



2525

Special Release

07 October, 2010

MAJOR GRANT AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT

The United States National Institutes of Health awards Medical Education Partnership Initiative [MEPI] grant to UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is partnering with the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) with a plan to invest \$130 million over five years to transform African medical education and dramatically increase the number of health care workers. Through the Medical Education Partnership Initiative (MEPI), grants are being awarded directly to African institutions in a dozen countries, working in partnership with U.S. medical schools and universities. The initiative will form a network including about 30 regional partners, country health and education ministries, and more than 20 U.S. collaborators.

Eleven programmatic awards, largely funded by PEPFAR, will expand and enhance medical education and research training in the field of HIV/AIDS. Over a five-year period, MEPI intends to provide up to \$10 million for each programmatic award, A complete list of awards and collaborating partners is available: www.fic.nih.gov/programs/training_grants/mepi/awards.htm

It is heart-warming to announce that the University of Ibadan is one of the eleven institutions receiving the programmatic awards. The University will be leading a consortium of six Nigerian Universities and partnering with two US Universities to implement programmes towards improvement and strengthening of medical education system Nigeria. In addition, the grant will help these institutions to contribute to the PEPFAR's goal of training and retention of 140,000 new health care workers in the next five years and improve the capacity of partner countries to deliver primary health care. The improved medical education system and capacity from this programme will be transferred to the other medical schools in the country through the National Universities Commission.

SCOPE OF WORK

The NIH Medical Education Partnership Initiative in Nigeria (MEPIN) provides an opportunity to address many of the challenges facing the Nigerian education institutions today with the overall goal of improving and strengthening the medical education system in the country. The MEPIN will enhance the knowledge and skills of students and medical graduates to effectively meet and sustain the specific health care needs of Nigeria.

The University of Ibadan is the lead medical school with partners including: University of Jos, University of Nigeria, University of Maiduguri, Ahmadu Bello University, University of Lagos, the AIDS Prevention Initiative Nigeria Ltd, Northwestern University and the Harvard School of Public Health. All institutions making up the MEPIN consortium have been long-term development partners in the Harvard PEPFAR program.

The specific aims of the proposal are: 1) Evidence based revision, updating and re-structuring of the current medical education program including: MBBS [MD equivalent], Bachelor of Dental Surgery, Nursing, Pharmacy and Basic Medical Laboratory Sciences; 2) Develop a health issues training program for young adults using pre-medical, nursing and health professional students as a model; 3) Develop specific mentoring, skill-building, and continuing medical education programs for post-graduate students and faculty; 4) Enhance the multidisciplinary research capacity for post graduate students and faculty by implementing directed career oriented programs; 5) Create MEPIN Research Fellowship programs. These new models for training and career development opportunities for post graduates and faculty will create an enabling environment to promote locally driven research.

Once implemented, they will demonstrate a sustainable increase in the recruitment and retention of trained health professionals and academic faculty, increase the number of medical students who begin local practice, become members of academic faculty, and/or conduct research related to the implementation of PEPFAR and other public health priorities in Nigeria.

PUBLIC HEALTH RELEVANCE: The Nigerian medical education system faces many challenges including a decayed infrastructure, misplaced priorities, and inadequate resources. The majority of medical graduates are unable to adequately translate their knowledge of basic sciences to public health approaches to disease prevention. There is a dearth of research capacity for students and faculty, this MEPIN proposal seeks to address these deficiencies directly.

STRENGTH

According to the scientific reviewers, the strength of the proposal includes productive collaboration between the Nigerian universities and Harvard University, strong support for Nigeria from PEPFAR, which has built all of the infrastructure, and a feasible training plan. It was also noted that the University of Ibadan is a leading university in Nigeria that is capable of providing support for the other medical schools.

Principal Investigators:

Professor D. O. Olaleye

Professor I. F. Adewole

Co- INVESTIGATORS:

University of Ibadan

Professor A. Ogunniyi	-	Department of Medicine
Dr. E.O. Olapade-Olaopa	-	Department of Surgery
Professor O O. Akinyinka	-	Department of Paediatrics and Provost COM
Professor A. O. Omigbodun	-	Department of O&G
Dr. Georgina N. Odaibo	-	Department of Virology

Site Leaders of other Nigerian Institutions:

Professor Haruna Muktar	-	Ahmadu Bello University
Professor Solomon. Sagay	-	University of Jos
Dr. Oche Agbaji	-	University of Jos
Professor Sade Ogunsola	-	University of Lagos
Professor Sulaiman Akanmu	-	University of Lagos
Dr. Wadzani. Gaschau	-	University of Maidugari
Dr. Chinwe Chukwuka	-	University of Nigeria
Dr Prosper Okonkwo	-	AIDS Prevention Initiative in Nigeria, Abuja

Site Leaders of United States Partnering Institutions

Professor Phyllis Kanki	-	Harvard School of Public Health, Boston
Professor Robert Murphy	-	Northwestern School of Medicine, Chicago

Thank you.

Omotayo O. Ikotun (Mrs.)
Registrar