



**International Conference:  
Evidence in Global Disability and Health**

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## ABSTRACT

<b>Title:</b>	<b>The role of mothers in disabled children's access to healthcare and rehabilitation services in Ghana: exploring retrospective narratives of disabled young people</b>
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**Abstract text (limited to 300 words, should include background, methods, results and conclusions):**

### **Background**

More than 80 percent of disabled children and young people live in countries of the global South. Estimates suggest that less than five per cent of disabled children in low-income countries receive rehabilitation services. Despite an increasing interest in exploring barriers for accessing health services among disabled people in the global South, the role of mothers in disabled children's experiences of healthcare and rehabilitation in sub-Saharan Africa remains largely unknown. This paper investigates retrospective narratives of disabled young people, and explores how their mothers' knowledge and perceptions of disability influenced the care and rehabilitation services sought.

### **Methods**

Life story interviews with 42 young people (20 female and 22 male participants) with different impairment types (physical, visual, hearing) were conducted in the Greater Accra Region. Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The data was analysed thematically.

### **Results**

Three main categories of themes emerged (1) believed cause of disability, (2) choice and use of treatment, and (3) experiences of health care and rehabilitation. The findings suggest that disabled children's mothers play a pivotal role in accessing healthcare and rehabilitation services. Mothers were presented to hold both biomedical and traditional beliefs regarding the causation of disability. The healthcare and rehabilitation services sought largely depended on the perception of disability, the socio-economic status of the family, the availability of health care and rehabilitation services, and the socio-cultural environment. Disabled children and young people generally had little influence over decisions regarding health care and rehabilitation.

### **Conclusions**

Exploring the role of disabled children's mothers in accessing healthcare and rehabilitation services in the particular case of Ghana offers useful information for inclusive healthcare planning and delivery.

**Deadline for abstract submission: November 30, 2015**

Please submit your abstract to: [disabilitycentre@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:disabilitycentre@lshtm.ac.uk)

**Restricted to one first author abstract per participant.**

If you have any questions, please write to:

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