

## **REPORT OF THE IAAND 2020 PROJECT AWARD**

The 2018 IAAND AWARD project titled USE OF THE NUTRITION FOCUSED PHYSICAL EXAM (NFPE) BY DIETITIANS IN GHANAIAN HOSPITALS aimed to enhance the quality of nutrition care provided to patients by strengthening the usage of the Nutrition Focused Physical exam by dietitians in Ghanaian hospitals. The specific objectives of the project were as follows;

1. To assess dietitians' level of knowledge, training, and barriers in the performance of NFPE.
2. To organize a training and skills update workshop for Ghanaian dietitians on the use of NFPE in collaboration with University of North Florida (UNF).
3. To conduct a post – workshop survey to evaluate knowledge and extent of use of the NFPE, six months after the workshop.

The project took off with the baseline survey which found that, more than half of dietitians (51%) surveyed had a fair knowledge (attaining scores within the 50 – 74% range on the knowledge test) whilst 39% of dietitians scored greater than 75% on the knowledge test. Time constraints was the most frequently reported barrier that affected dietitians' use of NFPE.

Following the findings of the baseline survey, a skills update Workshop was organized by the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, School of Biomedical and Allied Health Sciences, University of Ghana (SBAHS-UG) in collaboration with the University of North Florida (UNF).

The aim of the workshop was to enhance and strengthen the skills and knowledge of dietitians and nutritionists in the implementation of NFPE.

The workshop was held on Friday August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 at the Main Examination Hall of the College of Health Sciences, University of Ghana, Korle Bu campus. The program begun with a welcome

address by Professor Solomon Ofori-Acquah, Dean of School of Biomedical and Allied Health Sciences-UG. This was followed by a research presentation on the use of NFPE among dietitians in Ghana by Dr Laurene Boateng, the IAAND 2018 AWARD recipient. Professor Lauri Wright, director of the clinical nutrition program at UNF took participants through the AND/ASPEN (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics/American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition) malnutrition criteria while Sherri Lewis, also from University of North Florida took participants through the NFPE process. Participants had the opportunity to ask questions after each presentation.

About 240 participants comprising dietitians, nutritionists, dietetic interns, as well as faculty and students from dietetic departments of sister universities attended the workshop. Following the workshop, resource persons and faculty from both UG and UNF, paid working visits to 3 selected hospitals in Accra to offer hands on support to dietitians on the use of the NFPE.

The final phase of the project was carried out in May 2019. All dietitians in hospital-based practice (both private and public hospitals) who were participants of the NFPE skills update workshop were surveyed. The aim was to evaluate the use of the NFPE by dietitians in Ghanaian hospitals after the workshop. A Likert scale measuring overall confidence level in using the NFPE before and after the workshop revealed an increase in confidence levels, from  $2.97 \pm 1.08$  before the workshop to  $3.53 \pm 1.38$ , eight months after the workshop. The IAAND 2018 project award played a crucial role in achieving this feat. Findings of the project has been accepted as part of an educational session for the recently rescheduled International Congress of Dietetics (ICD), 2021. Food and nutrition professionals in developing countries particularly, will benefit from being able to replicate the project in their own settings for improved nutrition care in their countries.







A photo of Faculty and staff of University of Ghana and University of North Florida.