

RVTH

Royal Victoria Teaching Hospital

PRESS RELEASE:

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RVTH thanks Development Partners

On Friday 17th December 2004, the Royal Victoria Teaching Hospital (RVTH) held its annual Partners Breakfast. This event (the fourth annual edition of its kind) gives RVTH the opportunity to publicly thank its partners for their assistance during the year, to look with them to the future and to seek their views on how RVTH should move forward.

RVTH was honoured by the presence at the event, held in RVTH's Conference Hall, of Dr Yankuba Kassama, the Hon Secretary of State for Health and Social Welfare, Dr Ebrahim Samba, the outgoing WHO Regional Director for Africa and a great friend to RVTH for many years, Dr Nelson Shivute, WHO Representative, Mr Essa Khan, Permanent Secretary, Department of State for Health and Social Welfare and Mr Geoffrey Renner, Chairman of the RVTH Board. Many donors were represented at the event, both domestic partners and representatives of other governments, including His Excellency the Cuban Ambassador, who delivered words of support for which RVTH is very grateful.

The RVTH Chief Medical Director, Dr Pamela Esangbedo, delivered a presentation to the assembled partners and their representatives, in which she gave an overview of the hospital's development over 2004 and the current state and range of the services it can provide. RVTH sees over 200,000 outpatients a year and admits around 20,000 in-patients, of which over half are paediatric patients. RVTH houses the Regional Ophthalmic Training Programme in its eye clinic, and specialists from all over the sub-region come to Banjul to train. Dr Esangbedo touched on some highlights of 2004, including the opening of the Standard Chartered Bank Paediatric Ward by His Excellency the President Dr Alhaji Yahya A J J Jammeh on 23rd July 2004, the refurbishment of Campama and provision of psychiatric drugs by ActionAid The Gambia and the ongoing pledge from Africell to provide stocks of badly needed consumables.

Dr Esangbedo, supported by Dr Malick Njie, the RVTH Deputy Chief Medical Director, made a direct appeal to donors to sponsor the construction of a building to house RVTH's kidney dialysis unit. Equipment, consumables and training have already been pledged, but a building to house the service is needed.

Dr Esangbedo also set out RVTH's vision for the future, to become a centre of excellence in the sub-region and to provide the health services needed and deserved by the Gambian nation.

The Hon Secretary of State for Health and Social Welfare congratulated Dr Esangbedo and all the staff at RVTH for their work and dedication. He stated that the Government was fully behind RVTH's development into a Teaching Hospital and looked forward to the graduation of the first Gambian-trained doctors in 2005.

Speaking after the event, Dr Esangbedo said "It was good to meet together with our donors to exchange ideas and explain a little about how their support to RVTH makes an enormous difference to the lives of Gambians. I feel confident that, with such partners, RVTH can make great strides in 2005 and beyond."