

# Sharecare Ghana

Sharecare4u 

Annual Report &  
Financial Statements for  
the Year ended 2011

## ***CORPORATE INFORMATOPM***

Charity Registration Number : G 22,564

Social Welfare Reg. Number : DSW 3972

Registered Address : P.O. Box CT 4910  
Cantonments  
Accra  
Ghana

Executive Director : Nana Yaa Agyeman

Executive Council : Doris Ahiney Obodai-Sai - Chairperson  
Adwoa Sey  
Lara Cookay  
Phyllis Christian  
Anne Sekyi  
Nana Yaa Agyeman

Company Secretary : Joseph Gadagbui

Bankers : Ghana Commercial Bank Ltd  
Kaneshie Industrial Area

Auditor/Accountant : Portfolio Financial & Management Systems  
P.O. Box KN5239  
Accra-North

Advisors & Patrons : Dr. Albert Akpalu – Physician Specialist/  
Neurologist, Korle Bu Teaching Hospital  
Dr. Nii Adjetey Bonney Andrews – Neurosurgeon,  
neuroGHANA  
Alhaji Abdul-Rahman Harruna Attah –  
Managing Editor, The Accra Mail.

## ***BRIEF CORPORATE PROFILE***

Sharecare Ghana was incorporated as a non-governmental organization (NGO) in Ghana to support people with autoimmune and neurological conditions, including families and caregivers.

The association, founded in 2006, was registered in November 2007 and launched in 2008.

The aims/objectives of the NGO among others are:

1. To create awareness among the public about these diseases
2. Share feelings and experiences
3. Act as an advocacy group to pressurize local and national health authorities to treat autoimmune and neurological diseases with the seriousness deserved in the national health care delivery system;
4. Talk through problems facing us
5. Network with similar organizations locally and worldwide.

### ***DONATIONS***

Donations in cash or kind are mainly from;

- Professional medical bodies/officers
- Banking institutions
- Families and friends

## **MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

2011 was a relatively quiet year for Sharecare Ghana, perhaps in tandem with the global slowdown.

The highlight of the year was that the much awaited Noguchi Memorial Institute research began. Although scaled down to an exploratory study, it is a start and is expected to lead to more detailed research.

There were no activities in June and July because many members were unwell at this time. This seems to be a recurring trend perhaps because of the inclement weather at this time of the year, and may be worth investigating.

Apart from awareness creating activities about autoimmune and neurological conditions during the year, members continued to focus on ‘Sharecare children’ - children with neurological conditions. We plan a number of projects for the year ahead, aimed at supplying the needs of these children, and expect the public to support our modest efforts to give them a better life.

We are grateful to our sponsors for the year including Melting Moments, Buck Press Ltd., Ghana Oil Company Limited, Ghana Commercial Bank, Alternative Source of Income Program (ASOIP) and the many individuals who do not want to be named. We thank you all for your continued assistance, which has kept the association afloat.

In gratitude,

Nana Yaa Agyeman

# **REVIEW OF YEAR 2011**

## **Programmes Carried Out**

Activities for the year 2011 were in line with Sharecare's stated mission of awareness creation, advocacy, support and promoting research.

### **AWARENESS**

#### **Seminars**

The association held a number of seminars during the year beginning in April with students of the University of Ghana Medical School to bring autoimmune and neurological diseases under their radar even before they finish school. The students said it was unique for a patients' group to come to them, and suggested that such forums should be held more regularly.

In November a seminar was held at Trinity College to tell seminarians about autoimmune and neurological conditions, disability and how the clergy can help change negative attitudes in society. Another aspect was to caution them about trying to 'heal' people with disabilities when they do not have the ability to do so.

Sharecare members also joined the Ridge Church Youth in December to educate them on the same topic. After a lively discussion, many of them offered to volunteer for Sharecare.

#### **Car stickers**

At the beginning of the year car stickers were printed for sale to create awareness and raise funds. It was pointed out however that the stickers did not explain what Sharecare actually does. Fidelity Bank bought 500 stickers to distribute in support of Sharecare.

#### **Video clips**

Three video clips were produced on disability aimed at sensitizing the public and changing negative attitudes. This was done under the Flexfund project introduced by Ghana Federation of the Disabled/DANIDA. A professional TV/film producer assessed the clips after they were completed however and said only one clip was good enough to be shown on television.

The lesson learnt is to use professionals in future for such projects even if the cost is high.

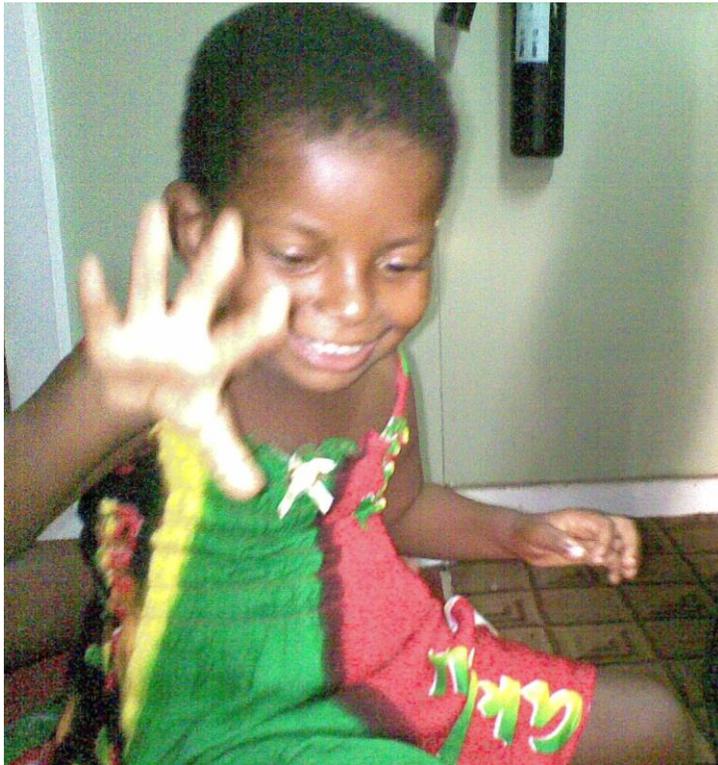
## **SUPPORT**

### **Support group**

The support group met ten times during the year. Topics by guest speakers included the gendered aspect of autoimmune diseases, relaxation and massage therapy and naturopathy as an alternative form of treatment

### **Sharecare children**

Support group meetings gave members the chance to follow the progress of Sharecare children. Last year we decided to 'adopt' Osu Alata in the Klottey Korle Constituency of Accra as our focal area to seek assistance for children with neurological problems. The rationale for this was to take our focus off our own health challenges as a kind of therapy. Osu-Alata was chosen because although located just behind the seat of government, the community is one of the more deprived settlements in the Greater Accra Region. Through our volunteer social worker who lives in this community, Sharecare has initially identified 10 children who need help.



**Four year old Ruth has been diagnosed with cerebral palsy**

The aim is to get them physiotherapy, speech therapy and special education when they are able to communicate, after which they will be mainstreamed into regular schools.

Kids Kingdom, a charity that supports the education of needy children, had promised financial support for the children's education needs. With that in mind, Sharecare paid for physiotherapist's assessment and first few visits and enrolled four of the children at the Special Education Needs, Counseling and Dramatherapy Centre (SENCDRAC) located in Abelemkpe in Accra. Kids Kingdom however said later that they had more children

than they could support. We therefore intend to raise the funds ourselves for the children. The estimated cost for 10 children was GHC30,000.

Sadly, two of the children died during the period - Junior who we could not get help for because his limbs had atrophied, and Little John who was neglected in spite of assistance to his parent from another NGO (Dorcas Foundation) in an income generating activity.

### **Members' welfare**

The welfare of members continued to pose a challenge, but visits were made to the homes of members facing severe challenges.



**Sharecare provided a wheelchair for Timothy a 17 year old boy with untreated hydrocephalus**

Some new members joined the association but others left when they found that they could not be assisted financially.

## **ADVOCACY**

### **National Health Insurance and home care**

No progress was made with efforts to get the National Health Insurance Authority to cover the conditions of Sharecare members, nor has the State reacted to the suggestion that it should fund home care through health insurance or taxes. Perhaps this is because the momentum of advocacy slowed down somewhat during the year because of changes within organizations partnering Sharecare in this campaign.

Members who cannot work were unable to access the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) because of the frustrating process at the Department of Social Welfare.

Sharecare will double its efforts on these matters in the year ahead.

### **Networking**

GFD - Sharecare participated in all activities of Ghana Federation of the Disabled including helping to draft the Legislative Instrument (LI) that will guide the enforcement of the Disability Law (Act 715) and International Day of Persons with Disabilities which was held in Wa.

IAPO - The Africa Network of the International Alliance of Patients' Organizations (IAPO) met in Johannesburg, South Africa in April bringing together 18 patient groups from across Africa including Sharecare.

Participants expressed frustration that health policies and initiatives rarely include patient involvement. They felt that patients can help ensure that healthcare services are developed to make the most efficient use of limited resources. They also drafted their input into IAPO's presentation at the UN General Assembly, which took place in September 2011.

### **RESEARCH**

Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research rewrote their research proposal and began an exploratory study into autoimmune diseases in Ghana. The main aim of the study is "to document the experiences of diagnosed autoimmune disease sufferers and their physicians to better understand the occurrence and management of autoimmune disease conditions".

It is hoped that the study will generate information to help identify autoimmune diseases that are of public- health priority in Ghana in terms of prevalence and that this will lead to more research.

### **Operations and Staff**

#### **The Board**

Elections were held in June as stipulated by the Sharecare Constitution and results announced at the annual general meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2011. Members retained Dr. Doris Obodai-Sai as Chairperson and Nana Yaa Agyeman. The new members were: Phyllis Christian, Lara Cookey, Anne Sekyi, Adwoa Sey and Joseph Gadagbui as Company Secretary.

The first meeting of the new Board took place on December 28<sup>th</sup> 2011. The Board decided on a review of anomalies in the Sharecare constitution; an expansion of the

Board; inclusion of some able bodied people on the management committee; more aggressive fundraising strategies and the need for members to show some commitment by paying dues.

### **Management**

The management team was expanded and the new team comprised: Deputy Director – Thiawa Dieng-Opon, Operations Director – Farida Bedwei, Public Relations Officer – Lily Osafo-Kissi, Secretary – Agnes Fobi and Assistant Secretary – Samuel Quarcoo.

### **Volunteers**

Several offers of volunteers were received and some accepted. The Flexfund project which should have ended in 2010, was completed in April 2011. Sharecare was unable to continue paying the transport costs of homecare volunteers after the project ended and had to let them go.

At the end of the year, Sharecare had three regular volunteers who rendered invaluable service to the organization and a driver who is given a regular allowance. The other volunteers were used as focal persons in the regions.

### **Challenges**

The health of Sharecare members, which brought them together in the first place, affects the implementation of planned activities. Members however achieved many of the targeted objectives for the year. Support group meetings came on almost every month and the Flexfund project was completed.

The Management Committee will factor this in future planning and be less ambitious.

### **Finances**

The association received GH¢5,288.00 this year in donations and fundraising as against GH¢11,181.59 received in 2010 in project funds, sponsorships and donations. Total income for the year was GH¢7,049.00 and Expenditure was GH¢6,342.00. The financial statement is attached.

Our donors and sponsors for the year included Alternative Source of Income Program (ASOIP), Buck Press Ltd., Ghana Oil Company Ltd. (GOIL), Melting Moments and several individuals. We are grateful to them for keeping the association going.

Barclays Bank closed Sharecare's account in September for non-fulfilment of 'Know your customer' regulations. Sharecare recovered the money and opened a new account with Ghana Commercial Bank., Kaneshie Industrial Area

## **Goals for the upcoming year**

Our projected budget for 2011 was GH¢15,000, which we expected from fundraising and donations. This was to go towards Sharecare children's therapies, awareness creation and advocacy. We fell far short of this projection.

We intend to find more innovative ways of raising funds in the upcoming year and write project proposals to potential donors.

The immediate goals are to continue raising awareness on autoimmune and neurological disorders, advocate for persons challenged by these conditions and finance the mobility and education needs of children with neurological disabilities.

***Prepared By:***

*Nana Yaa Agyeman, Executive Director*

*February 2012*