

First two doctors to complete fellowship training in pulmonary medicine are praised

The World Lung Foundation (WLF) hailed the graduation of the first two fellows, Dr. Fahmi Oumer and Dr. Tola Bayesa, who completed fellowship training in pulmonary medicine at the Addis Ababa University in January of this year as part of the East African Training Initiative programme.

This new programme run by the WLF, in partnership with Addis Ababa University and Tikur Anbessa (Black Lion) Hospital, and with support of the Ministry of Health in Ethiopia, launched two years ago. The programme will help create a new generation of lung health specialists by providing specialist training in-country for graduates of accredited medical schools in Ethiopia.

Dr Neil Schluger, Chief Scientific Officer, World Lung Foundation, said: 'We have been impressed with the commitment and professionalism shown by Dr. Oumer and Dr. Bayesa and it has been an honor to work alongside them.'

'We thank our colleagues at Addis Ababa University and the Black Lion Hospital, who shared our vision of developing and delivering the Initiative. Over the next few years, a further six doctors will join Dr. Oumer and Dr. Bayesa in becoming qualified pulmonary specialists. This is a life-saving achievement; the initiative shows that it is possible to develop medical specialists in their own country in a way that makes a real difference to the public, to the medical practitioners and facilities involved and to public health in the countries willing to commit to building capacity.'

For the past two years, Dr. Oumer and Dr. Bayesa have been instructed, mentored and supervised by a visiting faculty of lung health experts drawn primarily from the USA and Switzerland. In addition to their training in Ethiopia, both fellows presented original research about the nature and extent of lung cancer, as well as other common and chronic lung diseases in Ethiopia at the Union World Conference on Lung Health in Barcelona back in October last year.

Near the end of their two-year training programme, the doctors undertook a five-week rotation in the USA at Brown University in Rhode Island and Columbia University Medical Centre in New York. After graduating, Dr Oumer will remain at the Black Lion Hospital, the largest public hospital in Addis Ababa and Dr Bayesa will return to his home institution of St Paul's Hospital, also in Addis Ababa.

Dr. Ahmed Reja, Executive Director of the College of Health Sciences, Addis Ababa University, said: 'We extend our thanks to World Lung Foundation for partnering with us in this initiative and to the host of other partners and visiting Faculty who have helped to make it possible. We can assure our colleagues that the public of Ethiopia will benefit from our collective investment in these outstanding young doctors.'

Critics challenge Ebola respiratory protection equipment

Health experts have raised concerns as to whether the Ebola virus might become airborne in the future.



Despite their protective gear, the Médecins Sans Frontières medical team tries to maintain human contact with patients by talking with them a great deal and getting close enough to be able to look into their eyes. Photo credit: © Sylvain Cherkaoui/Cosmos.

acutely and deadly as Ebola it is best to follow the precautionary principle and ensure healthcare workers (HCWs) are provided with the best possible protection.

'If I can be hit in the face with one of those particles as a projectile, then it's coming close enough to me that I can also inhale it,' says Mark.

Debates about what the best protection is being discussed across the continent, with many health agencies recommending HCWs wear a disposable respirator classified as 'N95'.

Bonnie Castillo works with the biggest nurses' union in the United States and is concerned that the N95 leaks and allows fluids to get through. She says: 'We know it leaks... We have experience in terms of having to constantly re-adjust. As you re-adjust you contaminate, and to contaminate with a deadly disease? You don't gamble like that. You're literally gambling with nurses lives.'

Castillo and her union demanded recommendations in California change. Now nurses are provided with another respirator known as a powered, air-purifying respirator (PAPR) during aerosol-generating procedures on confirmed Ebola patients. PAPRs can cover the entire face and use a powered fan to bring air in through a filter.

The Ebola virus, also named 'the nurse killer' in West Africa, has claimed more than 8000 lives in what has become the largest outbreak since it was first discovered in 1976.

A report from the World Health Organization (WHO) states that in January of this year 820 healthcare workers have been infected with the virus and 488 have died from it.

WHO agrees the risk of catching and controlling the spread of Ebola comes 'when infection control precautions are not strictly practiced'. These precautions often involve wearing layers of various equipment, training programmes and strict protocol on putting on and taking off personal protective equipment.

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Asthma prevalence in Nigerian adolescents and adults: systemic review and meta-analysis
B M Musa and M D Aliyu [corrected to M H Aliyu]
Dr Baba Maiyaki Musa and Muktar Daneji Aliyu, Department of Medicine, Bayero University Kano Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital, Kano, Nigeria. [corrected to Dr Baba Maiyaki Musa, Department of Medicine, Bayero University Kano. Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital, Kano, Nigeria; Muktar H Aliyu, Vanderbilt Institute for Global Health and Department of Preventive Medicine, Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, Nashville, TN, USA]