

CFHI Newsletter

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SAFEPAD PRODUCTION

FROM THE COFOUNDER'S DESK

Dear friends of the family,

Welcome to the 7th Edition of the CFHI Newsletter, where we share stories that ignite change and remind us of the power we hold, collectively, to protect and uplift communities. Each edition is a testament to the belief that informed action can transform lives, and this month, our spotlight falls on a silent yet deeply consequential health challenge: hepatitis.

Hepatitis is often called a "silent epidemic" because it hides in the shadows, progressing quietly in the bodies of millions of Nigerians until it reveals itself through devastating illness. It is more than a health issue, it is a social and economic concern that erodes the well-being of families, threatens the productivity of our workforce, and burdens our healthcare system.

At the Centre for Family Health Initiative (CFHI), we believe that silence should never be the response to suffering. Hepatitis is preventable, treatable, and, in many cases, curable. Yet, the barriers of stigma, misinformation, and limited access to testing and treatment keep too many people in the dark.

Our work across communities has shown us that change begins with knowledge. When people understand how hepatitis is transmitted, how it can be prevented, and where to seek help, they are empowered to protect themselves and others. Through free screenings, health education, and advocacy for greater access to vaccines and care, CFHI is committed to turning the tide against this disease.

But as always, we cannot do this alone. The fight against hepatitis demands partnerships, policy support, and the shared determination of government, civil society, healthcare providers, and every individual.



Together, we can break the silence, end the stigma, and move closer to a Nigeria where hepatitis no longer claims lives or futures.

Enclosed in this edition of our newsletter is activities and projects report for the preceding month. Action to Sustain Precision and Integrated HIV Response towards Epidemic Control (ASPIRE), Diabetes Awareness and Care Project (Phase II).

Do have a pleasant reading!

Princess Osita-Oleribe
Cofounder, CFHI.



**CENTRE FOR
FAMILY HEALTH
INITIATIVE
(CFHI)**

...promoting health, protecting well-being

COMBATING HEPATITIS: A CALL FOR AWARENESS AND ACTION

Hepatitis, an inflammation of the liver, remains one of the most serious but under-recognized public health challenges in Nigeria. Viral hepatitis especially types B and C affects millions of Nigerians, often progressing silently for years before symptoms appear. By the time it is detected, the disease may have caused irreversible liver damage, cirrhosis, or liver cancer.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 350 million people worldwide are living with chronic hepatitis B or C, with Africa bearing a significant share of this burden. Nigeria ranks among the countries with the highest prevalence of hepatitis B, with estimates indicating that about 8.1% of the population is chronically infected (WHO Global Hepatitis Report, 2024).

Despite its severity, hepatitis remains poorly understood. In many communities, myths and stigma continue to overshadow science. Some believe the disease is caused by spiritual attacks, while others avoid testing due to fear of discrimination or the assumption that it has no cure. These misconceptions contribute to late diagnosis and missed opportunities for early intervention.

The impact of hepatitis extends far beyond health, it affects productivity, family income, and the overall economy. Chronic illness can prevent individuals from working, drain household resources, and place additional stress on an already burdened healthcare system.

The good news is that hepatitis is both preventable and treatable. Vaccines for hepatitis B are safe, effective, and widely available. Treatments exist that can suppress or even cure certain types of hepatitis. However, early detection remains the gateway to saving lives. That's why public awareness, education, and access to testing are crucial in Nigeria's fight against hepatitis.

At Centre for Family Health Initiative (CFHI), we have continued to raise the alarm about hepatitis through targeted outreach, awareness campaigns, and community health education. Our activities include free hepatitis B and C screening for vulnerable populations, sensitization sessions that address stigma and promote accurate knowledge, and support for hepatitis B vaccination, especially for newborns and those at higher risk of infection. These efforts are part of our broader commitment to promoting preventive health and empowering individuals with the information and services they need to live healthier lives.

As the world commemorates World Hepatitis Day this July, CFHI joins the global call to accelerate the elimination of viral hepatitis as a public health threat. We urge government agencies, donors, civil society groups, and communities to increase investment in awareness, testing, vaccination, and treatment.

The time to act is now. Hepatitis elimination is not just a health goal, it is a development imperative. By breaking the silence, ending the stigma, and strengthening systems of care, we can protect millions of lives and build a healthier, more resilient Nigeria.

DIABETES AWARENESS AND CARE PROJECT (DAC)

In June, the Centre for Family Health Initiative (CFHI) remained steadfast in its mission to combat diabetes through comprehensive outreach and screening activities across Imo State. Our commitment to bringing health services closer to the people has continued to make a tangible difference in communities.



Market Awareness at Nkwo Isu, Isu



Screening at St Thomas Catholic Parish, Obinze Owerri west

Altogether, these efforts reached an estimated 5,154 individuals, providing vital information on diabetes prevention, healthy lifestyle practices, and the importance of regular screening. A total of 654 individuals were screened, with 100 people referred for further medical evaluation due to elevated blood pressure, high blood sugar, or both.



Throughout the month, CFHI teams carried out activities in several locations, including St. Thomas Catholic Parish in Obinze (Owerri West LGA), St. Luke's Anglican Church and Living Faith Church in Akwakuma (Owerri North LGA), Agbahara Nsu in Ehime Mbano LGA, and the busy Nkwo Isu market in Isu LGA. Additionally, a roundtable discussion was held in Amawom Community, fostering meaningful dialogue around diabetes prevention and healthy living.

DIABETES AWARENESS AND CARE PROJECT (DAC)

These figures reflect more than statistics, they represent lives impacted, health risks detected early, and communities empowered to take proactive steps toward better health. The significant number of referrals highlights the ongoing need for health education and accessible screening services across the state.

Church screening at St Luke's Anglican Church, Akwakuma



ACTION TO SUSTAIN PRECISION AND INTEGRATED HIV RESPONSE TOWARDS EPIDEMIC (ASPIRE)

In June, the Centre for Family Health Initiative (CFHI) sustained its impactful work under the ASPIRE Project, delivering crucial health and support services to vulnerable children and caregivers across the Federal Capital Territory.

During the month, 94 new beneficiaries including 12 children living with HIV and 82 HIV-exposed infants were enrolled into the Community Case Management Program at various health facilities. The team mobilized 161 vulnerable children for essential services such as drug pickups, viral load testing, and adherence support across facilities like Kubwa General Hospital, Nyanya General Hospital, and Maitama District Hospital. To ensure access, 22 children received transport support, while 11 children previously lost to follow-up were successfully tracked and returned to care.

CFHI also conducted nutritional assessments for 45 children and carried out risk assessments for 272 children in different communities. A Case Managers' review meeting and capacity building session further strengthened service delivery during the month. Routine monitoring and household verification took place in Karimo Sabo, Tosho, Jiwa, and Waru communities.

ACTION TO SUSTAIN PRECISION AND INTEGRATED HIV RESPONSE TOWARDS EPIDEMIC (ASPIRE)

Community engagement remained central, with 78 beneficiaries participating in food demonstrations showcasing nutritious local meals in Sabon Gari, Kobi Sarki, and Piwoyi communities. Psychosocial support activities reached 81 children across Bwari, Nyanya, and Karamajiji, covering topics such as adherence, gender equality, and mental health.



Food Demonstration at Bwari



During the OTZ Activity at Karamajiji

Notably, Mothers' Love and CAP activities in Kogo, Byazhin Across, and Kagini communities reached 509 beneficiaries, offering health talks, screenings, and incentives. Four women tested positive for HIV during these events, with two newly diagnosed women promptly referred for treatment.



CFHI continued to support caregivers through Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) activities, reaching 62 caregivers in community sessions and 65 caregivers in facility-based sessions, focusing on breastfeeding, complementary feeding, and nutrition. Additionally, 58 adolescents were engaged in Operation Triple Zero (OTZ) sessions across Orozo, Karshi, Bwari, and Karamajiji, emphasizing treatment adherence and mental health.

SAFEPAD PRODUCTION

SafePad is a unique and awardwinning sanitary pad with a special antimicrobial treatment produced by Centre for Family Health Initiative (CFHI) in partnership with Real Relief, Denmark. To partner with us to end period poverty in Nigeria and beyond, kindly contact info@cfhinitiative.org or ed@cfhinitiative.org for more information. The permanently bonded antimicrobial technology helps heal vaginal infections by removing yeast and bacteria during use and care



OUR APPEAL

Interested in helping in any aspect of our work?

Persons interested in donating to our activities, offering volunteer services or partnering with us, are always welcome. All CFHI's projects are community based and family-centred, so that our beneficiaries are reached with activities that proffer sustainable solutions. Therefore, individuals or groups concerned with improving community health, sustainable socio-economic empowerment and the development of family-centred policies should kindly do so through the channels below

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