2011 Implementers Meeting Welcome Message

OpenMRS Implementers and Developers Meeting 2011

Welcome to the fifth annual OpenMRS Implementers and Developers Meeting in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda. We are excited to hold this year's meeting in East Africa as many of the original and the largest projects using OpenMRS are located here, with Rwanda being a pioneering site. OpenMRS has now expanded into implementation sites in over 42 countries throughout the world.

This year's meeting reflects the growth seen in East Africa with an agenda linked to the projects here in Rwanda. Since 2006, 24 PIH-supported clinics in Rwanda have implemented OpenMRS, with additional implementations to occur this year. The Millennium Villages Project (MVP) also implemented OpenMRS at their Myange site near Kigali. Running in parallel with these implementations, PIH has also provided OpenMRS-specific training for developers and expect to graduate 12 by the end of this year, bringing the total to 34. On a national scale, the Rwandan Ministry of Health has launched an ambitious rollout of OpenMRS to more than 100 clinics with support from the Global Fund, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the International Development Research Center (IDRC) in Canada and the Rockefeller Foundation. All of these activities are encompassed in this year's themes for the conference which include:

- Scaling up OpenMRS to large numbers of sites
- Tools to help the use of data from OpenMRS for reporting and analysis, and the evaluation of the performance and impact of eHealth systems
- "The OpenMRS EMR" an in-depth review of the functions needed in EMR implementations and the tools currently available in OpenMRS - in core or as modules. This will encompass the development of tools and versions of OpenMRS for use in hospitals, and improved support for clinical workflows

As in years prior, the meeting agenda will be driven by the interests and priorities of the participants. We will also have some common sessions to introduce new attendees from Rwanda and other countries to the main issues and principles of developing and utilizing OpenMRS. We hope you will go to the web site and give us feedback on your own interests for the meeting which can be found on the 2011 Implementers Meeting page. Additionally, one of the highlights of this year's meeting is a day for site visits where participants can interact and see OpenMRS in the daily workflow of a clinic in Rwanda. We hope that in this process implementers, developers, and users can collaborate, share expertise, and learn from each other's experiences.

Over the last year the leadership and the community have made progressive improvements with OpenMRS:

- OpenMRS leadership have taken the steps to turn OpenMRS into a non-profit organization
- The community developed, tested, and launched OpenMRS 1.8 with the release of 1.9 coming soon
- Initiatives to engage and grow the community through weekly forums:
    - Implementers Forum, Developers Forum, OpenMRS University, and the Design Forum

For those of you with time after the meeting there are many exciting national parks and other scenic sites to visit. These include the famous Mountain Gorillas in Volcanoes National Park in the North, the forests, chimpanzees and monkeys in Nyungwe in the South, and the scenery and wild game animals in Akagera National park in the East.

We are all looking forward to another exciting and productive meeting and learning from the wide range of projects and ideas from around the world to plan the next steps for OpenMRS.

Tubifurije ikaze mu Rwanda! (Welcome to Rwanda!)

The OpenMRS Leadership Group:
Paul Biondich, Hamish Fraser, Darius Jazayeri, Andy Kanter, Burke Mamlin, Chris Seebregts, Ben Wolfe

History of OpenMRS

OpenMRS started in 2004 with a visit to AMPATH in Eldoret, Kenya, by Paul Biondich and Burke Mamlin, and the OpenMRS collaborative was founded that year when Hamish Fraser and Darius Jazayeri from Partners In Health (PIH) and Chris Seebregts from the South African MRC joined forces with AMPATH and the Regenstrief Institute to create a new EMR system. In 2006 OpenMRS was first implemented at AMPATH with additional pilot implementations in Rwinkwavu, Rwanda, and the Richmond Hospital in KwaZulu, South Africa.