TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am a consultant paediatrician in charge of the Paediatric Cancer Unit at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital, Accra, Ghana. I am a member of the National Cancer Care plan Steering committee and a member of the Cancer Society of Ghana.

In 2008, two AfrOx executive members came to Ghana and met with some of us at the University of Ghana Medical School to discuss how Ghana could be helped to become a model for cancer care in sub-Saharan Africa which could then be rolled out to other countries in the region.

Currently, AfrOx is spearheading a proposed twinning programme between the Paediatric Cancer Unit at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital, Accra, Ghana and the Hospital for Sick Kids in Edinburgh. This will go a long way to help address the numerous challenges in caring for childhood cancer patients in a resource poor country such as Ghana. The twinning programme will help strengthen the human resource capacity for childhood cancer care in Ghana as well as provide some logistics including equipment where appropriate.

AfrOx is supporting the organisation of the 9th Africa continental Meeting of the Society of Paediatric Oncology in Accra, Ghana, March 10th – 12th 2010 by providing funds for a preconference workshop and for a speaker for one of the conference sessions. This has been invaluable.

AfrOx has supported the Cancer Society of Ghana in its activities which have included awareness raising among the general public with regards to cancer related issues – prevention, early diagnosis, treatment and care including palliative care. Activities of the Cancer month in 2008 which included health talks and screening for breast and cervical cancer were funded by AfrOx.

AfrOx has also provided resource persons for palliative care lectures given to health workers in Ghana.

Due to the persistent, unflagging support of AfrOx, Ghana is much closer to completing a national cancer care plan by mid 2010. AfrOx has sent one of its technical people to Ghana for
two months to work closely with the cancer care plan committee and to provide assistance whenever required.

I support AfrOx because unlike some organisations that impose their own ideas on beneficiaries, AfrOx works as a real partner aiming to improve whatever we have identified as our areas of need. AfrOx does not take over control but facilitates quite unobtrusively so that we do not become reliant on an external donor in the long term. AfrOx is very open to ideas and suggestions at all times. AfrOx also fulfils its word and so far has not made promises or proposals that have not been realistic or are unachievable.

In my opinion, AfrOx is a genuine partner in the journey towards improving prevention, early diagnosis and holistic care for cancers in a country such as Ghana and potentially other countries such as ours in Africa.

Dr Lorna Awo Renner
(Consultant Paediatrician)