

OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR



LAUNCH OF 2023 PINK OCTOBER AT THE TRUST HOSPITAL

ADDRESS BY:

**PROFESSOR NANA ABA APPIAH AMFO
VICE - CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2023
TRUST HOSPITAL, ACCRA**



Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

I am happy to be here this morning for the launch of this all-important annual health campaign, Pink October Breast Cancer Awareness month. All over the world, the month of October is dedicated to promoting awareness on breast cancer, supporting people diagnosed, educating people about risk factors, stressing the importance of regular screening, and fundraising for breast cancer research.

It is indeed an honor to be at the Trust Hospital, among dedicated healthcare professionals who have worked tirelessly toward the cause of breast cancer. Thank you for extending an invitation to me as guest of honour for this momentous occasion.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month holds a special place in our hearts, as it reminds us of the collective responsibility we share in the fight against this disease. I applaud The Trust Hospital for its unwavering commitment and dedication in breast cancer advocacy for over a

decade and half. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed, and they serve as an inspiration to us all. Dr. Juliana Ameh and your team of specialists, I commend you highly for championing this worthy cause.

Throughout Pink October, the Trust Hospital organizes routine screenings. I have been informed that last year, your team was able to screen an overwhelming number of almost 6,500 women. The results of this endeavor I believe served as a valuable foundation and stimulus for the introduction of The Trust Hospital's Oncology Service, now known as Trust Cancer Care.

This year's theme, "***Managing Together: A Step in Closing the Gap***," is both powerful and poignant. It reflects the collaborative approach needed to address the multifaceted challenges of breast cancer. It is a reminder that we must stand together, shoulder to shoulder, to bridge the gaps in awareness, access to healthcare, and support for those affected by this disease.

"Managing Together: A Step in Closing the Gap," speaks volumes about our collective efforts in the fight against breast cancer. It underscores the fact that no individual or organization can tackle this issue alone. It calls for a unified front where stakeholders including healthcare institutions, advocacy groups, universities, communities, and individuals come together to make a difference. This theme reflects the idea that our collective efforts are a vital step toward reducing the impact and burden of breast cancer on individuals and society.

The University of Ghana is proud to associate with The Trust Hospital in this noble endeavor. On our part, units of the University like the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR) and the West Africa Centre for Cell Biology of Infectious Pathogens (WACCBIP) during Pink October also organize breast cancer awareness and screening programmes for members of the community. Our researchers have been committed to advancing knowledge about the disease, exploring new treatment options, and enhancing early detection methods through collaborations with

experts and institutions both locally and internationally. Through seminars, workshops, and outreach programmes, we strive to disseminate accurate information about breast cancer, dispel myths, and promote early detection and prevention. UG has also been instrumental in nurturing health personnel who provide care for many conditions including breast cancer. As the premier university, we look forward to doing more this Pink October.

Ladies and gentlemen, statistics available indicate a worrying trend in the prevalence of breast cancer cases. Breast cancer is the leading cancer among Ghanaian women, and its incidence continues to rise. Breast cancer is a life-changing experience for those who battle it and their loved ones. This is compounded by the cost of management. Aside the financial burden, breast cancer also takes a toll on the emotional and physical wellbeing of patients and their families. Understanding this staggering reality helps us appreciate the urgency with which we should collectively tackle breast cancer.

While universities and healthcare institutions play pivotal roles, we cannot address breast cancer in isolation. Partnership with local

communities and organizations is paramount. We must engage with the community, raise awareness, and ensure that everyone has access to vital information and resources. The Trust Hospital's collaboration with various stakeholders exemplifies the power of partnership in tackling breast cancer. Together, we can leverage our collective strengths to provide comprehensive care, support, and education to those affected by this disease.

Ladies and gentlemen, acknowledging the challenges in managing breast cancer is also very essential. Limited access to healthcare services, late-stage diagnosis, and stigma are among the hurdles we must overcome. However, it is equally important to emphasize the opportunities for improvement and advancements in healthcare. The field of oncology is continually evolving, with promising developments in early detection, treatment modalities, and support systems for patients and their families. We must remain optimistic and forward-thinking, leveraging these opportunities to enhance the care and support we provide to those affected by breast cancer.

This launch is therefore a call to action to everyone present here and those watching online. Let us all get involved in spreading awareness about breast cancer. Encourage your loved ones to undergo regular check-ups, engage in healthy lifestyles, and lend your support to awareness campaigns with financial and other resources. Together, we can make a meaningful impact and save lives.

In closing, let us remember that the significance of this month is not just about a symbol of pink ribbons but a symbol of hope and unity. We are all in this fight together, and together, we can conquer breast cancer. Thank you once again for the opportunity to be part of this important event and may this Breast Cancer Awareness Month be a step closer to a future free from the burden of breast cancer.

Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo

Vice-Chancellor

2nd October 2023