

Ondo Unveils Community Health Insurance



Governor Mimiko

Akure — Concerned by the inability of many residents of the state to access quality healthcare services due to lack of required finances, Ondo State Government has introduced Community Healthcare Insurance Scheme. Under the scheme, all participants would have equal access to quality healthcare services, irrespective of their status. Governor Olusegun Mimiko said this at Igbara-Oke, headquarters of Ifedore Local Government Area of the state, at the second year anniversary of the Safe Motherhood Programme, also known as 'Abiye'.

Mimiko, who was represented by his wife, Olukemi, said 12 local governments were already benefiting from the scheme, adding that arrangements were at an advanced stage to involve other remaining council areas. He lamented that over 70 per cent of the population in Nigeria were still wallowing in poverty, and so were unable to access quality health care. The governor said the Abiye initiative, launched on October 28, 2009, was to make quality health care assessable to pregnant women and children less than five years of age in the state.

Under the programme, Mimiko said all registered pregnant women were monitored by qualified health workers through toll-free mobile phones given to them by the state government. He said with the success of the programme at the local government that was used as pilot, efforts are on to replicate it in the other areas in due course.

To further enhance the quality of maternal services to pregnant women and their children, the governor said construction was on-going in Ondo town for another Mother and Child Hospital, adding that the target of the administration was to reduce maternal deaths by 90 per cent by 2015. Mimiko noted that the Safe Motherhood (Abiye) Programme had developed from a home grown initiative at Ifedore as a benchmark for achieving the MDGs 4 and 5 for the continent of Africa. Consequently, he said, a health project termed "Result Based Financing in Health" was to commence in Nigeria, and Ondo state had been chosen as one of the three pilot states as a result of the empirical evidence of the success of Abiye. Earlier in his welcome address, the state Commissioner for Health, Dr. Dayo Adeyanju, congratulated the beneficiaries of the programme, saying they were expecting more to benefit in the programme in the years ahead. He lauded the traditional rulers in the area for their efforts in mobilising the communities and pregnant women in the area to embrace the programme.