



Kintampo Health Research Centre (KHRC) wins a WHO Fellowship Award

The World Health Organization (WHO) Jacques Parisot foundation fellowship for 2009 was awarded to Ms. Livesy Naafoe Abokyi, a Public Health Research Fellow in KHRC at an eventful ceremony at the WHO country office in Accra on 12th December, 2011. The award consists of a bronze medal and an amount of five thousand US dollars (\$5000). The amount received earlier was used to support TB research work in KHRC. The bronze medal was presented at the ceremony to the Livesy by Dr. D. Kertesz, the WHO country representative for Ghana.

The Director of KHRC Dr. Seth Owusu-Agyei and Dr. Kwaku-Poku Asante a Clinical Research Fellow at KHRC together with a core staff at the WHO including Dr. Daniel Fletcher Djoletto, Mrs. Cynthia Hagan, Mrs. Edith Andrew-Annan and Mrs. Priscilla Eshun were at the ceremony to grace the occasion.

The award was given in recognition of a population-based study of the health seeking behavior of persons with persistent cough in the Kintampo North and South Districts in the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana. The cross-sectional study was aimed at determining the prevalence of persistent cough among community members of the Kintampo districts and the health-seeking behaviour of those with persistent cough. Community knowledge on tuberculosis was also investigated. The study in which 11,050 household interviews were conducted revealed poor knowledge of tuberculosis, its transmission and prevention which could greatly account for the low case detection observed in our health facilities.

The Jacques Parisot fellowship foundation was established in 1969 by Mrs J. Parisot in memory of Professor J. Parisot who was associated with WHO from its earliest days and signed the Constitution of the Organization for France at the International Health Conference held in New York in 1946. The purpose of the Foundation is to encourage research in social medicine or public health by granting a fellowship, which is awarded every two years (even years).

In a brief remark by the Dr. Kertesz at the award ceremony, he recognized the contribution of the piece of research work to global health and the need to share such relevant findings with the National TB programme (NTP) to contribute in our collective effort to improve the TB situation in the country.

Dr. Seth Owusu-Agyei expressed the need for further collaborations in research between the KHRC, NTP and WHO particularly in the area of Tuberculosis; a follow-up to the households where persistent coughs were reported to collect samples for confirmatory laboratory tests could document the actual prevalence of TB cases and serve as a method of assessing TB prevalence by the NTP using non-health professionals. He added that with the up-to-date health and demographic surveillance database of the study area in place, this can easily be done. Dr. Owusu-Agyei identified other potential collaborations in area of Malaria and HIV/AIDS. He also noted that poor health systems has been a major setback to numerous otherwise effective health interventions and that research aimed at strengthening health systems will be another essential area of potential collaboration.



FROM RIGHT: Director of KHRC Dr. Seth Owusu-Agyei, Livesy Naafoe Abokyi and Dr. D. Kertesz