairs at the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, is providing funding to enable multicultural organisation to partner with government to deliver emergency relief and directly engage with communities impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Funding is to enable to multicultural organisations to support culturally and linguistically diverse (CALO) communities across Victoria who are currently impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The project as follows, Food Items distributed to African Community members and mental health clients to support during COVID locked downs and provided education about how to seek mental health support.

**Project completed and acquittal report sent.**

### **Research Project**

The Centre for African Research, Engagement and Partnerships (CARE-P) in partnership with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Mental Health and Well-Being Foundation for Ghana and the University of Health and Allied Sciences Ghana, built a 10-cubicle dry toilet block in the Schoon haven Cured Leper Village in Ho, Ghana West Africa.

The village is home to 150 residents and is devoid of sanitation. The project will be evaluated to examine the difference that having access to a toilet makes to the dignity, quality of life and personal comfort of the residents.

Bringing Sanitation to the Cured Lepers' Village HO, Ghana, West Africa

**Funding body:** Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Associate Professor Chris Kewley, Professor Mike Hazelton, Mr Kenneth Ae-Ngibise, Ms Winifred Asare-Doku, Dr Gina Teddy, Jennifer Appiah-Preprah, Mr Divine Kporha, Dr Aishatu Armiya'U and Francis Acquah.

**Acquisition of Land in Ghana: Dr Yaw Amankwa Arthur & Francis Acquah in progress**

## Publications Opportunities

Thanks to Professor Vincent Agyapong for the opportunity for the following publications

**Journal:** *Behavioral Sciences*

**Special Issue Title:** Humanitarian Emergencies- Anxiety, Depression and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

**Submission Deadline: July 30th 2021**

Asare-Doku W, Donnir GM, Ayuurebobi Ae-Ngibise K, Peprah J, Awuviry-Newton K, Acquah F,	'Psychiatric Disorders among the Military in West Africa: A Systematic Narrative Review.', Behav Sci (Basel), 11 (2021)	<b>Successfully published</b>
Ae-Ngibise KA, Asare-Doku W, Peprah J, Mujtaba MN, Nifasha D, Donnir GM,	'The mental health outcomes of food insecurity and insufficiency in west Africa: A systematic narrative review', Behavioral Sciences, 11 (2021)	<b>Successfully Published</b>
Dr Gordon Donnir, Winifred Asare-Doku, Kenneth Ae-Ngibise, Jennifer Peprah, & Dr Janet Dzator	Flooding: Anxiety, Depression and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder	<b>Unsuccessful</b>

**Text4HealthyAgeing:** *Implementing and institutionalizing an evidence-based text messaging intervention to support healthy urban ageing. \$6,000,000 Canadian implementation science grant. Led by Prof. Vincent Ayagpong – Unsuccessful*

Thank you to all who have contributed to the work of the Foundation over the past couple of years especially during these difficult times.

Francis Acquah  
17 February 2022