

## PAN AFRICAN GLAUCOMA ASSOCIATION PRESS RELEASE

**The Pan African Glaucoma Association (PAGA) inaugural meeting in Accra, Ghana; Bridging the Gap in Glaucoma Care in Africa and in Diaspora, NYC, USA- Accra, Ghana, -2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2024**

The Pan African Glaucoma Association, PAGA, kicked off its inaugural meeting at Marriott hotel, Accra, Ghana on the 27 June, 2024. The focus was improving glaucoma awareness and care in Africans and African Diaspora. People of African descent have the highest rates of blindness from glaucoma around the world. More than half of the people do not even know they have this. Under the theme, **Bridging the Gap in Glaucoma Care in Africa and in Diaspora**, glaucoma experts/ophthalmologists and other stakeholders involved in eye care in the African and Diaspora gathered with a deep sense of commitment towards advancing glaucoma treatment and research across the continent and Diaspora.

This 3-day meeting advocated on the need for active collaboration, exchange of knowledge, innovative approach to patient care, all aimed at alleviating the burden of glaucoma/glaucoma related blindness in People of African Descent, (PAD). This congress also featured many scientific symposia, expert panel discussions, glaucoma wet lab sessions, and sought for inter disciplinary collaborations amongst experts to improve the outcome of this visually disabling/sight threatening condition. People of African descent with glaucoma often present with more advanced disease. Early detection remains the gold standard in the prevention of blindness due to glaucoma. This congress was locally co-hosted with Ophthalmological Society of Ghana, OSG. In attendance were members from several countries in Africa, the Diaspora, and throughout the world. The Congress was a pivotal gathering to shape the future landscape of glaucoma care in Africa.

The Opening Ceremony was chaired by the former Ghanaian First Lady, Her Excellency, Lady Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings. She is also the Patron of Glaucoma Patients Association in Ghana. The keynote address of the event was delivered by Dr. Anthony Nsiah-Asare who was the Special Guest of Honor and the Presidential advisor on Health. In his address, Dr. Anthony Nsiah-Asara said that glaucoma accounted for 19.4% of all causes of blindness in Ghana. He stressed that there is an urgent need for concerted effort to bridge the gap in glaucoma care. He identified Awareness creation, improving access to eye care, improving access to eyecare services and provision of affordable and sustainable treatment options as major pillars to bridging the gap. These points were also echoed by the Chairperson, Lady Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings as she implored the experts to work together towards reducing the public health significance of glaucoma in Africa.

📍 PAGA Main Office  
49 West 127th street, New York, 10027  
✉ info@panafricanglaucoma.com  
☎ 212 663 0473  
[www.panafricanglaucoma.com](http://www.panafricanglaucoma.com)



In his address, the President of Pan African Glaucoma Association, PAGA, Dr. Daniel Laroche affiliated with New York Eye and Ear of Mount Sinai and New York University Medical Center stated that “we can prevent blindness from glaucoma with early detection and earlier cataract surgery, microinvasive glaucoma surgery and newer glaucoma surgical techniques”. The President of Ophthalmological society of Ghana, OSG Dr. Dziffa Bella Ofori-Adjei, reiterated that PAGA is testament to the shared commitment of experts to combat glaucoma in Africa through collective effort.

The Honorary lecture of the event was delivered by Professor Karim Damji of Agar Khan University, Pakistan, a Professor Emeritus of University of Alberta, Canada and was introduced by Dr. Dan Kiage of Kenya. He emphasized building glaucoma capacity to meet the needs of the increasing numbers of people with glaucoma with the aging population.

The excellent scientific session was organized and coordinated by Dr. Karen Allison of University of Rochester, USA and the program committee. The excellent glaucoma surgical wet labs were organized by Dr. Adunola Ogunro of the Eye Foundation Hospital, Nigeria and the surgical wet lab committee.

We wish to thank our Silver Sponsor, The National Medical Association Ophthalmology Section, and bronze sponsors New World Medical, Eyeonic and Zeiss. We also thank all other supporters, attendees and those that donated.

For more information on glaucoma, accessing glaucoma care and to donate and support please visit. [www.panafricanglaucoma.com](http://www.panafricanglaucoma.com)

