

Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic, Euracare Advanced Diagnostics and Heart Centre successfully performed Ghana's first Intra-arterial chemotherapy (IAC) for an 18-month old female infant suffering from a Retinoblastoma (eye cancer) in the left eye.



Dr Vera Adobeia Essuman, Consultant Paediatric Ophthalmologist (left); Dr Dziffa Bella Ofori-Adjei (2nd left), Consultant Paediatric Ophthalmologist (Vitreo-Retinal Surgeon at UGMS / KBTH); Dr Benjamin Sarkodie, Euracare's Interventional Radiologist, Euracare Advanced Diagnostics and Heart Centre and Dr Fred Osei, Anaesthetist at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital, before the surgery.

Mr Benjamin Abaidoo (Ophthalmic Technician/ Principal Research Officer At the UGMS); with Dr Vera Adobeia Essuman, Consultant Paediatric Ophthalmologist (2nd left); Dr Dziffa Bella Ofori-Adjei, Consultant Paediatric Ophthalmologist (Vitreo-retinal Surgeon at UGMS / KBTH) and Dr Kwesi Amissah-Arthur, Consultant Vitreoretinal Surgeon (far right), after the surgery.



A team of Ghanaian Consultants from the University of Ghana Medical School (UGMS), the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital (KBTH), and Euracare Advanced Diagnostics and Heart Centre has performed the first-ever minimally invasive method for treating advanced eye cancers (Retinoblastomas) in Ghana. The innovative procedure called Intra-Arterial Chemotherapy (IAC) is an alternative approach to managing Retinoblastomas. Retinoblastoma is the most common malignant intraocular tumour in childhood, leading to death within 1-2 years if left untreated.



Euracare's Interventional Radiologist, Dr Benjamin Sarkodie, explained that IAC is a minimally invasive procedure for delivering a small dose of chemotherapeutic agents (cancer-killing drugs) into the ophthalmic artery (the blood vessel that supplies oxygen and nutrients to the eyes) without directly cutting into the globe. The procedure, thus, reduces the generalized toxic effects with chemotherapy. Treatment of a Retinoblastoma with this new technique in combination with radiotherapy is found to be more effective than radiotherapy alone.



An advantage with the procedure is that eye cancer that has not spread beyond the orbits of the skull can be salvaged to preserve vision and life. The leader of the team, Dr Vera Adobea Essuman (Consultant Paediatric Ophthalmologist) stated there were other methods of treating eye cancer in children, including radiation therapy, laser therapy, cryotherapy, immunotherapy, and surgery, but to mention a few. Other forms of treatment available in Ghana are chemotherapy and external beam radiation therapy.



Other members of the medical team were the Head of the Paediatric Oncology Unit of KBTH, Professor Lorna Awo Renner, and Mr Benjamin Abaidoo (Ophthalmic Technician/ Principal Research Officer at the UGMS).

Photography: Mr Barrak El-Mahmoud (CAPTURE your memory bank)

An article titled 'Chemotherapy used to treat eye cancer' was featured in the Daily Graphic newspaper on Thursday, May 28, 2020.

