



# Health For All

## Who We Are

Health For All (HFA) is a non-profit organization that provides free primary healthcare in rural Nigeria. HFA's prime objective is to decrease morbidity and mortality related to Hypertension and Diabetes. HFA provides services in a small town in South-East Nigeria. In this area, as in most of Nigeria, the population is extremely poor and people strive to survive day to day. They concern themselves with basic necessities, like food for the day and shelter. People often seek healthcare when it interferes with their function, and the concept of chronic disease management or health maintenance is very foreign. Hypertension and Diabetes are chronic diseases that often have very high morbidity burden and mortality if left untreated. Success in management of these diseases require ongoing medication management and lifestyle modification. In December of 2014, HFA started the process of improving outcomes of Hypertension and Diabetes for the people it serves in this community. To date, we have provided over 2000 episodes of care. HFA offers Blood Pressure and Diabetes screening twice a year. From the screenings, we identify those with Hypertension and Diabetes. We have over three hundred diagnosed cases of Hypertension and Diabetes. Once diagnosed, HFA follows participants monthly with Hypertension and Diabetes screenings, and medications. HFA health screenings include blood pressure and blood sugar checks, health education, a meal, and maintenance medications – Acetaminophen, Iron, Multivitamin, and Vitamin C. We also distribute seeds for planting to promote increased vegetables in the diet. Health education is a key component of improving outcomes for this population. Health education at our first event in December of 2014 aimed to recognize the impact of these diseases on the health and life of the population.

## Screening Events

HFA currently holds two screening events per year. HFA screening events take place under tents and canopies set up in a village square. A local coordinator arranges the location and publicity for the event. Each screening event requires staff of about 15, a mix of staff nurses and student nurses from the local school of nursing, and other support staff. We also use several volunteers for the packaging of medications. They package a thirty-day supply, each, of four different medications for up to 600 people.

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## August, 2016 screening event

At our most recent screening event on August 6, we served 370 participants, all of whom came out during a week of busy activities in the local communities. An additional 60 people came to the follow up clinic for confirmation of diagnosis of Hypertension, and or Diabetes. At this time of year in the communities, women are busy with activities of 'August meeting', they travel back to the communities from far and near to participate in meetings. The month of August is also in the thick of the rainy season. 430 people were not deterred even by the threat of heavy rain during the event.

In addition to Hypertension and Diabetes, other health topics were also addressed, including different chronic leg ulcers, often a complication of both diseases. The common belief in the communities is that Chronic leg ulcers are due to poisoning or voodoo cast on the diseased person by another.

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### Changing beliefs

As I cleaned the wounds on the leg of a villager, she cried out saying, "see what they have done to me". I reassured her that she would be fine. A neighbor who attended the Screening event, came by and proceeded to tell her that her wound was due to disease, and not from Voodoo or poisoning. The neighbor asked, "didn't you hear when we were told that at the village square", "didn't you see the picture".

## Health Education changing beliefs and habits

Health education is a key component in the treatment of Hypertension and Diabetes, and other Chronic diseases, for which there aren't a cure, but must be managed to prevent complications and improve outcomes. Health education at our first event in December of 2014 aimed to recognize the impact of these diseases on the health and life of the population. A basic introduction and description of both Hypertension and Diabetes, in very simple and understandable language, was given to the participants. Information was delivered with assistance of a translator as needed. With each subsequent health screening event, the education component builds on that of previous events. The July 2015 event, used a Q&A format to improve learning.

Our most recent event in August 2016, did just that. An initial reinforcement of past instructions about the role of salt in Hypertension, was followed by expanded instruction on the role of stress on Hypertension. Similarly, dietary practices in the management of Diabetes was also further expanded. During this event, our Health Education also touched on Arthritis, proper use of medications, and Chronic leg ulcers. We also used enlarged and laminated pictures and written information as visual aids to improve learning.

Participant questions during Q&A session are evidence that information from the Health Education is gradually changing attitudes about health, and specifically, Hypertension and Diabetes in the community.



## Why HFA

Before HFA, the concept for Chronic diseases and the need for maintenance care in the management of chronic diseases was foreign. When people get sick they go to the nearest medicine shop or clinic for medications to treat and cure the problem. Hypertension and Diabetes were treated in the same way. This approach to managing both of these diseases leads to complications that cause damage to body organs. Through Health Education, HFA is gradually changing this attitude towards health and disease. Participants are beginning to understand and accept that diseases like Hypertension and Diabetes must be treated long term, with both medications and lifestyle work, i.e., dietary measures and physical activity.



## Monthly Clinics

HFA holds monthly clinics for participants diagnosed with Hypertension, and or Diabetes. Every month reminders are sent to participants by phone and text message about the upcoming clinic. The monthly clinic is run by a two person staff, one checks the blood pressures and blood sugars, while the other distributes the medications. Participants receive a month's worth of medication refills, and this way they never run out of their supply. This further reinforces the importance of consistent use of medications in the control of Hypertension and Diabetes.

HFA is providing very useful and necessary service to a community that is experiencing high disease burden from Hypertension and Diabetes. HFA is changing attitudes and beliefs about disease and wellness

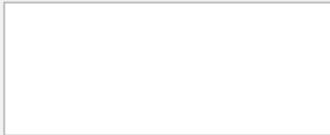
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*Health For All ... because everyone  
deserves a chance at Life*

Find us on the Web:  
[www.healthforallglobal.com](http://www.healthforallglobal.com)



## Join Us

HFA aims to host two screening events annually, and monthly follow up clinics to ensure participants continue to take their medications consistently. Please join us to improve health outcomes for persons with Hypertension, and Diabetes in these rural communities. Join us by helping make it possible for us to continue this work.

## Support us

\$12 will provide one month supply of blood pressure and Diabetes medications to a participant. Participant response rate less than 50% of our diagnosed population. With better funding, we can hire more staff, and better refine our outreach efforts. Our screening events will also benefit from improved facilities, instruction equipment to improve learning. Your support will help us achieve our goal to increase the number of screening events per year, and allow for the addition of screening locations. Each screening event cost about \$7500, and the monthly events cost about \$350.

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