

## **INTERNATIONAL SPINA BIFIDA AND HYDROCEPHALUS DAY CEREBRATIONS FOR SOUTH/ WESTERN UGANDA 2014**

The World Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus day is significant as it reminds the public and policy makers the reality about Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus and the continuous advances in medicine, health care and preventive measures. The World Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus day was designated by World Health Organization in 2012 to be recognized by all partner countries. It is celebrated 25<sup>th</sup> of October every year.

### **Theme for the Day: Access to Health for all.**

Children with Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus in developing countries used to die before their first birthday due to limited health care services. Through the Work of International Federation of Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus and its Partners, Services for Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus have been established in most of the countries worldwide. This has led to the increase in the number of children receiving services, growing into youths and adulthood.

However Persons with Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus encounter many disadvantages in our societies and are often subjected to stigma and discrimination and Children face this worst. Most health institutions are still unable to meet health care needs of persons with Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus. Most health workers are not informed about the two conditions and are usually hesitant to provide a service to people with Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus. Today parents with Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus Children South/western Uganda travel long distances regularly to 'OURS' in Mbarara, CURE Hospital in Mbale, and Mbarara regional Hospital to access health services.

We believe that if the existing Public and private health Institutions are informed and equipped, they are in position to support establishment of services for Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus in our communities.

Combined efforts of; Spina bifida/Hydrocephalus Children families, Communities, Policy makers, Government bodies, Civil Society Organisations, and Supporters/Doners...is very important to make this a reality.

'OURS' (Organised Useful Rehabilitation Service) is a community based rehabilitation program that empowers children with disabilities and their families to participate in society with an enhanced quality of life through provision of accessible, holistic and affordable rehabilitation service. It is a specialized department of Ruharo Mission Hospital started by Ankole Diocese in 1995.

With support from International Federation of Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus, OURS established Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus Interdisciplinary management Services in South/western Uganda. Today over eight hundred sixty four (864) Children with Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus are receiving services through this program.

As a way of improving awareness on Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus Interdisciplinary Services in the region, this year 'OURS' in Collaboration with Parents of Children with Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus have organized a series on activities to advocate for inclusive Health care services our communities. The main activities will take place in three districts of South western Uganda: Rukungiri, Kanungu and Kabale. They will include Radio Spots and a talk show, Outreach Clinics and Parents training day in each district. The celebration activities run from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and all major stakeholders from the above districts will be involved.

**Objectives for the celebrations:**

- To equip Stakeholders of Health services in the region with basic information regarding Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus, available services for interdisciplinary care.
- To take management Services for Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus children Closure to people in their communities, plan necessary interventions with care givers, review Clients on follow up, and give supporting information.
- To Improve ways of Identification, Proper referral and follow up of children with Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus in the region

- Train community resource persons/partners on Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus Interdisciplinary Services so as to build a referral network and Spina bifida and Hydrocephalus mainstream services

**For More Information reach**

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