

Stemming the Tide of Vaping and Shisha Smoking among University Students through Lung Health Awareness Campaign

Introduction

In July 2024, I received an invitation from the Pan African Thoracic Society (PATS) to apply for the PALI PATS 2024 Grant, aimed at promoting lung health awareness in Africa. My application, titled “Stemming the Tide of Increasing Incidence of Vaping and Shisha Smoking among University Student through Lung Health Awareness Campaign,” was successful. Following this, I was prompted to hold the event on World Pneumonia Day; however, due to a scheduling conflict with the academic calendar of Ebonyi State University (EBSU), we decided to commemorate World Lung Day on October 17, 2024. The theme for this year’s celebration was “Clean Air and Healthy Lungs for All” and sub theme for my event was “Breathe Easy: Vaping Hurts, Stop Shisha.”

Pre-Event Activities

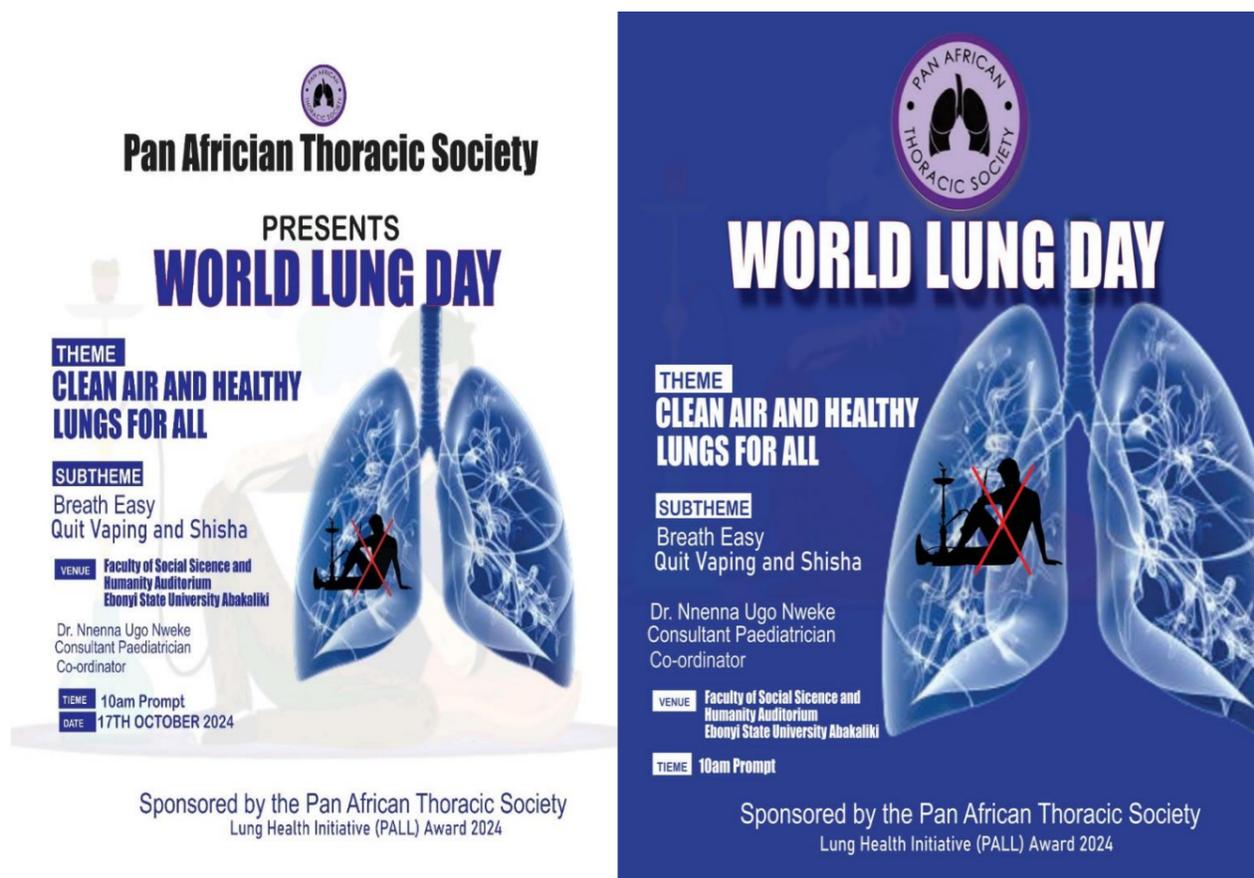
To prepare for the event, several activities were undertaken:

Flyers, banners, and branded T-shirts were designed and printed. The principal investigator (PI) took charge of these designs with resource persons. The PI conducted advocacy visits to EBSU management to secure support. The university generously provided the newly constructed auditorium as the venue and ensured power supply throughout the event.

Meetings with SUG leadership, including the president and health director, facilitated student mobilization and awareness efforts. The PI coordinated with medical staff to recruit trained health assistants as volunteers for pre-spirometry vital sign checks.

Volunteers from the College of Medicine at EBSU were recruited and trained in various tasks such as taking accurate measurement of height and weight using a stadiometer, quick medical history assessments to identify exclusion criteria. Also trained on how to ensure proper completion of questionnaires by participant, ushering and serving attendees. Two volunteers were trained on how to measure lung function using a handheld Micro-plus spirometer. Spirometry tests were conducted at two stations by the PI and a spirometry technician. A musical band was hired for the event, including a DJ/comedian as the master of ceremonies.

Inhalers were procured at a subsidized rate and to be distributed to students found to have lung function abnormalities. This initiative aimed to enhance access to essential medications for those in need, particularly in a university setting where students may face financial barriers to obtaining necessary treatments.



The Fliers for the Programme



Training section and the awareness Rally

Main Event

The event commenced with an awareness rally around the campus, engaging students, volunteers, and the PI. An ambulance was on standby for emergencies. The Dean of Social Sciences represented the Vice Chancellor during the rally, which concluded with a transition into the main program.

The main session included:

Brief speeches were delivered by the Dean and SUG president.

A skit was presented followed by an engaging performance from DJ Imakwa.

Two resource persons, The PI and Dr Joy Eze represented by Dr Victor Uduma delivered lectures on “ The Effect of Vaping and Shisha on Respiratory System” followed by an interactive Q&A session.

Standardized questionnaires were distributed to participants for feedback.

Volunteers who opted for lung function tests underwent spirometry assessments.

Refreshments and transportation tokens were provided for all resource persons, volunteers, and participants. Additionally, T-shirts were distributed to volunteers and participants who completed lung function tests.



The VC's representative Speech and The Resource Persons delivering speech



WORLD LUNG DAY

Theme: CLEAN AIR AND HEALTHY LUNGS FOR ALL

Sub-theme: Breathe easy, quit vaping and shisha

Stemming the Tide of Vaping and Shisha Smoking Among University Students
Through Lung Health Awareness Campaign
Powered by: [PAT Lung Health initiative](#)

PROGRAMME OF EVENT

9:00-9:45 AM	Rally and Photography
10:00-10:15AM	Welcome and introduction
10:15-10:45 AM	<p>Speeches</p> <p>Vice Chancellor Representative and the Dean</p> <p>The SUG President</p>
10:45-11:20 AM	Presentation
11:30AM-12:10 PM	Question and answer section
12:10-12:30 PM	Drama Skit
12:30 – 1:45 PM	<p>Health segment</p> <p>Lung function test</p> <p>Closing</p>
1:45 – 2:00PM	<p>Presentation of Inhalers</p> <p>Vote of thanks</p>

The Programme of the events

Conclusion

The campaign successfully raised awareness about the dangers of vaping and shisha smoking among university students while promoting lung health. The collaborative efforts between EBSU management, student leaders, medical staff, and volunteers contributed significantly to the event's success. This initiative aligns with global efforts to advocate for clean air and healthy lungs for all, particularly in light of this year's World Lung Day theme. By providing these inhalers to students, the campaign not only raised awareness about the dangers of vaping and shisha smoking but also directly addressed the healthcare needs of asthmatic students, ensuring they have access to vital resources for managing their condition. This dual approach of education and practical support is essential in fostering a healthier campus environment.



Spirometry section and the Presentation of inhalers

Outcomes and Sustainability of the Lung Health Awareness Campaign

The campaign successfully raised awareness about the dangers of vaping and shisha smoking among university students. Participants demonstrated a greater understanding of the health risks associated with vaping and shisha use, potentially leading to reduced usage among students...

By providing inhalers at a subsidized rate to students with asthma, the campaign directly addressed the healthcare needs of vulnerable individuals, improving their ability to manage their condition effectively.

The event saw active participation from students and faculty, fostering a sense of community involvement in lung health advocacy.

The administration of standardized questionnaires and lung function tests provided valuable data that can be analyzed to assess the prevalence of respiratory issues among students, contributing to ongoing research efforts in lung health.

To ensure long-term impact, the campaign can evolve into a continuous educational program within the university, incorporating lung health topics into existing health education curricula or student orientation sessions. Establishing partnerships with local healthcare providers and organizations can facilitate regular lung health screenings and educational workshops, similar to successful models seen in other regions. This collaboration can also provide access to resources and expertise for future initiatives. Encouraging the formation of student-led advocacy groups focused on lung health can empower students to take ownership of the issue and engage their peers in ongoing awareness activities.

Acknowledgement

I wish to sincerely thank the Pan African Thoracic Society (PATS) Lung health Initiative (PALI) for providing the grant to conduct this event. I wish to also thank the Staff and management of the Ebonyi State University Abakaliki for allowing us to utilize its infrastructure for the event free of any costs. I also acknowledge Prof. Joy Eze, Dr Uduma Victor, Volunteers, Staff of the university medical Centre and the Student Union Government.

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