

Gender

'Breast cancer not spiritual disease'

By Gilbert Mawuli Agbey,
AGONA SWEDRU

THE President of Breast Care International (BCI), Dr Mrs Beatrice Wiafe Addai, has advised women against attributing the cause of breast cancer disease to a curse or something spiritual.

She said it was about time the myth surrounding breast cancer was demystified and considered to be like any other disease which needed to be treated early to prevent death.

Dr Wiafe Addai, who is also the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Peace and Love Hospitals, gave the advice while addressing a day's breast cancer education and screening exercise at Agona Swedru in the Central Region last Saturday.

James Mckeown, Calvary Methodist and First Baptist Child Development Centres (CDCs), under Compassion International.

According to her, most women, after identifying symptoms of the disease, attribute it to a curse and rather go to prayer camps for treatment and visit hospitals only at a point where the disease has reached a fatal stage.

Early detection

She stated that such acts should be stopped to help reduce the rate at which breast cancer was killing a lot of women in Ghana and over the world.

She explained that breast cancer was the number one killer disease among women all over the world and that the fight against it was a global one aimed at reducing its prevalence rate.

She mentioned that the cause of the disease had not yet been found and

their parents so that early medical treatment could be sought.

She called on the beneficiaries to do regular breast self-examination to enable them to detect any deformity and report to a specialist for treatment.

She stressed that the disease was curable though it was one of the communicable diseases, adding that women should as quickly as possible detect any abnormal changes in the breast through examination.

She called on the public to do away with the myths, misconceptions as well as the stigma about the disease which had put fear in many women, preventing them from seeking medical care.

She called for an aggressive awareness campaign against the disease since lack of knowledge about it had compelled most affected women to delay its treatment.

Quick read

- 1: About 300 project children and their caregivers, under three Child Development Centres (CDCs), have benefitted from a breast cancer education and screening exercise at Agona Swedru.
- 2: The objective of the event was to expose the children to the symptoms of the disease so that they could easily report any deformity in their breast to specialists for treatment.

Francis Kwesi Ackom, told the *Daily Graphic* that breast cancer disease was causing the death of many women including young ladies and it was necessary for education on the disease to be intensified to help control it.

He indicated that the event was organised for the children who needed to be well-equipped with knowledge about the disease at their tender age so

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preventing them from seeking medical care.

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including young ladies and it was necessary for education on the disease to be intensified to help control it.

He indicated that the event was organised for the children who needed to be well-equipped with knowledge about the disease at their tender age so that they would be in a better position to report any strange changes in their breast for medical attention.

Punish males who impregnate teenage girls

Nana Adjoa Awindor

Gender Desk

Executive Director of the Obaapa Development Foundation, Nanahemaa Adjoa Awindor, is pushing for stricter punishment of males who impregnate teenage girls.

According to her, promoting a campaign ensures that males who impregnate teenage girls are equally made to bear the brunt of their actions to serve as a deterrent.

She was speaking at a Community Entry Durbar of the '1000 Teenage Mothers Back to School Project' (TMBTSP) at Agogo. The durbar, which sought to find a fitting strategy for the implementation of the project (TMBTSP), brought together stakeholders and partners, including the Agogo Hema, Nana Afrakomaah Serwah Kusi Aboadum; the Ghana Education Service, Obaapa Development Foundation, Child Vision, CAMFED and the Swiss Embassy.

Statistics

Statistics from the Ghana Health Service (GHS, 2012) shows that 75,000 teenagers between the ages of 15 and 19 got pregnant in

Nanahemaa Adjoa Awindor stressed that the prevalence of teenage pregnancy was disturbing and wondered why teenage girls

were made to drop out of school while their partners were left to continue with their education, a situation she said must not be encouraged.

According to the Executive Director of the Obaapa Development Foundation, girls dropping out of school affects the empowerment of women. She stressed that education of females had an additional significance for the development of nations.

She intimated that when the male partners were also made to stay at home, just like the teenage mothers, that would serve as a deterrent to teenagers who indulged in early sex.

Nanahemaa Adjoa Awindor tasked family members and the community to give the necessary support, guidance and counselling to teenagers who find themselves in such situation.

Stay away from early sex

The Asante Akyem North District Director of Education, Mr Edward Adams, said teenage pregnancy was one of the main factors hampering girl-child education in the district. He has, therefore, lauded the Obaapa Development Foundation for the initiative.

He also indicated that many pupils in the area dropped out of school because of eye sight



• Nana Adjoa Awindor (left), Nana Afrakomaah Serwah Kusi Aboadum, the Agogohemaa and the Swiss Ambassador, Mr Gerhard Brugger at the durbar.

and hearing problems and went on to appeal for medical assistance for such pupils.

The Agogohemaa, Nana Afrakomaah Serwah Kusi Aboadum, for her part, admonished teenagers to stay away from early sex and rather engage in healthy habits.

The queen also encouraged teenage mothers to take up the opportunity and enrol on the 1000 Teenage Mother Back to School Project and insisted that early pregnancy did not mean an end to future aspirations.

The Swiss Ambassador, Mr Gerhard Brugger,

proposed that the Obaapa Development Foundation should expand its operations to cater for the education of more teenage mothers who had dropped out of school as a result of early pregnancy.

He indicated that although Switzerland lacked natural resources, it had become one of the successful nations because it invested heavily in education. He thus urged the girls to strive to complete their education despite the odds.