

## **University of Nairobi Dental Hospital Receives Global Recognition for Tobacco Dependence Treatment**

The University of Nairobi Dental Hospital (UONDH) is one of 19 organizations worldwide selected to receive a financial award to expand work in the field of tobacco dependence treatment. The grant, presented by Global Bridges Healthcare Alliance for Tobacco Dependence Treatment, hosted by Mayo Clinic, and Pfizer Independent Grants for Learning & Change (IGLC), is part of \$2.3 million in awards to support healthcare professional training and advocacy around the world.

The awards complement existing work in tobacco control and represent the first major funding in the area of tobacco dependence treatment in low-and middle income countries, a need outlined in Article 14 of the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. WHO estimates that tobacco use will kill 1 billion people this century - with low and middle income nations affected disproportionately - unless immediate, decisive action is taken.

According to Richard Hurt, M.D., emeritus Director of the Mayo Clinic Nicotine Dependence Center, the work that UONDH is doing in tobacco dependence treatment is part of a comprehensive tobacco control strategy that is necessary to reduce premature death, illness and economic loss. “As tobacco use reduction measures, such as taxation, targeted media campaigns, and smoke free policies, increase the demand for treatment services, it is imperative that help is available to those who want to quit,” says Dr. Hurt.

UONDH is an oral health care referral centre that is run by the School of Dental Sciences (SDS) in the Kenyan capital. It is situated on Argwings Kodhek Road, 3.5 kilometres from Nairobi city centre. UON – SDS trains students at undergraduate and post-graduate levels and is a registered continuous professional development (CPD) provider. Its degree programmes have regional recognition in the East African Community member states. The objective of the project spearheaded by UON - SDS is to evaluate the effect of training in tobacco use prevention and cessation (TUPAC) counselling on the uptake and participation of oral health care providers (OHCP) in tobacco control.

Global Bridges Chair and Director of the Mayo Clinic Nicotine Dependence Center Taylor Hays, M.D., sees the grants as just the beginning. “These grants are seeds that are being planted in countries where there are no or little resources to do this type of work. Our hope is that it will grow from there.”

Since its inception in 2010, Global Bridges has advanced effective tobacco dependence treatment and advocated for effective tobacco control policy. This includes creating training curricula based on established best practices and training more than 3,300 healthcare professionals from 66 countries. A multilingual website ([www.globalbridges.org](http://www.globalbridges.org)) has helped to facilitate collaboration worldwide.

To learn more about SDS’s award winning plans, contact Dr. Elizabeth Dimba at [eaodimba@yahoo.com](mailto:eaodimba@yahoo.com).

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This graphic shows the geographic spread of proposals received by Pfizer IGLC for Global Bridges. There were 39 full proposals covering projects in 32 countries.

