

AFRICAN VOICES

Health workers from across Africa trained and mentored in ISH initiative

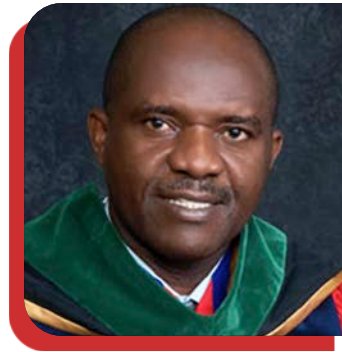
94 health workers from across Africa have received training and mentorship as part of a new ISH initiative aimed at improving hypertension care across the continent.

The African School of Hypertension for Non-Physician Health Workers was set up by the ISH Africa Regional Advisory Group (RAG) and was first delivered between August and December 2022. It offers training on diagnosing and managing hypertension, and on referring patients to specialist physicians when needed.

The aim of the course was to enable non-physician workers including nurses, pharmacists and community health workers to carry out some of the roles that traditionally only physicians have done. To be eligible for the course, students had to be working in a non-physician healthcare role and be employed in a registered health facility. The first students, coming from Nigeria, Kenya, Gambia, Cameroon, Malawi, Sudan, Tanzania and Ghana, have just received course completion certificates from the ISH.

The course is divided into two phases: two months of online lectures taking place every Saturday, followed by a two-month period of mentorship with experienced physicians. Lectures are pre-recorded and uploaded onto the OMRON Academy (an e-learning program for healthcare professionals developed by OMRON in collaboration with leading medical societies, including the ISH), with course faculty members available during lectures to answer questions live. Faculty members were drawn from the RAG membership and other ISH members in Africa.

Africa RAG Chair Professor Augustine Odili, said: "There is a high prevalence of hypertension in Africa and historically only physicians have treated hypertension. But this is not sustainable and there



is a need for other healthcare professionals to deliver care. 'Task sharing' with non-physician health workers already happens in other areas of healthcare in Africa, such as malaria, HIV and obstetrics care, and this is what we want to encourage in hypertension too. This is a key reason we set up the school."

Dr Adeyeye Akintunde, Course Director and ISH Fellow, said: "We had really strong engagement and attendance from students at all sessions, and students benefitted from the chance to speak live with course faculty at the same time as watching the online lectures. We are providing ongoing mentorship to students, and we have also developed an online app enabling students to stay in touch with lecturers and other course attendees."

Dr Godsent Isiguzo, Deputy Course Director and ISH Fellow, said: "There has been extremely positive feedback from course attendees. We will now be conducting in-depth feedback with attendees and we will take on board this feedback for future course sessions."

President of the ISH, Professor Bryan Williams, said: "It is very gratifying to see the success of this course and the impact it will have both in terms of workforce development and patient care. Africa is a focus for the ISH, and we want

to do everything possible to support educational and other initiatives made by ISH members and experts in Africa to improve hypertension care in the region.”

The Africa ISH RAG will run the course again as there is high demand for future places.

Prof Odili said: “We hope to see this course grow and grow – to help develop our healthcare workforce and to improve care for patients with hypertension across our region.”

Find out more about the [ISH Regional Advisory Groups](#).

COURSE ORGANISERS AND RAG MEMBERS

Faculty Members and Mentors



Names	Country	Status
Prof. Hind Beheiry	Sudan	Faculty Member/Mentor
Prof. Albertino Damasceno	Mozambique	Faculty Member
Dr. Reuben Mutagaywa	Tanzania	Faculty Member/Mentor
Dr. Lucie Mbulaje	Malawi	Faculty Member/Mentor
Dr. Ayodipupo Oguntade	Nigeria	Faculty Member
Dr. Abiodun Moshood Adeoye	Nigeria	Faculty Member
Prof. Basden Onwubere	Nigeria	Faculty Member
Dr. Akintunde Abiodun Adeseye	Nigeria	Faculty Member/Course Director
Prof. Anastase Dzudie	Cameroon	Faculty Member/Mentor
Dr. Godsent Isiguzo	Nigeria	Faculty Member/Mentor
Prof. Augustine Odili	Nigeria	Faculty Member
Dr. Lamin	Gambia	Mentor
Dr. Alfred Dokku	Ghana	Mentor
Dr. Florence Akumiah	Ghana	Mentor
Dr. Louis Avorkliya	Ghana	Mentor
Prof. Elijah Ogola	Kenya	Mentor
Dr. Akinyemi Aje	Nigeria	Mentor
Dr. Ayoola Yakeen	Nigeria	Mentor
□Dr. Adejumo Oluseyi	Nigeria	Mentor
Dr. Manven	Nigeria	Mentor
Dr. Sebastian Marwa	Tanzania	Mentor
Dr. Exon	Tanzania	Mentor

Course administration

Uzochukwu Maureen Amaechi
Joseph Chinonso Okereke
Ifeanyi Emmanuel Nwude