



**G.A.S Partnership**  
Collaborating for health in Northern Ghana

# **G.A.S. PARTNERSHIP**

## **NEWSLETTER**

**1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2011**

The G.A.S. Partnership is improving healthcare provision in the Upper East Region (UER) of Ghana primarily through strengthening manpower and promoting skill-sharing. The Partnership responds to need, complementing not replicating services already offered, enhancing the skills of the local medical professionals so they can make a lasting, sustainable impact on their region. 2011 has got off to a great start, and this newsletter hopes to show the fantastic achievements of the year so far.

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**We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who is involved in the Partnership- it would not work without everyone's commitment and support.**

### **SOME EXAMPLES OF THE IMPACT OF TRAINING IN GHANA**

***'With the updates in training and equipment, anaesthetic practices will improve tremendously'***

Feedback from WHO Oximeter workshop



***'The training has changed the way we do things...there's a lot of improvement from before'***

Ophelia (pictured), Midwifery Officer, Regional Hospital and AfriKids Medical Centre

***'Without Jane (Spring) or AfriKids I would have been a builder or a foreman'***

Abu, X ray technician, AfMC

***'Does the G.A.S. Partnership have a long term future?'***

***Oh Come on! Of course it does. Ask my colleagues in other hospitals- anyone. I am practicing what I learnt.'***

Harun, Anaesthetist, Bongo Hospital

# G.A.S. IN GHANA

## QUARTER 1 TRIPS



**Q1 saw 5 volunteers go to Ghana between the 25<sup>th</sup> February and 27<sup>th</sup> March:**

- Dr Ollie Ross (Consultant Anaesthetist) and Gary Crow (Senior Operating Theatre Practitioner)-Theatres and Anaesthetics
- Dr Mary Briley** and **Dr Catherine Grierson** (Consultant Radiologists)- Diagnostics
- Keith Dowell** (Director of Estates and Capital Development)- Estates

Highlights include:

- The delivery of Pulse Oximeters to the hospitals in the UER, kindly donated by the WHO Global Oximetry Initiative. This equipment had been previously identified as being urgently needed, therefore delivery and training on how to use it had a large impact. Through being able to monitor oxygen levels in the body, this will contribute to saving lives.
- Practical Continuous Professional Development workshops with hands on ultrasound training
- Demonstrating the importance of an estate strategy, site and infrastructure development and operational guidance when expanding the current facilities
- Agreeing and developing a formal anaesthesia refresher training course for the UER

They all worked extremely hard and are an example of the commitment the volunteers from Southampton make to the development of healthcare in the UER through the G.A.S. Partnership. Many positive outcomes were drawn from these visits, with over 179 people receiving direct training as a result of the trips.



1- A Ghanaian Medical Professional is shown how to use a Pulse Oximeter



2- Keith Dowell carrying out a workshop in the shell of the AfriKids x-ray room



3- Mary Briley carrying out teaching on ultra-sound scanning



4- Ollie Ross presenting Pulse Oximeters outside the AfriKids Medical Centre

# Case Study Report by AfriKids staff member, Liam Nolan

I've been with AfriKids in the fundraising team since 2008 and this year marked my third annual visit to Ghana and to AfriKids projects. With each visit it has been fascinating for me to see how fast things in Ghana can change and how much things have developed thanks in no small part to generous donors in the UK, and the hard work of volunteers and partnerships like G.A.S.

My first trip was back in April 2009 when I boarded the plane at Heathrow with an anxious Jane Spring; the radiographer from Southampton who was one of the first volunteers from what has since been formalised as the G.A.S. Partnership. Having helped source and ship a mobile x-ray machine to Ghana, Jane was on her way to begin training non-medical staff in how to use the equipment. In the stifling Bolgatanga heat, Jane started to teach the basics to eight volunteers with no prior knowledge or experience of radiology; no small task.

Two years later I found myself in the AfriKids Medical Centre talking to Abu Imoro (pictured) about how construction was going on the new X-ray Unit. Abu, along with his colleague Florence, was amongst the volunteers who started their training under Jane. Abu and Florence now run the hospital's x-ray services from a small room at the back of the centre. This is a temporary space for them as they wait for a new purpose built unit to be completed. For me, this X-ray unit is a very real example of the G.A.S. Partnership in action; sharing of equipment and skills for the benefit of thousands of patients each year.

Spending any time at the AfriKids Medical Centre, or visiting any of the Ghana Health Service run facilities that are a part of the partnership, it's not hard to see the other benefits being brought to the region. **I spoke with midwives who have changed the way they work thanks to knowledge gained from visiting partners from Southampton. I met an anaesthetist who feels a lot more confident in the wellbeing of his patients thanks to new basic equipment that is standard in the UK. I spoke to theatre nurses and doctors, all of whom have benefited from the partnership.**

Now that the partnership is officially one year-old, I for one am excited to see how things will develop in time. To see the very real change in the radiology department in just two years makes me wonder how things will improve and change in the other specialist areas under the scheme. Working in partnership, the three parties that make up G.A.S. are making a very real and tangible difference to the Upper East Region of Ghana and we're only just at the start of things. Who knows what else will be achieved by the time I make my next visit.



*Abu in his work as an x-ray technician, and in the new x-ray building for the AfriKids Medical Centre*

# G.A.S. IN THE UK FUNDRAISING NEWS



Since the official launch of the Partnership, huge fundraising efforts have been made. Here are some snippets from Philip Hancock's summary to the Fundraising Committee of how to take thing forward:

'The three main areas where we hope to raise fund going forward are from Grant Foundations, major fundraising events (June 17<sup>th</sup> Sunshine Ball at the RTYC in London and the Masked Ball at the DeVere Grand Hotel, Southampton on 28<sup>th</sup> October) and from individual fundraising efforts by the SUHT community.

We have had great support from the SUHT community especially from: Alice Dale, Ruth Finney, Sandy Wright, Sally Burton, Laura Godfrey, Birgitta Hancock, Jane Spring and Lena Samuels to name a few who have raised over £ 10,000 to date.

In the future we have a Bike Ride from Southampton to Brighton on the 28<sup>th</sup> May by Gareth Petty (BioMedical Scientist at the SUHT), Fun Run in May and Skydiving in June both organised by the SUHT Charity Division.

Thanks for all your help to date to you all on behalf of the people of the Upper East Region of Ghana!

## JUST GIVING

A Just Giving page has now been set up on behalf of the G.A.S. Partnership to make it easier to donate. It can be found here:

<http://www.justgiving.com/gas-partnership/>

Tell your friends and spread the word!

The G.A.S. Partnership's page

Target: £5,000.00  
Raised so far: £0.00

0%

Donate now

The G.A.S. Partnership is a tri-partite healthcare initiative between Ghana Health Services (GHS), AfriKids and Southampton University Hospitals' Trust (SUHT), working in the Upper East Region (UER) of Ghana.

This is an extremely poor region of one million people with healthcare indicators lagging behind the rest of Ghana. One in nine children currently die before their 5th birthday and there is only one doctor to 36,000 people. To put this into perspective, in the UK there is roughly 1 doctor for every 250 people. A huge problem is medical professionals' reluctance to work in the region which is far less developed than the rest of the country and where opportunities for professional development are extremely limited. The G.A.S. Partnership

Raising money for AfriKids  
Charity Registration No: 1093624

AfriKids  
AfriKids is a grass roots child rights organisation working to improve life for children in Ghana.

Read more

\* Total raised online: £0.00  
Offline donations: £0.00  
Gift Aid plus supplement: £0.00

## THE G.A.S. PARTNERSHIP SECURES A MAJOR GRANT!

We are delighted to announce that AfriKids have secured a grant from the Guernsey Overseas Aid Fund for their work in healthcare, £27,000 of which has been allocated to the G.A.S. Partnership. This money is going to be used for purchasing specialist equipment, a shipment of materials to Ghana and training related costs including funding flights for volunteers to enable more fantastic work to be carried out.

## SUNSHINE BALL

The Sunshine Ball on the 17<sup>th</sup> June is AfriKids' major fundraising event of the year for the G.A.S. Partnership, we look forward to seeing you all there!

**AFRIKIDS INVITES YOU TO  
THE SUNSHINE BALL**

The Royal Thames Yacht Club,  
60 Knightsbridge, London  
SW1X 7LF

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2011

7pm: Champagne reception  
8pm: Sit down dinner  
1am: Carriages

Entertainment: guest speakers, auction and live Band

Suggested donation - £125 per person/ £1,000 per table of ten  
\*We are aiming to ensure the entire event is fully sponsored meaning 100% of your donation will go directly to the G.A.S. Partnership and the AfriKids Medical Centre

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AfriKids  
Bringing My Smiles to Little Faces

G.A.S. Partnership

Dress code: Black tie