

“Anti Smoking Campaign in Ghana.” The Daily Graphic. Ghana Health Service.
<http://www.ghanahealthservice.org/articles.php?nd=51&tt=%20Anti%20smoking%20campaign%20in%20Ghana>

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2013-06-09

A group of campaigners from the world anti-smoking coalition has arrived in the country to partner the Ghana Health Service (GHS) and the media to push the tobacco free agenda forward.

The objective of the group is to advocate the passage of the National Tobacco Control Bill in Ghana to give meaning to the ratification of the tobacco control treaty introduced by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 2003.

The WHO treaty, known as the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, has the objective of reducing the public health toll from tobacco, since the treaty obliges the countries that ratify it to adopt measures that include bans on advertising tobacco products, requirements that all ingredients used be listed on packaging-and broader legal liability for manufacturers, which include payment of higher taxes.

The anti-tobacco team which is made up of members of the Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada and the Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth, Nigeria - have already met officials of the Food and Drugs Board (FDB), the Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS), the Ghana Health Service (GHS), some media houses and other stakeholders to push the issues of smoke-free environment in Ghana forward.

During a visit to the Daily Graphic in Accra the Executive Director of the Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada, Ms Cynthia Callard, said that there was the need to protect the lives of non-smokers from the activities of those who had chosen to die through smoking and, therefore, called for the immediate passage of the bill.

She said countries should not be deceived by the few dividends they received from tobacco manufacturing companies, since they ended up spending even more on the health of the people because of the effects of tobacco.

Ms Callard said Ghana's failure to pass the bill was making the rest of the countries in the sub-region to adopt wait-and-see attitude, since many of them considered Ghana as a pacesetter when it came to policy formulation.

She said it was important that stringent measures were adopted to free the world of tobacco, since 50 per cent of people who smoked globally would eventually be killed by tobacco if they did not stop it.

Other members of the team that visited the Daily Graphic were the Research Director of the Physicians for a Free-Smoke Canada, Mr Neil Collishaw; the Programme Manager of Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth, Nigeria, Mr Akinbode Oluwafemi; a

Senior Health Research Officer and the Focal Person for Tobacco Control of the GHS, Mrs Edith Koryo Wellington; and a Health Promotion Specialist of the GHS in Tamale, Alhaji Abdul-Rahman Yakubu.

Source: Daily Graphic