MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENT
27 OCTOBER 2011

ELEVEN GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS TO INTRODUCE PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES

The Kenya Hospice and Palliative Care Association (KEHPCA) announced a major investment by The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund and the True Colours Trust to support the integration of palliative care into public health services in Kenya. The funding is through the Waterloo Coalition - a collaboration of donors and palliative care organisations working in Kenya and Malawi. The Ministry of Health has identified eleven public level 5 and provincial hospitals across the country in which to establish palliative care services for the care of patients with life-limiting illnesses.

The Government of Kenya’s commitment to establish palliative care services in these hospitals will guarantee a more effective, efficient, and equitable health system. A working health system that includes palliative care services is vital to ensure widespread pain and symptom control and an improvement in the general care, support and quality of life for patients and families facing life-threatening illnesses in Kenya.

This significant public-private partnership will focus on the development and implementation of a national training programme for the integration of palliative care into hospital services, the development and dissemination of comprehensive hospital palliative care guidelines, provision of technical support and mentorship for hospitals, and the measurement of the impact.

Over 220 health care professionals will be trained in palliative care throughout the programme, with eight established Kenyan hospices to mentor the newly emerging hospital palliative care units. The programme will ensure that local community healthcare professionals are aware of the new palliative care services at the hospital so that patients and families receive smooth and timely referrals.

KEHPCA project that the partnership will enable an additional 4,000 new adult cancer patients and 5,000 adult HIV / AIDS patients to receive high quality palliative care through the new hospital units in a period of one year. It is also projected that an additional 500 new paediatric cancer patients and 1,000 paediatric HIV / AIDS patients will receive palliative care through the new hospital units each year.

Dr. Zipporah Ali, National Coordinator, KEHPCA, explains

‘Effective palliative care results in patients spending more time at home and reduces the number of hospital inpatient days. It improves symptom management; provides patient, family and care giver satisfaction; reduces the overall cost of disease and improves quality of life of patients and family. This partnership will demonstrate and document these benefits and will highlight how palliative care can be used to strengthen the government health care system.’

Lucy Sainsbury, Chair, True Colours Trust, said

‘The Government of Kenya’s commitment to integrate palliative care into eleven public level 5 and provincial hospitals is commendable. We are delighted to be part of this partnership. It will help ensure that people with life-limiting illnesses across Kenya are able to access pain relief and symptom control.’

ENDS
Notes to Editors

1. What is Palliative Care?
   Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients facing problems associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment, treatment of pain, and holistic treatment of other problems including the physical, psychosocial and spiritual. A key component of palliative care is the support of families and caregivers.

2. What is a Level 5 Hospital?
   Level 5 hospitals in the Kenya health care system provide very specialized care and oversee the implementation of health policy at the county level, maintain quality standards, and coordinate and control all district health activities. Level 5 hospitals act as referral hospitals to the level 4 (district hospitals) and as an intermediary between the level 6 national central hospitals and the district hospitals.

3. Key programme outcomes will be
   - The training of 220 health care professionals from 11 government hospitals
   - CME's for a further 50 of the wider staff at each of the 11 hospital
   - Sensitization of local community health care professionals on the available palliative care services at the hospital - so that patients and families are referred appropriately
   - 8 hospices to act as mentors to the hospital palliative care units
   - The development of hospital palliative care guidelines
   - Improved access to pain relieving morphine through work in partnership with the Global Access to Pain Relief Initiative

4. Background
   To support the scale up of palliative care, including access to pain relief, services in Kenya, in 2009, KEHPCA launched a campaign to introduce formal palliative care services into Government hospitals in the country. Over the past two years, through advocacy efforts spearheaded by KEHPCA with the Ministry of Medical Services and the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, a strong working partnership with both ministries has been established. Indeed as a direct result of this partnership KEHPCA was involved in the Government of Kenya’s recently completed National Cancer Control Strategy.

   A key outcome of KEHPCA’s advocacy work, the Government of Kenya has now selected 11 public provincial and level 5 hospitals operating at high patient volumes to begin integrating palliative care as part of their core services. A formal circular letter to inform the Provincial Directors of Medical Services in the ten hospitals was posted in July 2010 (An eleventh hospital, Kisumu District Hospital, has since been added to the program). This is a great achievement in the history of palliative care in Kenya, and the Ministry of Health (MOH) has officially requested KEHPCA to initiate and support the process of integrating palliative care in the hospitals. In January 2011, KEHPCA submitted a formal summary report to both Ministries. This report addressed the concerns and needs of the selected hospitals and made recommendations for the roles of the ministries, the hospitals and KEHPCA for the project to be successful.

   Through this significant initiative, a comprehensive program of work will be undertaken across 2011 and 2012, leading to the full integration of palliative care in the 11 Government hospitals.

5. Kenya Hospice and Palliative Care Association
   The Kenya Hospices and Palliative Care Association (KEHPCA) which is the National Association, was formed to represent Hospices and Palliative care service providers in Kenya. The aim of the association is to scale up Palliative Care services in the country to bridge the very significant gap between those who get the services and those in need of the services. This encompasses addressing issues of accessibility, affordability and quality of the services. KEHPCA focuses on advocacy; education and training; scaling up palliative care services; Setting standards for palliative care; networking and developing private and public partnership to advance palliative care in Kenya.

6. The Waterloo Coalition
   The Waterloo Coalition is a time-limited initiative which was established to dramatically improve access to palliative care and pain relief in Kenya and Malawi. It comprises The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund, the True Colours Trust, the African Palliative Care Association (APCA), the Global Access to Pain Relief Initiative (GAPRI), the International Children’s Palliative Care Network (ICPCN) and the World Palliative Care Alliance (WPCA). The Open Society Institute’s International Palliative Care Initiative, the Foundation for Hospices in sub-Saharan Africa (FHSSA) and EMMS International have observer status.
Working to a tight time-scale – April 2011 to December 2012 – the Coalition will identify and support in-country partners who can work alongside government providers to increase the number of patients accessing palliative care. This will be done by replicating successful projects, training staff and ensuring access to essential drugs.

7. **The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund**
   The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund (the Fund) works to ensure that palliative care - an affordable and holistic approach to healthcare that provides relief from pain and symptoms and emphasises quality of life for patients and their families - is available to all those with HIV/AIDS, cancer and other life-limiting illnesses who need it. This is through **scaling up services, developing education and training, advocacy** and **research and evaluation**. The Fund wants to ensure that palliative care becomes fully integrated into national health policies and systems, fully integrated into the strategic plans of HIV/AIDS and cancer stakeholders working in sub-Saharan Africa - and a funding priority for donors.

8. **The True Colours Trust**
   The True Colours Trust is committed to improving access to affordable palliative care for adults and children in sub-Saharan Africa, prioritising the need for appropriate pain relief. True Colours works to increase awareness of palliative care and to influence policy at a regional and international level; improve access to opioids; and support palliative care services across the continent through a small grants programme administered by APCA. The Trust’s work is currently focused on Kenya, Malawi and Zambia.

9. **Press enquires, image and interview requests:**
   KEHPCA Tel: +254 (0) 20 2729302. Julia Strong, Email: julia@kehpca.org
   The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund, Tel: +44 207 902 5500. Olivia Dix, Email: olivia.dix@memfund.org.uk
   The True Colours Trust, Tel: +44 207 410 0330. Email: truecolours@sfct.org.uk