

NEWS

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CCNMTL PARTNERS WITH MAILMAN SCHOOL FACULTY MEMBER ON \$2.8 MILLION GRANT TO IMPROVE HEALTH IN GHANA

April 22, 2009. CCNMTL is a partner in a \$2.8 million grant awarded by The Gates Foundation to Dr. James Phillips of Columbia's Mailman School of Public Health's Heilbrunn Department of Population and Family Health to develop, test, and disseminate a health information management system relying on low-cost cellular phone technology. This system, being developed in partnership with the Columbia Center for New Media Teaching and Learning (CCNMTL) and the Grameen Foundation, will be used to improve the timeliness, accuracy, and utility of information required by front-line health workers in remote communities of Ghana.

The Mobile Technology for Community Health (MoTeCH) Initiative, as the project is known, will improve health outcomes by enhancing information sharing at the community and district level. Working together with Dr. Phillips, CCNMTL will use the data submitted via health workers' cellular phones to develop data display, feedback, and user interface tools that provide support to local managers. District health managers will use the aggregated data to aid in community health service decision-making, district advocacy, and evidence-based leadership training and health workers will receive timely, accurate reports and emergency details about health issues in their area via their cellular phones. In addition, public health students at Columbia and in Ghana will use CCNMTL's data visualization tools in their courses as they prepare for roles as public health decision-makers.

"This initiative gives us the opportunity to create a more timely and flexible health information infrastructure that will better serve the people of rural Ghana and serve as a model for other countries facing similar challenges," said Dr. Phillips. "This project will help build much-needed capacity in global public health by training future public health professionals at Columbia University and in Ghana."

This project is part of CCNMTL's Triangle Initiative – <http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/triangle> – which develops online tools to simultaneously benefit research, education, and the community.

About the Columbia Center for New Media Teaching and Learning (CCNMTL)

CCNMTL's mission is to enhance teaching and learning through the purposeful use of new media and technology. We form partnerships with faculty, providing them with as much support as they need in everything from the construction of course Web sites to the development of advanced projects. We are committed to remaining a leader in our field, engaging our faculty partners in the reinvention of education for the digital age.

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