



NEVER AGAIN!!!

Vaah Junior Foundation for Better Maternal and Child Health

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Christmas and New Year Message from the Vaah Junior Foundation

Greetings in the name of our Lord.

After nine months of heartache, despair and hope, we are glad to come your way once again to wish all of you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year 2011. 2010 has been a year of heartache over the preventable losses of our loved ones, despair over the seeming inability and disinterest on the part of policy makers, regulators, providers and others to acknowledge the prevalence of substandard care and abuse of women who go to deliver in health institutions and the resulting preventable deaths and injuries that come with it. For those who would rather pretend that this phenomenon does not exist or that our advocacy is a case of vindictiveness against a particular hospital, we can only hope and pray that they never live to experience what the likes of Hamdiatu, Dzifa, Vaah Junior, Makafui and many more have had to experience.

In spite of it all, 2010 has also brought us hope that the issue of substandard care and abuse of laboring women in hospitals is now being recognized by major financiers of the health sector. A recent study funded by the USAID titled “Promoting Evidence & Action for Respectful Care at Birth” has identified disrespect and abuse in childbirth as both a human rights issue and an important quality of care problem that also results in many women opting for options other than institutional delivery when in labour. The report lists physical abuse, non-dignified care, non-consented care, non-confidential care, discrimination, abandonment of care and detention in facilities as some of the ways in which these women are disrespected and abused during childbirth.

We are especially encouraged by the efforts of the US Government’s Global Health Initiative to remove barriers such as the above that prevent women from accessing lifesaving health services such as assisted delivery. We hope that as key financiers of Ghana’s health sector make the issue of quality of care a key factor in their financing decisions; the government, regulators, providers and all who matter would have no option but acknowledge and deal with the problem once and for all.

On behalf of the Foundation, please accept our best wishes for a merry Christmas and a 2011 filled with hope. We acknowledge your encouragement and support, and hope we can count on you in this journey together.

Elizabeth Alluah Vaah (Mrs.)
Executive Director