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RUTGERS HEALTH
Rutgers Global Health Institute

Global Health CONNECTION

Your monthly source of Rutgers global health news, events, and resources
AUGUST 2025

Go Together Reaches Namibia



Left: Namibia Ministry of Health and Social Services's Executive Director (center, left) and his deputies met with the **Go Together** Rutgers delegation



Right: **Go Together** delegation meets with oncology leaders at Windhoek Central Hospital

In July, the Botswana-Rutgers Partnership for Health team visited Namibia to present **Go Together**—A Global Alliance to Expand the Oncology Workforce in Sub-Saharan Africa. The program aims to address the critical shortage of oncology-trained healthcare workers to strengthen cancer awareness, care, and prevention across the region.

Hosted by Executive Director Mr. Penda Ithinde, the Ministry of Health and Social Services welcomed the **Go Together** proposal, recognizing the urgent need for more cancer care training. The initiative will be a multisectoral, multicountry alliance that unites ministries of health, experts, universities, companies, and NGOs to develop country-specific programs. Phase 1 will launch in Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, and Eswatini.

The team also toured the AB May Cancer Centre, Namibia's main public oncology facility, where staff manage rising patient numbers with just one clinical oncologist, one radiation oncologist, and a four-month radiation therapy backlog. This visit underscored both the challenges and opportunities for collaboration, paving the way for impactful partnerships that can help strengthen cancer care and prevention in Southern Africa.

Principal Faculty Spotlight: Gwenyth Lee



In our new strategic plan for the Rutgers Global Health Institute, we will focus on three impact areas: **Cancer Care and Prevention for All; Healthy Children, Thriving Communities; and Infectious Disease Solutions**. These three areas highlight the priorities of our principal faculty's work in advancing global health equity. To highlight their contributions to these three impact areas of global health, we want to showcase the work of our principal faculty members in the Global Health Connection.

This month, we would like to showcase Dr. Gwenyth Lee. Dr. Lee's research focuses on understanding how interactions between nutritional and infectious risk factors lead to poorer child health and how underlying social and environmental processes drive infectious and nutritional risk factors.

Her new project, in collaboration with principal faculty member Dr. Shauna Downs, is *Dishi Fiti Ishi Fiti*. *Dishi Fiti Ishi Fiti* means eat well, live well in Swahili. Dr. Lee's new project will examine how teens in crowded urban neighborhoods in Kenya make dietary choices and how their food and social environments affect those decisions.

Stay tuned for their upcoming website, where you'll be able to explore how this work is advancing global health equity. In the meantime, you can learn more about Dr. Lee's work in her [Fogarty International Center profile](#).

New Maternal and Infant Health Center Underway in Trenton

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Pictured from left to right: Vicente Gracias, Julie Blumenfeld, Amy Towers, and Angela Starkweather

The new Maternal and Infant Health Center broke ground in Trenton and several Rutgers leaders, including our own core faculty member Julie Blumenfeld, were there to celebrate.

Vicente Gracias, Senior Vice Chancellor for Clinical Affairs and Vice President for Health Affairs at Rutgers University, Board of Governors Chair Amy Towers, and Angela Starkweather, Dean and Professor at Rutgers School of Nursing were also on hand for the groundbreaking. The center will be New Jersey's first-of-its-kind facility that will serve as an innovative hub for improving and advancing maternal and infant care.

Learn more about the Maternal and Infant Health Center groundbreaking here:

<https://www.rutgers.edu/news/rutgers-leaders-join-groundbreaking-maternal-and-infant-health-center-trenton>

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