7TH EDITION

A QUARTERLY BULLETIN

FROM SDH

ST. DOMINIC TODAY

Theme:

Building Reliable Teams; Transforming Work Culture to Achieve Goals

JAN - MAR 2022

ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE; A LOOMING PANDEMIC WE SHOULD ALL BE CONCERNED ABOUT.

Antibiotics are medicines used specifically to treat bacterial infections. Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria develop mechanisms that enable them evade the actions of these antibiotics; .....

THE YOUTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The abuse of drugs has become a serious problem especially among the youth in Ghana, of which the Denkyembour District is no exception.....

PERSONAL FINANCE 101

Making financial decisions can be intimidating, especially if you are just starting to manage your own money.....

St. Dominic Hospital Akwatia

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EDITORIAL

We are a quarter through the year already! Thank God for His mercies.

I welcome readers to another edition of ***St. Dominic Today***. This issue captures excerpts from the Leaders' Retreat held in January, 2022 which gave birth to the action plan for the year. Short profiles of the Best Worker award winners for the senior and junior staff categories are also featured. The Mental Health Unit of St. Dominic hospital is highlighted in this edition. This is accompanied by an article on "The youth and substance abuse" which is one of the major social issues confronting our nation. The St. Dominic Mobile Clinic program, intended to take healthcare to the door steps of the people is not left out.

Other interesting articles include the factors leading to antibiotic resistance and how to combat them, strategic investment and many more. Our children are not left out.We have highlights on the implementation of the common core program for Junior High Schools which gives students the option of branching straight into the academic or career pathways. Lovely photos of various projects undertaken by these young ones have been included.
This will surely make an interesting reading.

All the best in the next quarter!

Dr. Foster Osei-Poku
(Editor-in-Chief)

A MESSAGE FROM THE HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

I write for and on behalf of the Hospital Management Team.

All too soon, the first quarter of the year 2022 has come to a close. A period Management would best describe as uncharacteristic of the past experiences, but rather a turbulent era in its history. Working to meet the needs and expectations of patients, thus, for the best medical outcomes as always remains the torchlight.

Leaders' Retreat, on the theme – **BUILDING RELIABLE TEAMS; TRANSFORMING WORK CULTURE TO ACHIEVE GOALS,** was successfully held in Koforidua for a total of 72 departmental and units heads from 20th - 22nd January, 2022. An action plan borne from this period has been drawn and staff are seriously working with it for the year 2022.

As part of efforts to strengthen supervision on the job, Management has appointed a seasoned public health graduate, as "Clinical Supervisor", to complement the labour of ward in-charges. Mortuary expansion works have also begun in earnest. This is intended to rebrand the department with an eventual change of name. Works on the Physician Assistants' Training School have also commenced. An Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) Computer with table Visual Field Analyzer has also been procured to augment the fleet of eyecare machines.

All staff are encouraged to continue to offer their best in service and prioritise documentation as evidence of work done.

Rev. Fr. Ebenezer Kenneth Abban
Hospital Administrator

FIFTH ANNUAL LEADERS' RETREAT HELD

by Emmanuel Dogre



Participants at Leaders Retreat

St. Dominic Hospital, Akwatia, held its fifth version of the Annual Leaders' Retreat on 20th – 22nd January, 2022 at the Diocesan Pastoral and Training Centre, Koforidua. Participants were mainly heads of departments and units.

On the first day of the retreat, led by the Hospital Administrator, Rev. Fr. Ebenezer Kenneth Abban, there was a review of the performance of the Hospital for the year 2021. The Hospital Administrator expatiated on progress and outcomes of the hospital's activities in 2021. After the performance review, the Deputy Hospital Administrator, Mr. Hayford Asare-Williams, led participants to review the Programme of Work (Action Plan) for the year 2021.

Day two of the retreat began with a training session on the topic "***building reliable teams; transforming work culture to achieve goals"***. Dr. Gina Teddy, an experienced resource person in the fields of organizational development, building teams and systems, researching, and consulting facilitated the session. Participants were subsequently entreated to transfer the new knowledge and skills onto the job. Participants were later grouped for discussions, whose outcome led to the development of Programme of Work for the year 2022.



Dr. Gina Teddy, GIMPA (Main facilitator)

THE MENTAL HEALTH UNIT OF ST. DOMINIC HOSPITAL

by Ezekiel Darrah

BRIEF BACKGROUND

'All are lunatics but he who can analyse his delusions is a philosopher'…. Ambrose Bierce

- ***Mental health they say is a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. (WHO)***

The Community Psychiatric Wing of St. Dominic Hospital, was established on 2nd June 2014, to provide quality mental health services to all clients who visit the facility as well as those living the communities and surrounding districts. The vision of the unit is to ensure that clients who visit the hospital get accessible, quality and affordable mental healthcare and its related services. It is currently located at the St. Dominic Health Hub. Since its establishment to date, the unit has seen more than 1400 patients presenting with different conditions ranging from neurosis to psychosis. The Mental Health Unit has a four-member team, three of whom are Registered Mental Health Nurses and one Community Mental Health Officer.

Data for mental health disorders as at the end of 2021 indicated that more females than males report for treatment. The peak age for most disorders is 25-49 years. This age group is considered very active among other age groups since most people seek employment or engage in active work or start a family. Again, economic hardships, stresses of life, unachieved social or cultural expectations as well as unfavourable environmental conditions precipitate certain disorders. Top five conditions seen at the unit include:

- Epilepsy
- Substance use and related disorders
- Schizophrenia and related disorders
- Mood disorders
- Anxiety and stressor-related disorders

The unit's operations are anchored around the primary and secondary disease prevention principle; thus, our focus is mainly education and sensitization which aims at preventing the disease from occurring as well as providing out-patient and in-patient psychiatric care. Other activities of the unit include:

- Case finding
- Home visits/tracing



Staff of Mental Health Unit with a Client

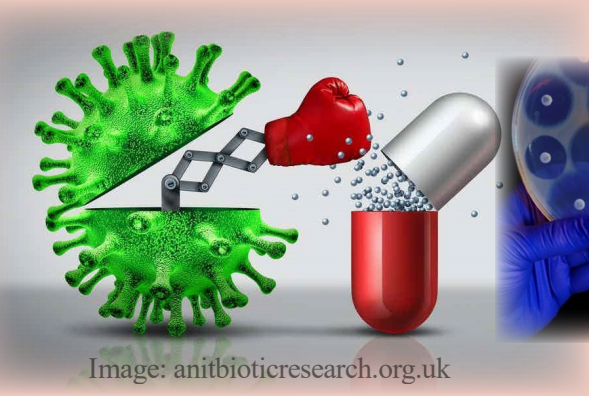
- Visits to traditional and herbal centres
- Visits to faith-based healing centres
- Psychological /counselling services
- Offering Psychosocial support and Psychological first aid
- Health education in clinics/OPDs, other medical centres, markets, churches, mosques, institutions and schools
- Outreach services
- Community activities (e.g. durbars, professional assistance to clients, families, etc.)

As part of its programme for 2022, the unit plans to embark of the following initiatives:

- Forming mental health clubs in schools
- Offering psychosocial support to staff
- Registration and renewal of NHIS cards for persons living with mental illness
- **Restoring Dignity Project**: It is expected that at least one vagrant will be picked from the streets and rehabilitated into society.
- **Forming Anonymous Groups**: This is where patients with similar conditions are brought together to discuss and share experiences with the aim of improving health.

ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE; A LOOMING PANDEMIC WE SHOULD ALL BE CONCERNED ABOUT.

By Vida Eshun



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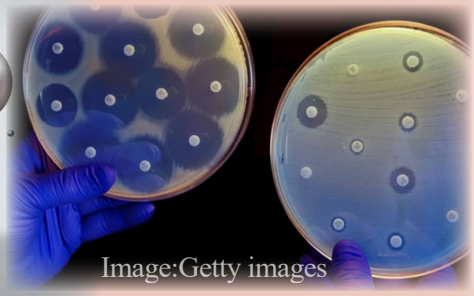

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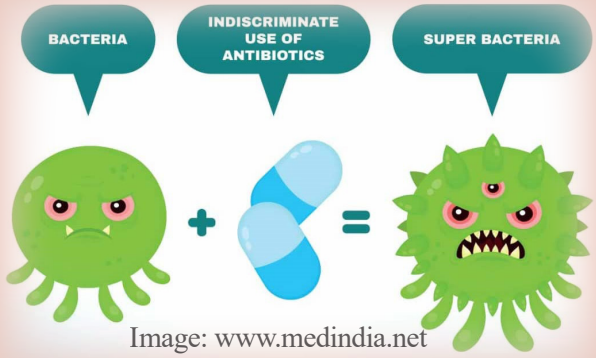

Image: www.medindia.net

Declared by WHO as one of the top 10 global public health threats facing humanity, antimicrobial resistance is a serious health issue we should all come on board to combat.

What is antibiotic resistance?

Antibiotics are medicines used specifically to treat bacterial infections. Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria develop mechanisms that enable them evade the actions of these antibiotics; making the medicines ineffective against them. It is the bacteria, not humans or animals that develop resistance. Antibiotic resistance makes infections become very difficult or impossible to treat. This also threatens the safety of surgeries and chemotherapies.

What causes antibiotic resistance?

- Overuse and underuse of antibiotics in humans and animals i.e. taking antibiotics whenever you feel unwell and not completing your antibiotic course because you started feeling well after a few days of starting.
- Lack of microbiology testing laboratories to inform the right choice of antibiotics and also the long duration of getting test results (mostly about 72hours or more).
- Animal farmers indiscriminately giving antibiotics to their animals to promote growth and prevent diseases.
- Poor infection prevention control.
- Poor drug regulations, inappropriate prescriptions and use of substandard antibiotics.

Why you should be concerned about antibiotic resistance.

A study published in The Lancet indicates that antibiotic resistant bacteria alone directly accounted for 1.27million deaths globally in 2019 with the highest numbers coming from Western Sub-Saharan Africa. This is more than deaths caused HIV/AIDS or malaria. One study even predicts that antimicrobial resistance could kill about 10million people per year by 2050.

How can you prevent /minimise antimicrobial resistance?

- Follow recommended infection prevention protocols to prevent infecting yourself and others with pathogenic microbes.
- Prescribers must ensure patients samples are tested for bacteria and antibiotic sensitivity before prescribing antibiotics (Fortunately, there emerging technologies to give results more quickly)
- Use antibiotics only when they are prescribed by a certified health professional.
- Always follow the recommended dosage of prescribed antibiotics.
- Do not give your animals/pets antibiotics when they are sick. Take them to see a vet.
- Choose foods that were produced without the use of antibiotics for growth promotion or disease prevention in healthy animals.

The next time you want to take antibiotics or give them to someone, ponder whether it is the best thing to do or it's going to fuel resistance. Remember what does not kill the bacteria only makes them stronger to probably kill you or a loved one later.

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MOST OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEES FOR THE YEAR 2021

by Emmanuel Dogre



MR. ISAAC SARSAH (HEAD OF LABORATORY)

SENIOR STAFF CATEGORY

Isaac Sarsah is a Principal Medical Laboratory Scientist who joined the St. Dominic Hospital as a laboratory technician, in November, 2006. He holds a diploma and BSc. in Medical Laboratory Science (Chemical Pathology) from the University of Ghana, Legon. Isaac has facilitated and participated in relevant training programmes and has evidently transferred the knowledge and skills acquired onto the job to yield positive results. He is a National Malaria Control Certified Level-A Regional Malaria Microscopy Trainer as well as Lead Laboratory Scientist for COVID-19 PCR testing for the hospital and the Denkyembour district.

He has successfully introduced and trained all laboratory staff on the use of laboratory analyzers and spearheaded the design of the new laboratory for St. Dominic Hospital.

Isaac has consistently proven to be highly committed and dependable on the job. He works tirelessly to achieve quality results with passion. His outstanding performance, dedication and excellent work ethics is worth emulating by all.



MR. SAMUEL ADONU (ESTATE & MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT)

JUNIOR STAFF CATEGORY

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit".

Samuel Adonu joined St. Dominic Hospital, Akwatia, as labourer on 1st July, 2001. For twenty (20) years, he has consistently proven to be a highly committed and dependable worker of the hospital. Although he is a labourer, he always makes himself available when his services are needed in other departments.

He has worked as scavenger, bio-gas attendant, and been involved in other artisanry-related works. He has been involved in almost all Estate and Maintenance works at St. Dominic Hospital for the past two decades. He is seen as a perfectionist who never hesitates to lend a helping hand, always striving for continuous improvement. With this, he has succeeded in distinguishing himself as a high performer; who is admired by all.

St. Dominic Hospital appreciates such a dedicated employee.

MOBILE CLINICS ORGANISED

by **Mercy K. Amegbor**

St. Dominic Hospital, as part of its efforts to send health care to the doorsteps of its clients and provide quality health care has resumed its mobile clinics to underserved communities in the Denkyembuor District and Kwaebibrem Municipalities. The mobile clinics had been suspended in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The team is made up of prescribers, nurses, a midwife, account personnel, record staff, pharmacy technicians, laboratory personnel, ophthalmic and ENT nurses as well as a driver. Activities carried out include health education, checking of vital signs, general out-patient consultation, HIV testing, Eye and ENT screening as well as the running of basic laboratory tests including COVID-19 testing and the provision of medication. In January, during the Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, screening for pre-cancerous lesions on the cervix was incorporated into the mobile clinic

Individuals that required specialized care as a result of illnesses were referred to the hospital for further treatment and assessment. We hope to reduce geographical barriers and increase accessibility to quality health care throughout the year.



Images from various outreaches

EXPANSION AND REFURBISHMENT WORKS BEGIN AT THE SDH MORTUARY

by Mr. Emmanuel Addo

St. Dominic Hospital has begun works towards rebranding of the Mortuary Department. On completion, the capacity of the mortuary shall increase from 150 to 384. Thus, the current expansion works are expected to add 234 additional fridge-like compartments to the current cold room. 24 of these are currently working as a VIP suite in fulfilment of the desires of clients with such expectations. The current construction and renovation works are expected to modernize the mortuary with an in-built 2.0 horse power refrigeration system that will maintain bodies at an optimal temperature of between $+2^0$C - $+8^0$C.

The St. Dominic Hospital mortuary which was established in 2003 had an initial capacity of twelve (12) bodies. Since then, it has transitioned through a series of phases, with the capacity increasing to twenty-four (24) and then one-hundred and fifty (150) in 2010 as demand to preserve more bodies increased.



Front view


Rear view

LATE DEBORAH AMPOFOA LAID TO REST

by Evelyn Amoako



The mortal remains of Deborah Abena Ampofowaah, who was a Senior Staff Nurse at St. Dominic Hospital were interred at her hometown, Adankrono after a solemn burial service at the Adankrono funeral grounds on 26th February, 2022. This was preceded by a short ceremony by Management and staff at the forecourt of the St. Dominic OPD on 25th February where her body was received and prayers said for the peaceful repose of her soul by the Hospital Chaplain, Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Debrah.

Colleagues, classmates, friends and family who gathered at the ceremony paid glowing tributes to the virtues Deborah exhibited when she was alive. Deborah left behind a son.

May her soul continue to rest in perfect peace.

THE YOUTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

by Ezekiel Darrah

The abuse of drugs has become a serious problem especially among the youth in Ghana, of which the Denkyembour District is no exception. The cause of the alarming rate of drug abuse is multi-factorial. Marijuana has been identified as the major drug abused among the youth in Ghana. Research has shown that experimentation is one of the main reasons for the start of abuse. (MHA 2020).

A drug is any chemical substance which when taken in affects the body's physiological and psychological functioning. Drug Abuse is the use of any chemical substance (drug) against general medical practice or that has not been prescribed by a medical officer, which alters the mind of the user to such an extent that it interferes with the individual's body, state of the mind, and interaction with people in the community.

WHY PEOPLE ABUSE DRUGS

- Peer Pressure
- To cope with stress (to relax)
- Curiosity
- To escape boredom
- To rebel against authority
- For sex
- For chronic pain
- When in Grief or Depressed
- Experimentation

SOME COMMONLY ABUSED DRUGS

ILLICIT DRUGS: Alcohol, Nicotine and Tar, Marijuana, Cocaine, Heroin, Tobacco (Shisha)

LICIT DRUGS: These include Prescription drugs (tramadol, cough mixtures, codeine), Inhalants (glue, cleansing fluids, lighter fuels, nail polish, paint &thinners) and Caffeine

GENERAL EFFECTS OF DRUG ABUSE

Physical Effects

- Increase the Heart rate
- Narrows the passage in the blood vessels thus preventing free passage of blood and oxygen throughout the body.
- High Blood Pressure (BP)
- Fatty or shrinked liver, liver cirrhosis, liver cancer
- Risk of cancer, heart and kidney failure
- Seizures

Psychological Effects

- Confusion and occasionally frightful
- Occasionally quiet and withdrawn
- Paranoia (Suspicious of people around him)
- Hallucinations (visual, auditory and tactile)
- Changes the user's way of Speech, Thinking and Actions
- Poor judgment, anxiety, agitation, irritability

Effects on academic performance

- Poor concentration
- Impairment in intelligence
- Memory problem and impaired attention
- Absenteeism due to lack of interest in school activities
- Problems with personal studies
- Theft
- Increase risk of dropping out from school

How to Help a friend and self Your

- Abstinence
- Get educated
- Know your facts about drugs
- Take advantage of activities and events that do not involve alcohol or drugs
- Choose to stay in control
- Address possible underlying problems (such as a variety of anxiety concerns, depression, self-esteem issues, trauma, family and relationship concerns)
- Seek counselling
- Get help from health professionals

PERSONAL FINANCE 101

by Richard Ahorlu



image: www.forbes.com

Making financial decisions can be intimidating, especially if you are just starting to manage your own money. Even if your personal financial situation isn't all that complicated, - say, you are a salaried worker who rents a home and has mostly predictable monthly expenses – managing money and bills can still be tricky as well time-consuming. Getting a handle on your finances is important and could be your ticket to a more stable and healthier outlook. Here are a few steps you can take to simplify your finances while working towards your goals this year.

1. **Set Priorities.** You've got plans, stuff you want to do, things you want to buy, milestones you hope to meet. At the end of the spectrum, are immediate financial commitments while at the other end, are long term financial goals like retirements which is years, or even decades, away. In between are wants and needs like homes, cars, vacations, medical procedures and education costs. Get clear on your purpose, and have a vision for yourself. Decide on how you want to see yourself in the next few years and pace yourself. Set for yourself timelines that will help you reach your ultimate destination, and get into action. While at it, there will be the need to plan on how to meet your immediate needs.

   Put your outdoor work in order and get your fields ready; after that, build your house. (Proverbs 24:27). This proverb means that you need to set priorities with your money. Make sure you save enough to cover the essentials – what you need to keep yourself alive and able to work – before spending money on creature comforts. In other words, set aside money to pay all the bills before you spend any on new clothes.

2. **Make a Budget.**

   Luke 14:28-30 – *Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, saying, "This person began to build and wasn't able to finish."*

   This Biblical saying is about budgeting. You know you need to cover the cost of necessities first – but those costs don't always come up right away, so you need to plan for them or make a budget. Planning and saving for those intermittent (but known) expenses is a key component of budgeting.

   By sitting down with a pen and paper, you can figure out exactly which expenses you have to cover – not just in the immediate future, but over the long term. Then you can determine how much money you need to set aside to cover all your financial needs, from paying your weekly bills, to financing your retirement years down the line. That way, you can make sure your "tower" – your finances – can be completed, from bottom to top.

3. **Build an Emergency Fund**

   It always makes sense to set aside money for future emergencies, thus, saving resources in good times so you have them to help you get through lean times. In modern-day, "lean" years are less likely to be a literal famine than some sort of financial crisis, such as a job loss or a health problem that saddles you with heavy medical bills.

   Present-day financial experts advise that, instead of storing up cash for



seven years, you should set aside roughly six months' worth of living expenses in an emergency fund (more if you're self-employed or have a fluctuating income). This money should be kept in cash or safe investments that should hold their value, so your money is there to draw on whenever you happen to need it.

4. Diversify Your Investments

Ecclesiastes 11:2 – *Invest in seven ventures, yes, in eight; you do not know what disaster may come upon the land*.

This line from Ecclesiastes is a short, clear explanation of why it makes sense to diversify your investments. Nearly any type of investment can fall victim to "evil" of some sort. So it makes sense to put money into many different types of investments so that a single disaster can't cost you everything you have. It's a basic principle of investing that the more you diversify, the more you reduce your risk.

Admittedly, some argue that diversification is a myth. They claim that you can earn a much better return by putting all your eggs in one basket – as long as it's the right basket. However, it takes a true genius to figure out which basket is the right one, and investors who try it are far more likely to end up losing their shirts than becoming millionaires overnight. For the ordinary investor, diversifying to reduce risk is a much safer and sounder plan.

5. Make a Financial Plan

Proverbs 21:5 – The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty.

This final rule from Proverbs more or less sums up all the others. Budgeting, planning for retirement, saving for emergencies – they're all different ways of being diligent in planning.

Making a financial plan is a three-step process:

a. Identify Your Goals. It's much easier to convince yourself to save and invest when you have a clear sense of what you're saving for. Depending on where you are in life, your financial goals could include paying off student loans, buying your first home, financing your kids' education, or investing for retirement. Write down your personal goals, and go back to them from time to time to see if they've changed.

b. Evaluate Your Situation. Next, figure out what your current financial situation is. This is a step you can take on your own or with help from an accountant or financial advisor. Determine your current net worth, how much you're earning, how much you're spending, and what kind of return you're currently getting on your investments.

c. List Steps to Take. Now that you know both where you are and where you want to go, all you have to do is figure out what steps you need to take to get from point A to point B

Financial planning is the first step towards financial security. It is important to set out goals and start off on the journey. The basics can go a long way in ensuring you have a solid start on your financial journey. Shalom!!!!

THE COMMON CORE PROGRAMME (CCP) FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS FULLY IMPLEMENTED AT ST DOMINIC R/C BASIC SCHOOL

by Sabina Dosu

The Common Core Programme (CCP) is a carefully designed curriculum for learners as part of the learning experiences necessary to prepare them for further education and the world of work.

At the end of the CCP, learners have the options of branching into either the academic pathway or the career pathway.

The CCP has the following key features:

Prepare learners adequately for career and academic pathways

Nurture values such as respect, diversity, equity, commitment to excellence truth and intergrity. Focus on assessing knowledge, skills, attitude and value with emphasis on what learners can do.

Produce a new generation of high school graduates with the requisite 21st century skills, work ethics and employable skills

The St. Dominic School in our quest for excellence in education is fully implementing this national agenda of creating community of learners and all so help in nation building by producing the right human resources for the country through education. The teachers are facilitating the pupils learning making them take charge of their own learning through projects.

The diverse pedagogical approaches used in the classroom by the various facilitators seek to achieve these core competencies and skills in the children: Digital literacy, communication and collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving skills, creativity and innovation, cultural identity and global citizenship, personal development and leadership are developed in the children.

St. Dominic R/C Basic School, Committed To Excellence in Education Creating a Community of Learners.



Staff and Pupils of St. Dominic R/C Basic School with their projects

GALLERY









Images from Leaders Retreat









Senior Staff Association End of Year Dinner



THE EDITORIAL TEAM

Dr. Foster Osei-Poku

Evelyn Amoako

Vida Eshun

Richard Ahorlu

Emmanuel Dogre

Sabina Dosu

Obed Nyampong

PHONE 0243559076
GPS ED-0008-3697
Email info@sdhakwatia.org
Website www.sdhakwatia.org