



## Field Notes

### Inside this issue:

Partnership Improves Pediatric Surgical Care in Mozambique	2
AIHA Establishes New LRC at Maputo Central Hospital	3
Supporting Expanded Use of Evidence-based Practices	3
Partnership to Launch Ob/Gyn Residency Program in Ethiopia	4
Ethiopian Biomedical Partners Conduct Stakeholders Meeting	4
Tanzania's First Cohort of Social Welfare Assistants	5
Establishing a 2-year Infectious Disease Fellowship in Jamaica	5
Conferences and Opportunities	6

## AIHA Kicks Off Partnership to Train New Mid-level Pharmacy Technician Cadre in South Africa

AIHA recently launched a new twinning partnership designed to strengthen South Africa's pre-service training capacity in the discipline of pharmacy care.

South Africa faces a marked shortage of mid-level healthcare professionals, including pharmacy workers.

Currently the country produces only 1,000 new pharmacy support personnel each year — far fewer than the 2,500 estimated to be optimal by the South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC).

In response, the Government of South Africa has revised the scopes of practice for the two existing mid-level pharmacy worker categories, creating a new Pharmacy Technician Education Program comprised of two separate one-year programs.

Those who complete the first year of the program will be qualified to work as Pharmacy Technical Assistants, while students finishing the second year of training will be qualified to work as Pharmacy Technicians.

These new mid-level pharmacy workers will assume more responsibility than the existing Pharmacy Assistants, thus expanding the country's human resources for health in pharmacy care.

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) in Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape, has been selected as the country's first provider of the Pharmacy Technical Assistant Program.

NMMU will soon begin offering the course and estimates that its first intake will include 70 students who will begin their studies in 2013.

The Pharmacy Technician Program is currently in the SAPC accreditation process and is slated to launch at NMMU in early 2014.

With support from PEPFAR and CDC/South Africa, AIHA has linked NMMU with the St. Louis College of Pharmacy (STLCOP) in St. Louis, Missouri, through its HIV/AIDS Twinning Center Program. The US partners will provide technical assistance to NMMU faculty as they proceed with implementation of the new Pharmacy Technician Education Program.

"This partnership's aim is to support NMMU in strengthening its curriculum and building capacity by mentoring the staff of the department to develop their expertise in the teaching and assessment of students whilst ensuring the quality of experiential learning provided to students," says Prof. Vic Exner, Executive Dean of Health Sciences at NMMU.

According to Prof. Exner, the ultimate objective of the collaboration is to optimize healthcare outcomes, such as improved drug supply management, by increasing the number and quality of pharmacy technicians and pharmacy assistants in the Eastern Cape and farther afield.

"We are honored to assist Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in building up its capacity to educate pharmacy technicians and strengthening the education students receive there," says Ken Schafermeyer, PhD, Director of International Programs at STLCOP.

"We'll be sharing the same teaching methods we use at [STLCOP], including the importance of giving students practical experience working with patients to improve their health," he explains, noting that pharmacy technicians are an excellent resource for delivering care for the more than 5 million people living with HIV in South Africa.

Schafermeyer and two other STLCOP faculty members traveled to Port Elizabeth in May to meet their NMMU counterparts and begin their collaborative efforts to ensure the success of this important new training program.

## Partnership Leads to Improved Pediatric Surgical Care in Mozambique

The East African nation of Mozambique is home to some 24 million people, more than half of whom are under the age of 15 years.

The country is facing a severe shortage of healthcare workers, with physician density at just 0.027 per 1,000 and only 10 pediatricians nationwide.

Pediatric surgeons are even more scarce, according to Dr. Emily A. Hartford, a physician stationed in Maputo with the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) Program in Global Health.

"When UCLA first established a collaboration with Eduardo Mondlane University and the Maputo Central Hospital in 2007, Dr. Atanasio Taela was the only local pediatric surgeon practicing there even though these institutions are the main medical school and teaching hospital in Mozambique," Dr. Hartford says.

Some of the key surgical needs of children in the country include hernia repairs, un-descended testicles, ano-rectal malformations, Hirschsprung's disease, urological conditions, and ambiguous genitalia, as well as trauma, burns, and surgical infections, according to Dr. Hartford.

Working closely with hospital and medical school leadership, the UCLA Global Health team has supported both the clinical and educational programs in pediatrics at Eduardo Mondlane University and the Central Hospital.

"We've created training programs for Mozambican clinicians working in newborn medicine, critical care pediatrics, transfusion medicine, infection control, and pediatric surgery," Dr. Hartford says. "We've also hosted

Mozambican doctors for long and short-term trainings in Los Angeles, where they have been mentored by a wide range of experts."

UCLA committed to supporting the professional development of Dr. Atanasio — particularly helping the young surgeon gain much-needed practical experience, which he could then share with his colleagues at Maputo Central Hospital.

"Dr. Atanasio had previously attended a brief training in Europe, but was not allowed to operate there, so his practical experience with children was still limited at this time," Hartford observed.

To facilitate his training using locally available resources, UCLA sent pediatric surgeons on a regular basis to operate with and train Dr. Atanasio at Maputo Central Hospital. The UCLA Global Health team also sponsored his attendance at a world-renowned course on ano-rectal malformations in the United States, as well as a trip to UCLA for additional training. With regular mentoring and frequent training opportunities, this young surgeon has now become a strong clinician with sound technical ability.

Dr. Atanasio is also committed to training the next generation of upcoming pediatric surgeons at the teaching hospital — he has already trained two additional surgeons and currently has three surgical residents training under him.

In all partnerships, the goal is to build local capacity and to have a sustainable impact. The UCLA pediatric surgery training and support in Mozambique is a great example of the type of partnering that leads to significant and

sustainable positive outcomes related to the care available for children in the country, Dr. Hartford says.

"Dr. Atanasio is ready to travel throughout Mozambique to train practicing general surgeons and technicians in important pediatric topics," she stresses.

Dr. Atanasio himself agrees.

"This partnership has really helped me improve my skills as a surgeon. We perform approximately 12 pediatric surgeries each month and I have the clinical knowledge I need to manage these cases with confidence. I also have the commitment to share these skills with others and am so happy that more and more medical students are becoming interested in pediatric surgery," Dr. Atanasio says. "I firmly believe that our ongoing partnership with UCLA has helped in this regard because it has brought more attention to pediatric care in my country."

In 2011, the partnership between Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo Central Hospital, and UCLA began receiving support from PEPFAR and the CDC in Mozambique.

AIHA's HIV/AIDS Twinning Center manages the program and is supporting their current work of building further capacity in the hospital's pediatric department, which will help improve overall care for children in Mozambique.



UCLA Neonatal Specialist Nurse Lizette Santos provides training on how to use baby warmers to Maputo Central Hospital nursery staff.

The UCLA partners, along with Embrace International, donated the new baby warmers to MCH in May as part of their ongoing efforts to improve care for infants and children in Mozambique.



## New Learning Resource Center Will Support Use of Evidence-based Medicine at Maputo Central

AIHA recently established a Learning Resource Center (LRC) to support access to evidence-based medical resources for our Twinning Center partners at Maputo Central Hospital's Pediatrics Department.

The teaching hospital is part of a twinning partnership that links Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM) and the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). Thanks to the support of PEPFAR and CDC/Mozambique, partners have been collaborating since 2011 to improve quality of care, with a particular focus on pediatric services.

Key partnership objectives include improving newborn and pediatric surgical care at Maputo Central Hospital (MCH), as well as to strengthen the institution's overall capacity to care for critically ill children.

The new LRC — which is equipped with four desktop computers connected to

internet via the hospital Wi-Fi, LCD projector, an all-in-one printer, and four android-powered tablets — is located in MCH's Pediatrics Department.

To facilitate optimal use of the LRC, AIHA conducted two training sessions April 16–17, which were attended by a total of 32 pediatricians and senior residents working at MCH.

Conducted by AIHA's Pretoria-based Learning Resources Coordinator Sailas Nyareza, the training covered three distinct areas: an introduction to online health information resources; an overview of specific resources, including HINARI and ePortuguese; and a session on the use handheld mobile devices for accessing evidence-based clinical information.

Portuguese-speaking faculty drawn from UEM and WHO's office in country helped to facilitate the training sessions on both days.

AIHA installed Up-To-Date on all four computers in the LRC, as well as on the four tablet devices to allow for offline access to Medscape and other key resources — which can be crucial for real-time access to information while at a patient's bedside.

Training faculty also helped other physicians and staff who had their own tablets and smartphones to install the medical apps on their personal devices.

The UCLA partners provided log-in details for Up-To-Date for the desktops and Up-To-Date MobileComplete for the tablets.

The new LRC is currently being managed by an MCH staff member and supported by UCLA partner Dr. Emily Hartford, who is based at MCH.



AIHA's Learning Resources Coordinator Sailas Nyareza led two day-long training sessions for 32 pediatricians and residents at Maputo Central Hospital in April to help ensure optimal use of the new LRC. LRCs enable healthcare professionals to access the latest evidence-based information and offer new opportunities for continuing education and collaboration.



## Learning Resources Project Helps Strengthen Use of Evidence-based Information and Practices

The overarching goal of AIHA's Learning Resources Project is to improve the quality of services provided to patients by expanding institutional access to knowledge resources; implementing evidence-based practice methods; and supporting professional communication and knowledge sharing platforms among health and allied workers.

A significant part of this effort has been dedicated to establishing Learning Resource Centers (LRCs).

Providing hands-on training designed to help health and allied workers gain the skills and knowledge they need to effectively utilize the LRC's ICT resources to access up-to-date, evidence-based information and apply it to their day-to-day practice is another key element of AIHA's ongoing efforts to promote the adoption of evidence-based practice in partner countries throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

With support from PEPFAR and CDC/Namibia, last November AIHA conducted a

four-day training titled, "Primer on Systematic Reviews and Research Synthesis," at the Polytechnic of Namibia.

Experts from AIHA, the South African Cochrane Center, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, and Stellenbosch University facilitated the training, which was attended by 25 healthcare professionals and medical students.

Systematic reviews provide the best evidence to answer healthcare questions and improve patient outcomes.



Dr. Honor Mitonga from the University of Namibia School of Medicine, takes part in a hands-on session on searching Cochrane's Library of Systematic Reviews during the November 2012 training workshop.



## AIHA Launches New Partnership to Establish an Ob/Gyn Residency Program in Addis Ababa



This new twinning partnership between St. Paul Hospital and Millennium Medical College in Ethiopia and the University of Michigan will focus on building Ethiopia's capacity to provide quality ob/gyn training at the pre- and in-service levels.

AIHA's Twinning Center launched in May a new partnership designed to strengthen Ethiopia's pre- and in-service training capacity in the field of obstetrics and gynecology.

Women in Ethiopia are 200 times more likely to die in childbirth or from pregnancy-related causes than women in developed countries.

Lack of adequate prenatal and birthing care contribute to the country's high maternal mortality rate; this is also closely linked to high newborn death rates.

Against this backdrop, the country currently has only four Ob/Gyn residency programs that cumulatively graduate fewer than 30 specialists each year — a number that is severely deficient in a country with more than 24 million women of reproductive age.

In response, PEPFAR and CDC/Ethiopia requested the HIV/AIDS Twinning Center's support for an existing

alliance between St. Paul Hospital and Millennium Medical College in Ethiopia and the University of Michigan's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology; the University of Michigan School of Medicine's Global Research, Education and Collaboration in Health (REACH) Program and the Office of Enabling Technologies are also playing a vital role in this partnership.

These Ethiopian and American institutions have been working together since April 2011, when the Michigan partners began providing technical assistance to improve maternal and child health at St. Paul's through targeted training and faculty development opportunities.

With Twinning Center support, the partners will be able to greatly expand their knowledge transfer efforts and more effectively build local human resource capacity, including the in-country training capacity needed to ensure high quality obstetric and gynecological care is

available to women in this East African nation of 94 million people.

The Ethiopian partners began construction of a new Maternal and Child Health Center, which is slated to open in 2014, so this expanded training program comes at a critical time.

Working together, the partners are developing innovative competency-based educational modules and enabling technologies suitable for delivering obstetrics and gynecology training in low-resource settings.

They will also focus on improving faculty development opportunities in teaching, research, and leadership that will help ensure sustainability of local capacity to train new care providers, as well as upgrade the knowledge and skills of current practitioners.

## Biomedical Partners Conduct a Stakeholders Meeting in Ethiopia



Some 50 policymakers and other biomedical stakeholders participated in a meeting conducted by AIHA partners at Tegbar Id Polytechnic and Jimma University in May.

Twinning Center partners at Tegbar Id Polytechnic and Jimma University's Institute of Technology in Ethiopia are working to build linkages among industry, academia, and health service delivery organizations as a way to strengthen the biomedical profession in country.

Together with their partners at Rice University and Texas Children's Hospital, they co-sponsored a Stakeholders Meeting in May, bringing together for the first time

some biomed representatives from hospitals, equipment vendors, and Ethiopia's ministries of health and education.

The group discussed the importance of biomedical engineering education in Ethiopia and focused on how to better prepare undergraduates by arming them with the knowledge and hands-on practical skills they need to succeed in the workforce.

Participants discussed various needs and gaps, as well as strategies for addressing

these issues in the coming years.

This twinning partnership is the first PEPFAR-supported biomedical engineering partnership in Africa and is funded by CDC/Ethiopia.

Partners expect to hold a second Stakeholders Meeting later this year.

## Kisangara Institute of Social Welfare Graduates Tanzania's First Social Welfare Assistants

Kisangara Institute of Social Welfare in the Kilimanjaro Region of Tanzania graduated the country's first cohort of 35 Social Welfare Assistants in May.

The group included Para Social Workers from the Mwanza, Iringa, Njombe, Mara, and Dodoma regions, who all expressed eagerness to use their new knowledge and skills to help ensure better access to social support services in their respective communities.

Social Welfare Assistants represent a new cadre in Tanzania that will help bridge the human resource gap in the health sector and strengthen its severely over-stretched health and social welfare workforce, especially at the ward and village levels.

Launched in June 2012, the Social Welfare Assistant Program (SWAP) was designed by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare's Department of Social Welfare with technical support from AIHA's HIV/AIDS Twinning Center partners at the Institute of Social Work in Dar es Salaam and the University of Illinois-Chicago's Jane Addams College of Social Work and Midwest AIDS Training and Education Center.

SWAP was developed to complement the existing Para Social Work Training Program, which was launched in 2007 through the AIHA partnership thanks to support from PEPFAR, USAID, and the CDC in Tanzania.

The US funding agencies and AIHA further supported the launch of SWAP by providing scholarships for the 35 trained Para Social Workers who were competitively selected to enroll in the first class at Kisangara.

Established with a Scheme of Service adapted in 2008 by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and the Prime Minister's Office on Regional and Local Government Affairs, the SWAP curriculum is based on the Institute of Social Work's social work certificate program.

The training package includes both classroom experience and a field practicum to provide knowledge of social work processes, policies, and laws governing services to vulnerable populations such as orphans, children, people with disabilities, and the elderly.

The SWAP curriculum also prepares Social Welfare Assistants to supervise Para Social Workers, mobilize communities for positive change,

oversee case management, and maintain quality of services.

Following the successful launch at Kisangara, the program is being rolled out to other Social Welfare Department colleges throughout the country.

Stakeholders are currently discussing ways of employing the newly graduated Social Welfare Assistants within the governmental health system.

Student recruitment is also under way, with SWAP application forms advertised online at [www.isw.ac.tz](http://www.isw.ac.tz), at the Institute of Social Work in Dar es Salaam, and at all District Social Welfare Offices where Para Social Worker trainings are conducted.

Enrollment for the 2013-2014 academic year, which starts in October, is expected to be around 75 Social Welfare Assistant candidates.

"We are ready to take what we've learned back to our wards and villages," was an oft repeated comment at the graduation ceremony, reflecting the dedication this first group of Social Welfare Assistants has for improving access to social support for those in need.

**The Tanzania Social Welfare Assistant Program represents the next step on a career ladder to enhance the country's social support system.**

**Para Social Workers or others with similar backgrounds may apply to this year-long certificate program to prepare for employment in ward-level social welfare roles.**

**The program includes seven months of classroom work and two months of supervised field work.**

## Partnering to Establish a Postgraduate Infectious Disease Fellowship Program in Jamaica

Physicians in Jamaica have long had to go abroad for infectious disease specialty training. Many of them do not return to their country, which places a serious burden on the health system.

At the same time, Jamaica is home to an estimated 32,000

people living with HIV/AIDS, according to USAID reports, with roughly half of them unaware of their status.

Twinning Center partners at the University of the West Indies (UWI) and the University of South Carolina are working together to develop a

two-year postgraduate clinical infectious disease fellowship program at UWI's Mona Campus. This program will help improve the overall system of care for infectious diseases in Jamaica and can serve as model for other countries throughout the Caribbean.

## Conferences and Opportunities



### **8th eLearning Africa Conference**

May 29-31, 2013  
Windhoek, Namibia

### **2013 Conference of the International Association of Physicians in AIDS Care (IAPAC)**

June 2-4, 2013  
Miami, Florida, USA

### **2nd International Conference on Medical, Biological, and Pharmaceutical Sciences**

June 17-18, 2013  
London, UK

### **6th South African AIDS Conference**

June 18-21, 2013  
Durban, South Africa

### **7th IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention 2013**

June 30-July 3, 2013  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

### **17th Annual Rural Health Conference**

August 8-10, 2013  
St. Lucia, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

### **US Conference on AIDS**

September 8-11, 2013  
New Orleans, Louisiana, USA

### **7th Social Aspects of HIV and AIDS Research Alliance (SAHARA) Conference**

October 7-10, 2013  
Dakar, Senegal

### **Medicine 2.0**

October 23-24, 2013  
London, UK

### **4th International Workshop on HIV & Aging**

October 30-31, 2013  
Baltimore, Maryland, USA

### **What Will it Take to Achieve an AIDS-free World?**

November 3-5, 2013  
San Francisco, Calif., USA

### **8th World Congress on Pediatric Infectious Diseases**

November 19-22, 2013  
Cape Town, South Africa

### **2013 Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (ANAC) Conference**

November 21-23, 2013  
Atlanta, Georgia, USA

### **6th International Workshop on HIV Persistence, Reservoirs and Eradication Strategies Conference**

December 3-6, 2013  
Miami, Florida, USA

### **2013 International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA)**

December 7-11, 2013  
Cape Town, South Africa

## HIV/AIDS Twinning Center

### **American International Health Alliance**

1250 Eye Street, NW  
Suite 350  
Washington, DC 20005

Phone: 202.789.1136  
Fax: 202.789.1277

### **Visit us on the Web at**

**[www.TwinningAgainstAIDS.org](http://www.TwinningAgainstAIDS.org)**

The HIV/AIDS Twinning Center mobilizes and coordinates the resources of healthcare and allied professionals in the United States and abroad to effectively build capacity to reduce HIV infection rates and provide care to those infected with, or affected by, HIV/AIDS in support of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

Funded by PEPFAR through a cooperative agreement with the US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, the Twinning Center is a project of the American International Health Alliance, a US-based nonprofit dedicated to helping limited-resource communities make positive, sustainable changes that improve accessibility to a broad range of high-quality healthcare services and preventive programs.

The contents of this newsletter are the responsibility of AIHA and the Twinning Center and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States government or other funding agencies.

