

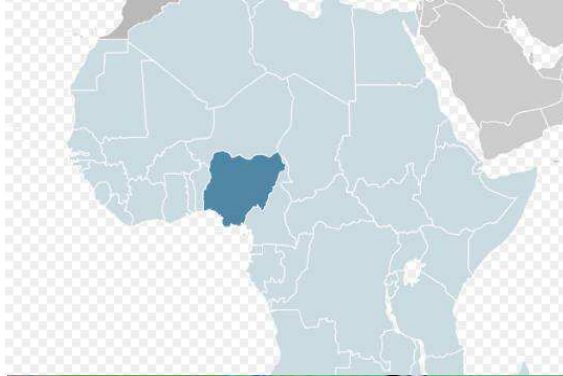
CardioStart announces inaugural mission to Enugu, Nigeria

April 12-25, 2015



We invite volunteers experienced in pediatric cardiac surgery and pediatric intensive care to participate in this important and exciting program building effort at the University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital in Enugu, Nigeria.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria, is a federal constitutional republic comprising 36 states. Its capital is Abuja. The country is located in West Africa and shares land borders with the Republic of Benin in the west, Chad and Cameroon in the east, and Niger in the north. It is the most populous country in Africa, and with 174 million citizens, the 7th most populous country in the world. British colonialism brought good and bad, and many suffered under British rule. Independence was achieved in 1960, but later civil war did great damage to the developing societal structure. The nation is divided between 500 ethnic groups, in which Christianity and Muslim are the most popular religions. Despite being an important economy, healthcare development has been severely limited.



Enugu State, in the southeastern part of Nigeria, is one of the 36 states constituting the Nigerian Federation and is far from the occasional media attention directed at the northern part of the country. The word "Enugu" (from Enu Ugwa) means "the top of the hill" and designates the oldest urban area in the region.



The city owes its geopolitical significance to the discovery of coal in 1909 by British geologists. The emergence of a permanent cosmopolitan settlement influenced the construction of a railway line to link the Enugu coal field with the sea port in Port Harcourt for export of the mineral.



Enugu is also located within an hour's drive from Onitsha, one of the biggest commercial cities in Africa. English is widely spoken in Enugu, and the climate is temperate with a mean temperature in April of 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

Status of Healthcare in Nigeria

It could not be clearer that there is a serious need of our assistance in Nigeria. The Nigerian Center for Disease Control says poverty and pollution have reduced the national life expectancy to 47 years old, one of the lowest in West



Africa. While health officials dispute the number, none dispute the urgency of improving health care in the region.



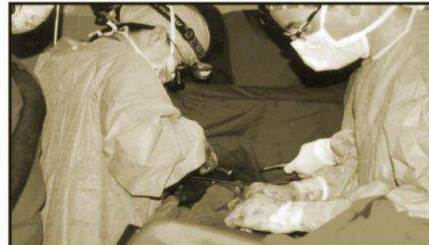
Open heart surgery:

UNTH back on track as National Cardiothoracic Centre of Excellence

By Themegbunem Okafor



*Medical Personnel from USA monitoring an Open Heart Surgery Machine at UNTH, Ituku/Ozalla, Enugu



*Open Heart Surgery in progress at UNTH, Ituku/Ozalla, Enugu

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One problem exists in Nigeria that no one disagrees with: *When people here die young, they usually die from diseases that could have been prevented or treated.* Westernization of cities like Enugu has led to increasing problems with hypertension, smoking, obesity & diabetes with no correspondent education in preventive cardiovascular or prenatal care. Additionally, while the preponderance of congenital heart defects mirrors other parts of the world, access to definitive surgical treatment is severely lacking.

The University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital (UNTH) in Enugu is among the top five teaching hospitals in Nigeria, with the statutory mandate of research, teaching, and specialist healthcare delivery. Although the Minister of Health has designated UNTH as a National Cardiothoracic Centre of Excellence, until recently no cardiac surgery had been performed there for over 10 years.

In 2013, an umbrella NGO called the VOOM Foundation (www.voomfoundation.org) headlined the first of 6 subsequent missions to make cardiac surgery possible again for patients from all over Nigeria. There are Cardiothoracic Surgery, Cardiology, & advanced nursing training programs in place, and strong support from the state & hospital administration to move the center toward an independently functioning program to serve the people of Nigeria.

This represents an excellent opportunity for CardioStart clinicians to make a meaningful difference offering real-time education, technique demonstration, best practice & protocol implementation to allow UNTH to move toward this important goal.

Team Composition & Volunteer Concerns

This mission will be co-directed by Emily Farkas, MD & Peter Allen, CCP, who performed the first heart surgery at UNTH in March 2013 and have great familiarity with the area and program. We will also be joined by Dr. Vincent Ohaju, the founder of the VOOM Foundation, a trauma surgeon currently working in Duluth, Minnesota. Dr. Ohaju has personal ties to Nigeria and has personally witnessed the effects from lack of available medical care on friends and family, including the loss of his father who passed away in 1983 at the age of 56 due to complications from aspiration of a piece of meat, which is something that could be corrected with a simple procedure, in even the smallest hospital in the United States. In fact, over 95% of the people in Nigeria live without essential medical services. This is an opportunity for those of us in a position to effect change to greatly help those less fortunate. The 2015 team will include the following positions:



- 2 Pediatric Surgeons
- 2 Pediatric Perfusionists
- 1-2 Pediatric CV Anesthesiologists
- 2 Scrub/Circulating staff
- 1 Pediatric Cardiologist
- 1 Pediatric Intensivist
- 6 Pediatric CV ICU Nurses
- 1 Pediatric Nurse case manager
- 1 Pediatric Respiratory Therapist
- 1 Database/Research Collator

Volunteer safety is a very high priority for CardioStart International. Although 6 recent volunteer missions by other groups have been successfully completed without a single safety issue, a dedicated team of Nigerian security staff will be assigned to the mission and accompany our team members each day and evening to eliminate any concerns volunteers may have.

Additionally, CardioStart is sensitive to current questions surrounding Ebola in West Africa. Please note that on October 20, 2014, the World Health Organization declared Nigeria free of Ebola virus (please refer to www.WHO.int for further information).



Travel Logistics

International airfare costs will be self-funded by each volunteer. Flights should be arranged for travel to & from Lagos (LOS, Murtala Muhammed International Airport). The team will then travel together on a short domestic flight to Enugu. Please do not purchase a ticket until you are accepted on the team by written confirmation.



Lodging will be provided in a safe & excellent local hotel by our hosts. Volunteers should expect that they may be asked to agree to same-sex room sharing in order to help reduce cost. During the day, meals will be available and provided by the hospital. Evening meals/snacks, etc. are available in the hotel or local restaurants, at volunteers' own expense. They are generally of a high standard and inexpensive.

Touring

Lagos, Nigeria is considered by many to be "the Big Apple of Africa" and will be our international port of entry and departure.

Nigeria has several very beautiful national parks rich in diverse flora and fauna, and an enormous variety of prized jungle animals, Several secure and fully guided tour opportunities are available through Nigerian Tourism (www.tourism.gov.ng). some highlights include the Yankari Game Reserve and the Obudu Mountain Ranch.

Touring attractions and arrangements locally and for other points in Africa can be pursued from Lagos, but must be undertaken before or after the mission.



Please! Look beyond the politics and struggles of Africa. Come and help us do some amazing work for a people who are very deserving of better cardiac healthcare!

