

**REPORT ON HEALTHY LUNGS FOR LIFE EVENT AMONG STREET HAWKERS  
AND TRADERS IN DUAYAW NKWANTA, GHANA; ORGANIZED ON 25<sup>TH</sup>  
SEPTEMBER, 2021 TO MARK WORLD LUNG DAY**

**Introduction**

Research has established a link between constant exposure to air pollution and other environmental factors to lung diseases. In Ghana, especially in market places, there is poor waste disposal systems compelling people mostly traders to dispose rubbish indiscriminately and burn them in the open spaces polluting the air with smoke, this together with fumes from vehicles and other factors exposes people to lung diseases. Traders and hawkers in the market places and streets spend more than half of their day in the market selling as their means of livelihood. This puts them at a higher risk of developing lung conditions compared to other members of the population. Furthermore, a recent study in Ghana has revealed an increase in vaccine hesitancy from 17.2% to 28.5% with the arrival of its first vaccines from the Covax facility in February, 2021 (Head et al; 2021). There might be a challenge with getting herd immunity for the country if people refuse to take it due to misinformation or lack of knowledge, this might keep more people at risk of Covid-19 and slow down the end of the pandemic.

The problems highlighted above and more necessitated the need for community education and sensitization on lung related issues. Through funding from the Healthy Lungs for Life (HLFL) Grant supported by the European Respiratory Society (ERS) and the European Lung Foundation (ELF), a public awareness campaign was organized by the St John of God College of Health to Street hawkers and traders in Duayaw Nkwanta on World Lung Day (25<sup>th</sup> September, 2021) to sensitize them on quality air, cessation of smoking, physical activity and the need to get vaccinated against lung infections.

## **Activities**

St John of God College of Health located in Duayaw Nkwanta, Ghana effectively organized a Healthy Lungs for Life Educational Campaign to sensitize people in the community about lung infections and diseases and ways to prevent them. The activities spanned three days from the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September to the 25<sup>th</sup> of September which was World Lung Day. The Event made use of thirty Volunteers who comprised of twelve staff of the College, thirteen final year Physiotherapy Technician students, one Environmental/sanitation officer from the Municipal Assembly, one Public Health Specialist from the St John of God Hospital and three Police Officers.

### **Day 1: 23/09/21; Radio Talk show and announcements**

A one and half hour paid talk show was done at ‘**Charity FM**’ which is one of the well renowned radio Stations with a lot of Listeners in the Municipality. The program started around 3:00pm and was hosted by DJ Francis who is the Assistant manager of the station. The Panellists were Abena Gyamfuaa (Public health Specialist), Klinsman Brefo (Sanitation officer) and Eric Nyarko (Physiotherapist). Abena gave a detailed education on what the lungs are, functions of the lungs, some of the lung infections and diseases, factors that predispose people to these diseases. She ended by touching briefly on ways of preventing lung diseases and encouraged listeners to get vaccinated against lung infections such as Covid-19. The sanitation officer also highlighted on effects of a dirty environment on our health and encouraged people to clean their surrounding often and avoid open space burning. The Physiotherapist added by briefing listeners on the importance of exercises to our health including lung function, he also admonished listeners to be physically active and avoid sedentary life styles; he ended by describing some exercises that can improve lung capacity and function. There was time for people to call in with their questions which were well addressed by the panellists. The talk show was done in the local dialect (Twi) with a few

explanations in English in order to benefit a larger group since ‘Twi’ is widely spoken and understood by majority of the people in the community. Payment were made for the Radio Station to advertise and make announcements about the Street walk and education twice a day to the 25<sup>th</sup> of September, 2021.

**Day 2: 24/09/2021;** Virtual education on social media platforms

On the second day, a blogger for the community YouTube Channel; ‘**Duayaw Nkwanta TV**’ was employed to capture a video and pictures of a forum discussion by volunteers on lung related issues (same as education at the radio station). This was done at the College premises. The video was shared on YouTube on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September, 2021.

The President of the Student Representative council (SRC) and his Executives who were volunteers for this event were tasked to share all the lung educational materials and memes on the SRC social media handles and share to all the student body who were also encouraged to share. Also, all volunteers with the exception of the police officers dedicated the second day of the event to share all lung related fliers and memes on their WhatsApp status and other social media platforms.

**Day 3: 25/09/2021;** Street events/Church education

This day marking World Lung Day was when the main events took place. T Shirts bearing World Lung Day and the theme for this year’s celebration which was ‘ Care for your Lungs’ was worn by all volunteers to easily identify them on the Streets and in the Market and to advertise and draw people’s attention to the event. It started off at the premises of the Police Station at around 10:00am. Volunteers walked through all the Principal streets of Duayaw Nkwanta (with 3 Police escorts) holding Placards and a banner with Lung promotion messages on them. Two of the volunteers also had megaphones to announce our purpose of being on the street that morning and educated people on ways to maintain healthy lungs.

After the street walk, volunteers grouped themselves into twos and went off into the market and Lorry Stations providing one on one education to anyone or groups of people they met. They also handed out fliers with lung messages on them to passersby and sellers. Aside the education, people were also encouraged to visit the St John of God Hospital if they have any signs/symptoms of lung infections or diseases and should not self medicate or attribute it to spiritual causes.

At the same time of the street walk, three volunteers went to the Duayaw Nkwanta Central Seventh Day Adventist Church to educate the congregation on ways to maintain healthy lungs for life. The entire church congregation were very happy for the education and also asked questions that were addressed.

The event ended about 4:00pm.

### **Funding/Expenditure**

The 1000 Euros grant from the European Lung Foundation and European Respiratory society was used to; pay for radio talk show and adverts, print T shirts, banner, posters and fliers, buy data, cater for transportation and fuel, pay staffing cost (driver, social media manager, etc) and refreshment for volunteers. A total of € 1, 021, an equivalence of **GHC6,942.8** was used for the project.

**The table below gives details of expenditure of the funding.**

<b>A. Volunteer Expenses and daily Staffing Costs</b>					
<b>Category</b>		<b>Unit Cost (€)</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Total (€)</b>	<b>Total GHc</b>
1	Social media Manager	30	2	60	408
2	Photo/Video Editor	50	1	50	340
3	Carpenter	30	1	30	204

4	Driver	40	1	40	272
<b>Total</b>				<b>180</b>	<b>1224</b>
<b>B. Cost of Materials</b>					
1	T-shirts	5	25	125	850
2	Banner	30	1	30	204
3	Placards	5	20	100	680
4	Posters	2	20	40	272
5	Fliers	0.5	250	125	850
<b>Total</b>				<b>420</b>	<b>2856</b>
<b>C. Public Relations and Marketing</b>					
1	Radio Adverts and Talk Show (Charity FM)	105	1	105	714
2	Online Coverage (Duayaw Nkwanta TV)	50	1	50	340
3	Purchase of data for social media (volunteers)	4	20	80	544
<b>Total</b>				<b>235</b>	<b>1598</b>
<b>D. Travel</b>					
1	Fuel (travelling and conveying volunteers for activities)	65	1	65	442
<b>E. Other Expenses</b>					
1	Refreshment (Water, Snack & Lunch) volunteers	5	23	115	782
2	Renting of Megaphone	3	6	6	40.8
<b>Total</b>				<b>121</b>	<b>822.8</b>
<b>Sum of totals of all categories</b>				<b>€ 1, 021</b>	<b>GHC 6,942.8</b>

### Beneficiaries of Event

The targeted population for the HLFL event were Street hawkers, traders, commercial drivers and the general public. More people than anticipated benefitted from the project. The wavelength of Charity FM spans the whole of Duayaw Nkwanta and its surrounding villages and have over two thousand daily listeners of their radio programs, it was estimated that, considering the time and date of the talk show done at the station, about 500 people would

have benefitted from the discussion/education. The street education reached out to about two hundred and eighty people; there were about 70 congregants in the church for the church program and social media advert reached out to approximately 300 people.

In total the program benefitted about 350 people directly and about 800 people indirectly or virtually, it benefitted the 30 volunteers too by broadening their knowledge on lung related issues through research and reading to equip themselves before the event and the education from the public health specialist and sanitation officer.

### **Impact of Project**

The project had direct and indirect benefits on the participants. The sanitation officer from the municipal assembly promised to lobby for more dustbins at the market places to improve the waste disposal systems and organize regular clean up exercises at the market places and lorry parks.

Most of the people encountered during this event had no knowledge on the impact of smoke and other waste substances to their lung health but were better informed from this project, this was evident in the fact that some group of people who were sitting close to a hip of burning rubbish moved farther away to a safer place just after some of the volunteers talked to them.

A few individuals who were reluctant initially to take the covid-19 vaccine said they are now enlightened after the education so they will go for the vaccine. Some taxi drivers also agreed to service their vehicles regularly to reduce the pollution caused by car fumes.

In all the volunteers were thankful for the opportunity to be part of this project that will improve and better the lives of community members and themselves (this was confirmed in some few interviews with them after the event).

## **Media Coverage**

Link to video on Duayaw Nkwanta TV youtube channel <https://youtu.be//Af4sfWYro9k> and facebook page @ Duayaw Nkwanta TV

School's Facebook Page: Physiotherapy And Orthotics Training School (information from street walk posted on 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2021)

Student Representative Council Social media handles; Twitter @ src\_sjgcoh Instagram@sjgcoh\_src

## **Relevance of Project to HLFL topics**

The project covered all the HLFL topics, that is; Air pollution, Smoking cessation, physical activity and vaccination. This project was an educational one that sensitized people on all the topics above. (See Reference of photos of lung day messages on placards).

## **Conclusion**

The St John of God College of health is grateful to the HLFL grant which was supported by the ERS and ELF. This funding has helped made an impact on the lives of Street hawkers and Traders. Generally, people we reached out to were very welcoming and promised to make changes in their own individual ways to promote healthy lungs. We believe that constant education will make a bigger difference therefore, the college will incorporate healthy lung activities in its yearly activities to the Duayaw Nkwanta community and surrounding villages.

**NB: Photos and videos of event are attached in a folder**

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