



website [www.moteclife.co.uk](http://www.moteclife.co.uk)

☎ 07765 210362

70 Hunting Gate, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. HP2 6NX

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## **SUPPORTING, TRANSFERRING SKILLS AND UP-GRADING LABORATORY SERVICES IN THE THIRD WORLD**

I am the Chief Biomedical Scientist in a private Microbiology Laboratory in London. I belong to an organisation called **Motec-Life UK**. It is a charitable organisation comprising volunteer healthcare professionals, medico-legal experts and technicians whose objective is to provide sustainable healthcare to the underprivileged people of West Africa. Motec is currently undertaking a co-ordinated programme of educational and clinical activities at the Koforidua St Joseph's Orthopaedic Hospital and other satellite Health Institutions in Ghana, concentrating on Orthopaedic Trauma and allied surgical needs in this region. In doing so, the organisation is hoping to upgrade hospital-based healthcare services in the target hospitals by following an annual programme of four working visits with multi-disciplinary teams.

During my recent visit to Koforidua, I observed that the Pathology Laboratory needs massive upgrading to support our work; particularly microbiological analysis of samples for detection of nosocomial infections and antibiotic resistance patterns. So dire are the shortages that the laboratory workers have tried to fashion their own antibiotic discs from local blotting papers – a well-intended tactic that produces unreliable test results.

In the West, the chief means of tracking disease and drug susceptibility patterns is through high-quality laboratories and robust national surveillance. In Ghana, infections can be fatal. Laboratory and surveillance networks are luxuries. Bacterial culture and susceptibility testing, a necessary component of rational antibacterial prescribing, is uncommon. Furthermore, diagnostic tests for infections are usually unavailable or unreliable, and diagnosis is made largely on the strength of clinical signs and symptoms. They lack equipment, experienced laboratory workers and basic materials. Such material deprivations have discouraged scientists from embarking on basic research and the kind of studies that are desperately needed to map the true dimensions of antibiotic resistance. The role of a functioning laboratory in supporting Orthopaedic work at a hospital like St Joseph's, which serves both Ghana and its neighbouring countries, cannot be underestimated.

I am therefore appealing to you to support our effort. We would be extremely grateful if you could provide us with any of the listed equipments (old or new) and consumables to help train the local staff to carry out basic bacteriological culture. Not only would it help us to improve the service we provide the target hospitals during our annual visits, but also allow a substantial long term improvement in the service that healthcare workers can offer the local population after we have left.



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## **Equipment**

- Microscope x 1
- Incubators x 2 (1 x standard, 1x C02)
- Autoclave
- Centrifuge

## **Reagents/Consumables**

- Latex kits
- Antisera
- Antibiotic discs
- X and V supplements
- Cryovials
- Disposable Petri dishes
- Transport swabs
- Disposable inoculating loops
- Media powder format – all types

Thank you again for your support.

Raymond Ofori  
([www.moteclife.co.uk](http://www.moteclife.co.uk))

7<sup>th</sup> March, 2007.