

IAD-USA INAUGURAL MEDICAL MISSION FOR AGULU, AUGUST 8, 2010

At the 2009 Institute for Agulu Development (IAD) convention in Atlanta, the General Assembly voted to launch a free Preventive Healthcare Program to assist our less fortunate brothers and sisters back home in Agulu. Consequently, the executives were mandated to put a program in place and execute a medical mission to Agulu before the 2010 convention. There and then, some healthcare professionals present at the convention were appointed, while few more others volunteered to join the healthcare planning committee headed by Dr. Fidel Unini. The committee was mandated to submit a comprehensive project roadmap to the executives in three months.

Although IAD had great confidence in the committee's ability to deliver, especially with the enthusiasm they held their first meeting at the convention lobby, but it was cautiously apprehensive. We realized the massive work ahead of them; because they were starting from the scratch. At the three month's deadline, and after about six teleconferences, a comprehensive program was submitted and explained to the executive and board in a power point presentation.

Without doubt, and with few questions, it was obvious that the committee exceeded our expectations. That committee was dissolved and another execution taskforce committee appointed by the executive to organize and execute a medical mission in line with the road map provided by the planning committee. To ensure that it did not deviate from the initial plan, Dr Unini was reappointed to head the second committee.

Slowly but steadily, the new committee started another marathon teleconference preparatory for the mission. The most important phases of the planning were funding to purchase the equipments to be used, as well as purchasing enough drugs needed for the project. With the hand of God and luck on our side, we were able to surmount all obstacles; thanks to redoubled efforts of most members. By the beginning of July, we became more hopeful, and so doubled our teleconference time to a weekly affair. At the end of July, teleconferencing became more sporadic, and at the same time our preparation code was changed from hopeful, to confident; and by the first of August, to enthusiastic.

In the midst of the whole planning we maintained constant contact with the Agulu Peoples Union (APU) President General and his executives, as well as the Healthcare Committee all of whom were very helpful. Coincidentally ASA-USA also chose Agulu as one of the towns for their 2010 medical Mission which followed on the heels of IAD mission two days after. Through the whole preparatory period, we relied on the home team for location readiness and publicity.

Today, we are happy to announce that the IAD Preventive Medical Mission launched August 8, 2010 was a huge success. Although we were not able to attend to everyone who came, but the exercise was one of fulfillment, and a learning experience. We promise to be more prepared in future missions; at the minimum we must ensure to attend to everyone who signed up no matter how long it takes. On this note we ask IAD

members to give themselves three hearty cheers. It would not have been possible without your resolve after many years of procrastination.

We, the executive, would like to use this opportunity to thank members of IAD Health Planning Committee - Fidelis Unini, MD. (Chairman); Josephine Anene, RN; Elizabeth Obi, RN; Chinwe Obi, RN; Oliver Obi, Pharm; and Emilia Ugwo-Muomegha (Secretary). Their planning roadmap was very instrumental to the success of our maiden mission. Most importantly, we also want to thank IAD members who volunteered their time and personally paid their air tickets and other expenses to participate in the medical mission. These members are: Dr. Fidelis Unini, Ms. Emilia Ugwo-Muomegha, Dr. Isaac Obi, Ms. Dorothy Aneto, Mr. Chike Aniukwu, and my humble self who tagged along. There is no way to thank these people enough judging from the crowd they attended at home.

At the same time, we must thank some home-based doctors Dr. Justus Ezeaso (Chair, Health Committee), Dr. Uboh, Dr. Onwuocha, and the ten doctors and nurses from Nnewi Teaching hospital. Dr. Emmanuel Muozoba who chauffeured us to and from Owerri airport was God-sent. He left his job at Nnewi Teaching Hospital to make himself available to all our needs. We would not have been able to achieve much without his help. Our two volunteer Pharmacists, Mr. Sunny Obi of UNTH Enugu, and Mr. Cletus Ibeh of private practice, Nnewi, were exceptional and particularly very calm in the face of near provocations at the prescription dispensation table. Along with these medical staff were the students of Obosi School of Pharmaceutical Technology who were on industrial attachment at Agulu General Hospital, and who volunteered their services and rescued us from what would have been a big mess at the Pharmacy center.

On the donor list, we wish to thank Plaza Medical Center of Forth Worth, Texas for donating free equipments and drugs toward IAD medical mission. We also thank AmeriCares, USA for magnanimous donation of several boxes of free drugs towards our mission; and MAP (Medical Assistance Programs) International for also donating free drugs to us. IAD is happy to acknowledge that the medications supplied by these three bodies were almost enough for this initial limited mission. We have placed their names and logo on the donor list of our website in appreciation of their efforts in making our maiden mission a huge success. Finally we thank Mrs. Ebele Ojiako (nee Oli) for a laptop donation toward documenting our work by the staff hired to keep the effort alive in the community.

We wish to recognize the traditional ruler of Agulu, HRH Innocent Obodoakor (Igwe III), who officiated at the launching ceremony and later made rounds to felicitate our efforts. In tow was the President General of Agulu People's Union (APU), Chief Charles Okoye who helped set up the venue for us and ensured security protection for the team. Finally, the last but the most generous is Chief Paulinus Aniagboso (Isimmili Agulu), the First Vice President of APU, who provided the medical team with meals for the two days mission.

IAD is the brain-child of Mr. Fidelis Umeh who was its founding father and President for 19 years. We thank him for "lighting this candle" of hope, and promise that we shall not

let the lamp burn out under our watch. Whatever waves we make today is due mainly to the solid foundation on which he established IAD. We hope that while in retirement and as IAD President Emeritus, he would still make himself available to us for his advice, his wisdom, and direction.

Emmanuel Onyeozili, Ph.D.
President, IAD-USA