

IN THE LOOP



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TOP NEWS OF THE QUARTER

- With heavy hearts, we mourn the passing of Henok Tesfay, who was not only a volunteer at CareEpilepsy but considered his home. We honour his memory by serving everyone affected by epilepsy and carrying forward his passion and dedication to raising awareness about epilepsy
- Elevating Epilepsy Care: Creating Awareness and Empowering Health Professionals in Debrebrhan. A commendation to Dr. Tesfaye Zelleke and Debrebrhan Comprehensive Specialized Hospital
- We were delighted to welcome staff from the Ethiopian Dietetic Association to our clinic this quarter! They shared their expertise, educating our patients about the importance of balanced nutrition for living well with epilepsy
- This quarter, we bid farewell to Sr. Haimanot Altaseb, our clinical service leader, thanking her for her invaluable contributions over the last four years. We warmly welcome Senay Hagos as our new Health Officer
- CareEpilepsy participated in the Annual Fasika Exhibition and Bazaar, reaching diverse audiences and creating epilepsy awareness
- Neurologists at the Forefront: Providing Expert Care to Patients

CEO MESSAGE: REFLECTING ON GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENTS

In our second quarter, with heavy hearts, we mourn the passing of Henok Tesfay, who was not only a volunteer at CareEpilepsy but considered his home. We honor his memory by serving everyone affected by epilepsy and carrying forward his passion and dedication to raising awareness about epilepsy. Additionally, we say farewell to Sr. Haimanot Altaseb, a highly esteemed leader who has contributed significantly to our organization for four years. Her leadership has driven us towards growth and success, inspiring colleagues along the way. We express our immense gratitude for her invaluable contributions and wish her well as she pursues new opportunities outside our fold.

For the past six years, CareEpilepsy Ethiopia has been dedicated to providing quality medical services for people with epilepsy. Our clinic, led by experienced health professionals, including neurologists, health officers, and nurses, ensures comprehensive assessments and EEG testing to optimize anti-seizure therapy and manage epilepsy-related behavioral or psychological issues, along with providing psychological support and counseling to families. Moreover, we have made necessary preparations to introduce a telemedicine service, enabling us to offer epilepsy care remotely.

In addition to our clinical services, we are committed to empowering patients and their families with epilepsy information, equipping them with the knowledge to effectively manage seizures and make informed choices for a healthier life.

As a result of our efforts, our services have contributed to the improved physical and mental well-being of patients and their families. Furthermore, our service-user involvement activities promote social bonding, offer learning opportunities, and facilitate access to services that enhance integration within the community.

Promoting public education is of utmost importance to us, and we invest time in conducting awareness programs at schools to increase society's understanding of epilepsy and reduce stigma while fostering inclusivity. Collaborating with schools, we empower teachers to handle epilepsy effectively and create a supportive environment for children in need.

Celebrating six years of providing quality epilepsy medical services, we extend gratitude to donors, volunteers, and well-wishers for propelling us forward. However, sustaining and meeting the needs of our patients is a challenge. We appeal for donations to ensure ongoing essential care for people with epilepsy, building a healthier, inclusive community together. Your support is crucial to prevent us from closing our doors on patients in need.

We urgently need your assistance through [donations](#) to guarantee the continuation of vital care for individuals with epilepsy as we work to create a more robust, inclusive community. Your donation is the lifeline that ensures our mission endures and transforms the lives of those struggling with epilepsy.

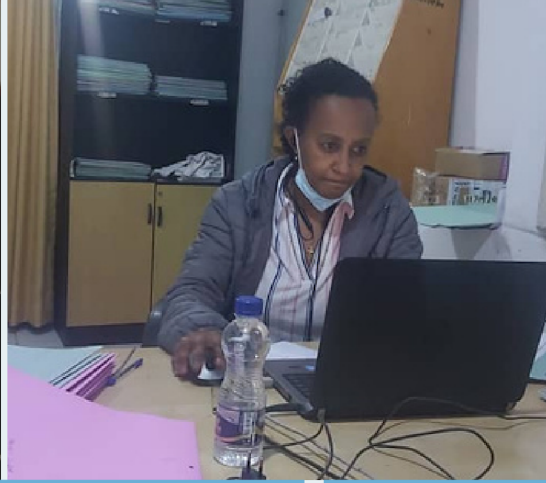
Stay tuned for more updates on our organization's latest developments and achievements in the upcoming newsletters.

Focus on epilepsy.

With warmest regards,

Enat Yewnetu
CEO, CareEpilepsy Ethiopia





CLINICAL SERVICES

During the second quarter of 2023, we are proud to share the following accomplishments:

- Thanks to our dedicated volunteer neurologists, our health officer and nurse, we provided care to 258 patients, addressing various epilepsy and associated health concerns and offering personalized treatment plans.
- Within this quarter, 99 patients were seen by our health officer and nurse, 76 adult patients were attended to by adult neurologists, and 90 children with epilepsy received care from our pediatric neurologist.
- 49 patients utilized our free EEG service, with the invaluable assistance of volunteer neurologists to interpret the EEG recordings.
- We arranged for 15 patients to have an MRI done.
- We provided medication to 116 patients and are grateful for the support of a generous family who donated unused medication, showing the spirit of sharing within our community during challenging times when acquiring medication has been difficult. Thank you Helina and Mekdem
- We are delighted to welcome 16 junior medical doctors and 2 nurse volunteers, marking the first time we have such dedicated support.
- Two new volunteer neurologists joined our team, providing enhanced training and clinic support.
- We successfully implemented electronic health records, streamlining operations and ensuring seamless continuity of care for all our patients.

We remain committed to serving our community and making a positive impact in the lives of individuals affected by epilepsy.

NEUROLOGISTS AT THE FOREFRONT:

Our neurologists have been receiving heartfelt appreciation and blessings from our patients, showing the positive impact of their care and dedication.



CLINICAL TRAINING

@ Debreberhan Comprehensive Specialized Hospital, Debrebrhan

We conducted an intensive training session for health professionals, taking our efforts beyond Addis Ababa to Debrebrhan city, located 130 kilometres away in Ethiopia. Over the course of 3 days, we successfully trained 26 health professionals from various weredas of Debrebrhan. The comprehensive program focused on different aspects of epilepsy, equipping the participants with updated knowledge and best practices in epilepsy management. By expanding the expertise of primary healthcare workers, more individuals living with epilepsy can receive timely and accurate diagnoses, proper treatment, and the necessary support to manage their condition effectively. This training initiative represents a crucial step towards improving the overall quality of epilepsy care and positively impacting the lives of patients in the community.

We extend our sincere appreciation to Dr. Tesfaye Zelleke, Associate Professor of Neurology and Pediatrics at Children's National Hospital in Washington, D.C., for partnering with us and his financial support towards our training program. Dr. Tesfaye's dedication to improving epilepsy treatment in Ethiopia is truly commendable. Moreover, Debreberhan Comprehensive Specialized Hospital's active involvement in facilitating the program's logistics further demonstrates their commitment to advancing epilepsy care within their facility



RAISING EPILEPSY AWARENESS AND FIRST AID SUPPORT AMIDST CONFLICT IN THE UNICEF CAMPSITE

In spite of the rain, our team raised epilepsy awareness and taught first aid at the UNICEF campsite in Debrebrhan, crucial due to conflict-related seizures. We also spread awareness on city streets, schools, and via radio programs.



EMBRACING CHANGE:

Farewell to Sr. Haimanot Altaseb and Welcoming Senay Hagos as Our New Health Officer

This quarter, we bid farewell to Sr. Haimanot Altaseb, our clinical service leader, thanking her for her invaluable contributions over the last four years. We warmly welcome Senay Hagos as our new Health Officer and we look forward to Senay's fresh perspectives and progress in delivering exceptional care. As Haimanot embarks on a new chapter, we express our deepest gratitude for her dedication and passion, and we wish her success in her future endeavors. In the image below, you can see Haimanot receiving a gift from the CareEpilepsy staff.



PUBLIC EDUCATION

In Ethiopia, despite over 1% of the population living with epilepsy, our community lacks awareness about the condition and proper treatment, leading to stigma,

discrimination, and inadequate first aid support for people with epilepsy. Our education program is a crucial first step towards early detection, effective treatment of seizures, and eradicating epilepsy-related stigma.



RAISING AWARENESS AT HEALTH CENTERS

A total of 290 community members attended our teaching sessions.



EPILEPSY EDUCATION AT SCHOOLS

In the first quarter, we worked together with local schools to deliver engaging epilepsy education sessions for children and adolescents. These sessions focused on important topics such as facts about epilepsy, seizure triggers, and seizure first aid. Here are the highlights of our accomplishments:

- This quarter we have trained 17,363 students and 500 teachers about epilepsy and taught epilepsy recovery positions. Teachers and other school staff are in a good position to spot seizures and help.

Additionally, we established an online teachers' support group facilitated by CareEpilepsy staff. This platform serves as a valuable resource for educators, providing them with information about epilepsy and offering any necessary support. Currently, we have 45 members actively participating in this group.

OTHER PLATFORMS

- We have continued to enhance our educational social media platform, dedicated to disseminating valuable information about epilepsy.
- A total of 4,000 leaflets and 400 posters were distributed to promote epilepsy education.



THE WELLBEING OF OUR PATIENTS

At CareEpilepsy Ethiopia, we understand the importance of holistic wellbeing which encompasses more than just physical health. Therefore, we have expanded our services to encompass various wellbeing initiatives, including:

Let's take a glimpse into the vibrant tapestry of activities that unfolded during the first quarter, all geared towards nurturing the wellbeing of our cherished patients:

- 1. Telephone Helpline:** 166 patients received information and advice through the helpline, providing them with support, guidance, and a better understanding of epilepsy-related concerns.
- 2. Home Monitoring Service:** 260 patients benefited from the nurse-led home monitoring service, ensuring regular check-ins to monitor their seizure status and offer tailored advice for effective management.
- 3. Counselling Service:** 64 individuals made use of the counselling service. Living with epilepsy can bring various emotional and psychological challenges, and our professional counselling is instrumental in alleviating their burden and learning effective strategies for managing stress.
- 4. Patient Support Group Meetings:** 126 patients and their families found solace in the monthly support group meetings, where experiences are shared, information exchanged, and mutual support provided.

NURTURING BONDS: Group Therapy Led by Sister Meron



CONNECTING OVER COFFEE: The CareCraft Social Club

- 1. Coffee and Chat Morning:** Engaging 130 individuals in weekly coffee and chat morning sessions, where patients socialize, connect, and explore their creativity through craftwork. This initiative empowers patients with new skills and therapeutic expression, fostering relaxation and reducing stress.
- 2. CareCraft:** By providing the training and raw materials for craftwork, we are fostering creativity and empowering patients to develop new skills. Engaging in creative endeavors serves as a form of therapy, allowing patients to express themselves, enhance their cognitive skills, and promote relaxation and stress reduction.

SPREADING SMILES AND SUPPORT:

A Delightful Visit to CareEpilepsy Ethiopia



CareEpilepsy Ethiopia was delighted to welcome supporters Etye Haimanot and Asmawit from London, along with Betlehem from San Jose, USA, on their recent visit to our center. They were amazed by the work we do and left with a renewed commitment to continue supporting our cause.

Oh, and to top it off, they surprised our children with some delicious cake! 🍰 The joy and laughter it brought were better than any antiseizure medication! 😊

We are so grateful for their support and can't wait to see the positive impact they will make on the lives of those affected by epilepsy. 🙌

Thank you Etye Haimanot, Asmawit and Betlehem.



UNVEILING THE JOURNEY: A PATIENT'S STORY

Mekdes Tilahun

Meet Mekdes Tilahun, a resilient individual living with epilepsy. Born in 1989 in Arcingele town, Mekdes was diagnosed with epilepsy seven years ago, which brought forth psychological, economic, and emotional challenges. At the peak of her struggles, she endured multiple seizures daily.

However, her life took a positive turn when she joined CareEpilepsy, in October 2017. Under our guidance, Mekdes started taking Phenobarbital regularly and implemented the lessons she learned about managing epilepsy triggers and medication compliance etc. As a result, she achieved reasonable seizure control and she currently continues to attend follow-ups at Amanuel Hospital and CareEpilepsy clinic.

Mekdes testifays " CareEpilepsy have been a lifeline for me, providing me with clinical care, medication assistance, and counseling. This has significantly improved my physical and emotional wellbeing."

As a member of our organization, Mekdes was granted the opportunity to engage in income-generating activities. In particular, she found her passion in baking injera, and CareEpilepsy Ethiopia equipped her with the necessary tools to start a business. She explains her situation "Through my hard work and determination, I can now work and support my family, including my loving children".

Mekdes expresses deep gratitude for everything our organization has done for her. The clinical services and psychological support have been pivotal in her journey, and she remains committed to making positive changes in her economic situation.

With a heart full of thanks, Mekdes acknowledges the life-changing impact of CareEpilepsy Ethiopia and our dedication to supporting individuals like her. She looks ahead with hope and determination, knowing that she has found a caring and empowering community to lean on



**WELLBEING
HUB**

TIPS FOR NURTURING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Life is all about balance, right? So, let's strike that perfect balance between living active lives and caring for our mental wellbeing. Whether you have epilepsy or not, finding joy in our leisure activities is a fantastic way to uplift our spirits and feel more fulfilled.

Tips for maintaining good mental health: Prioritize self-care, stay connected with friends, limit stress, get enough sleep, seek support, practice gratitude, engage in physical activity, embrace hobbies and avoid substance abuse.



EMPOWERING CHANGE: MEET OUR DYNAMIC YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

I'm Dagmawi Shimeles (the person standing in the middle of the picture), a 3rd-year medical student at Lorcan Medical College. As a volunteer for CareEpilepsy Ethiopia, I've had the incredible opportunity to raise epilepsy awareness among elementary and high school students, patients, and their families at hospitals and health centers. Alongside neurologists, I actively participate in monthly follow-up programs and have co-hosted an epilepsy awareness event in collaboration with CareEpilepsy Ethiopia at our college.

Recently, I took on the role of the main coordinator for the summer of 2023 volunteering program. This experience has been truly enriching and enlightening. The warm and welcoming support from the staff, especially Sister Meron, has been heartwarming. Working closely with some of the finest neurologists in our country and interacting with patients, each with their unique stories of bravery, has been an incredibly humbling experience.

Through this journey, I've learned far beyond what any textbook could teach about epilepsy and its profound impact on the lives of patients, families, and communities. I've become keenly aware of the prevalence of epilepsy and the lack of knowledge and stigmatization surrounding it in society. Above all, I've come to realize the incredible power of volunteerism and the positive changes we can bring to the lives of so many citizens through CareEpilepsy Ethiopia. Our volunteers, like myself, play a pivotal role in cultivating a compassionate and understanding community for those living with epilepsy.

FACTS CORNER

SEIZURES CAN SOMETIMES PUT YOU OR OTHERS AT RISK OF HARM!

THEREFORE DO: -

- Place padding on furniture edges or corners that are sharp or stick out
- Have a shower instead of a bath
- Do not lock the bathroom door
- Use an electric stove so there is no open flame
- Place saucepans on the back burners and with the handles turned away from the edge of the cooker
- Have a plan of action ready so that you can alert friends, family, or neighbors if you need assistance



MEET OUR STAFF

Kibrom Sahle



Introducing Kibrom Sahle, a remarkable individual born in Gurage zone in South Ethiopia. Since the tender age of 4, he has been living with epilepsy, diligently managing his condition with anti-epileptic medication. Today, he stands tall as a beacon of hope, holding the microphone and passionately speaking to patients at CareEpilepsy Ethiopia.

Despite the challenges posed by epilepsy, Kibrom's determination knows no bounds. In 2018, he accomplished an inspiring milestone by earning a bachelor's degree in special needs inclusive education from Addis Ababa University.

Four years ago, Kibrom joined Care Epilepsy Ethiopia, where he serves as a dedicated patient representative. For the past three years, he has facilitated monthly patient meetings and conducted home visits to monitor their wellbeing. He also plays a pivotal role in raising epilepsy awareness through media engagements and serving as a charismatic host for monthly programs.

"Being part of this extraordinary organization has been transformative for me. It has empowered me to overcome the challenges of living with epilepsy and equipped me with invaluable knowledge about epilepsy management. Now, I am driven to make a meaningful impact in my community. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to W/ro Enat Ewnetu, whose visionary leadership is bringing about positive change in our country. It fills me with immense pride to be a part of this organization." - Kibrom Sahle

We applaud Kibrom's unwavering dedication and the difference he is making in the lives of those affected by epilepsy. His journey exemplifies the power of resilience and the impact of CareEpilepsy Ethiopia's mission.



BUILDING BRIDGES: OUR VALUED PARTNERS

- In May, Yekatit 12 General Hospital celebrated its 100-year anniversary, and we were honored to be part of the festivities. As part of the celebrations, pediatric neurologists and residents from the hospital visited our organization. We were delighted to welcome them, and together, we provided specialized care to more than 20 pediatric patients in our clinic.
- We are pleased to have presented our latest report on epilepsy at the non-communicable diseases quarterly meeting organized by Addis Ababa Health Bureau. CareEpilepsy Ethiopia's report focused on epilepsy management and awareness, highlighting the impact of our training programs for health professionals. This collaborative event further strengthens our commitment to improving epilepsy care in Ethiopia.



OUR GREAT HEROES

Dr Abenet Tafesse

Dr. Abenet Tafesse is an Associate Professor of Neurology at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, where he plays a pivotal role in training neurologists as a Specialty discipline. With extensive experience in adult neurology both nationally and internationally, he currently serves at Black Lion Specialized Hospital and runs a private neurology clinic.

Dr. Abenet was among the first neurologists to join our inaugural awareness-raising walk in 2016, and he continues to be an integral part of our volunteer neurologist team, providing care at our free outpatient epilepsy clinic and offering training for healthcare professionals.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Dr Abenet Tafesse for his unwavering support and commitment.

Thank you, Dr. Abenet Tafesse.



LOOKING TO TALK TO SOMEONE?

Our helpful Information & Advice Officers are available to assist you. Reach us at +251 11 669 4455. We extend support to carers, friends, and families, emphasizing the importance of maintaining your own well-being while caring for someone with epilepsy.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

»»» THANK YOU

CareEpilepsy Ethiopia wishes to thank everyone who supported our work in kind and financially. Specifically, we want to thank the following organizations and teams for their generous donations, hard work, time and patience during this quarter.

- Our national youth and professional volunteers for their in-kind donations of service
- The Association of Ethiopian Neurologists for their in-kind donations of service
- Amhara Bank
- Friends of CareEpilepsy in Geneva
- Friends of CareEpilepsy in Atlanta

CareEpilepsy Ethiopia works with the most marginalised children, women and men who face barriers to getting the education and employment they deserve. At CareEpilepsy, we believe in the power of the individual and of a group of thoughtful, committed people to change the lives of people with epilepsy; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. Together we can save lives. Together we can change the perception of epilepsy. Together we can make a difference.

There are many ways to support us: become a member, volunteer your time, become a corporate partner and donate.

SAVING LIVES IS BETTER TOGETHER!

DONATE

»»» WAYS TO SUPPORT US

Give online

www.careepilepsyethiopia.org/donate

Ethiopia

CareEpilepsy Ethiopia

Account Number: 1000161849166

COMMERCIAL BANK OF ETHIOPIA

— ” —

"You wonder why I want you to spread epilepsy awareness when you don't have epilepsy? At one point, neither did I."

Help spread epilepsy awareness.

— ” —

COURTESY OF EPILEPSY ACTION
CAREEPILEPSY



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