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MAY 2021 Vol. 43 No.5

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Pharmanews is God's business, I'm just a steward, says Atueyi

- As Pharmanews celebrates 42nd anniversary

Pharmanews Publisher, Pharm. (Sir) Ifeanyi Atueyi, has revealed some of the secrets behind the success of the journal over the years, describing himself as a faithful steward of the business, while ascribing actual ownership to God.

uninterrupted publication of its flagship journal, despite several challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Pharmanews boss also emphasised the vital place of honesty and integrity in

continued on page 19

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L-R: Pharm. Taofik Oladipupo Odukoya, chief executive officer/founder, Vanguard Pharmacy Ltd; Mrs Kawthar Bolajoko Odukoya, executive director/co-founder, Vanguard Pharmacy Ltd; Professor Chinedum Peace Babalola, vice-chancellor, Chrisland University, Abeokuta and Pharm. Lawrence Aiyelabola, chairman, Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, Ogun State, during the unveiling of Vanguard Pharmacy's sixth branch, in Abeokuta, along MKO Abiola Way, Ogun State.

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SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

1. Subscription rate for 12 editions is N10,000 including postage within Nigeria.
2. Single copy costs =N=1,000.00 (without postage)
3. Payment to be made directly to **Zenith Bank Plc. A/c No: 1010701673**
4. You can also pay through portal, simply visit: <http://login.remita.net/remita/external/PHARMANEWS/collector/>
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ISSN 0331-815X

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PHARM. ADEJUWON OTELAJA

Pharm. Adejuwon Otelaja is a seasoned professional, pragmatic leader and consummate management consultant. He is the founder and chief executive officer of Kanymed Healthcare Nigeria Limited, Kwara State. He is also the newly elected chairman of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), Kwara State Branch.

Otelaja had his elementary education at Niger PreAge International Home School, Lagos, where he finished with distinction in 1991. He was one of two wards of senior staff of Glaxo Nigeria Limited who passed the company's scholarship exam and was given a full scholarship to attend the Federal Government College, Odogbolu, Ogun State, where he finished with seven distinctions.

Thereafter, he attended the prestigious Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in Pharmacy in 2004. While at OAU, he was a recipient of the Arthur Anderson Honours List Award (award given to the best five students per level in the university in the 98/99 session).

Otelaja had his internship as a demonstrator internee with the Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Faculty of Pharmacy, OAU. He also worked on research focused on medicines waste reduction.

He had his NYSC at the Medical Centre of the Adamawa State University, Mubi, Adamawa State, between 2005 and 2006. He began his career as a medical representative with Swiss Pharma Nigeria Limited in 2006 and won several awards. He was promoted twice in 2010 as senior medical representative and area manager, Lagos 1.

As area manager, he won the best area manager award in 2011 and 2013. The company also sponsored his education at the West African Postgraduate College of Pharmacists, where he graduated in 2015 with a fellowship in Social and Administrative Pharmacy. He was thereafter promoted as regional manager, Lagos West, a position he held until he left the company in 2016.

Otelaja bagged a master's degree in Business administration from OAU and was admitted into the full membership cadre of the Nigerian Institute of Management in 2015. He also became a graduate of the Senior Management Programme-58 of the Lagos Business School, Pan Atlantic University.

Otelaja was the chairman of ACPN Kwara State between 2017 and 2020 and has held several other elective positions. He presently manages Kanymed Healthcare Nigeria Limited as well as being a key partner of Swiss Pharma Nigeria Limited, Jauf Pharmaceuticals and Frutta Juice and Services Limited.

Otelaja is happily married to his childhood sweetheart, Mrs Yetunde Otelaja, who is a site supervisor with the Canadian Red Cross in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and they are blessed with children.



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Inspiration

"Do not wait; the time will never be 'just right'. Start where you stand, and work with whatever tools you may have at your command, and better tools will be found as you go along." – **George Herbert**

"Press forward. Do not stop, do not linger in your journey, but strive for the mark set before you." – **George Whitefield**

"Believe in yourself! Have faith in your abilities! Without a humble but reasonable confidence in your own powers you cannot be successful or happy." – **Norman Vincent Peale**

"Accepting personal responsibility for your life frees you from outside influences – increases your self-esteem – boosts confidence in your ability to make decisions

– and ultimately leads to achieve success in life." – **Roy T. Bennett**

Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful. – **Joshua J. Marine**

I have been impressed with the urgency of doing. Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Being willing is not enough; we must do. – **Leonardo da Vinci**

The only way to do great work is to love what you do. – **Steve Jobs**

"Don't limit yourself. Many people limit themselves to what they think they can do. You can go as far as your mind lets you. What you believe, remember, you can achieve." – **Mary Kay Ash**

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1. PN is the leading healthcare journal in Nigeria.
2. PN has been published monthly without interruption since 1979.
3. PN is the widest circulating healthcare journal in Nigeria.
4. PN has the highest readership among health journals.
5. PN is available online as mobile App and PDF.
6. PN has about 6 million monthly website hits.
7. PN is the journal of choice for advertisers.
8. PN is the Winner, 2017, 2018 and 2019 Nigerian Healthcare Media Excellence Award.

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 Your Global Health Journal

Celebrating 42 Years of Uninterrupted Monthly Publication (1979-2021)

On 25 April, Nigeria joined the rest of the global community to commemorate World Malaria Day, an annual event established in 2007 by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to highlight the need for continued investment and sustained political commitment for malaria prevention and control. The theme of this year's campaign, "Zero Malaria - Draw the Line against Malaria", explored the progress achieved so far in the war against malaria by some countries, while emphasising the need for countries still having a high burden of the disease to attain the set goal of ending malaria by 2030.

The event particularly provided an insight into the enviable milestone achieved by 38 countries of the world, which have been certified malaria-free by WHO, including five African nations. Algeria emerged the latest with zero incidence of the disease in 2019, while Ghana, Namibia and South Africa also had the record of reducing malaria incidence and deaths by 40 per cent in 2020 compared to 2015.

Sadly, Nigeria still suffers the highest burden of malaria in the world, with approximately 61 million cases and 100,000 deaths reported annually, according to the World Malaria Report 2020. What may, perhaps, serve as a little consolation is the 2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) which indicated that the country made some progress in reducing the prevalence of the mosquito-borne disease among under five children, with a sharp decline from 42 per cent in 2010

Malaria eradication in Nigeria: Hopes and impediments

to 23 per cent in 2018.

Now that the WHO has further scaled up the target through its Global Strategy for Malaria 2016-2030 which aims to reduce malaria incidence and mortality by at least 90 per cent by 2030, as well as eliminating malaria in at least 35 countries, it is imperative to ask, where does Nigeria stand in all this? Or more precisely, if many other countries, including some in Africa, have attained the target of zero-malaria, why does Nigeria not only continue to lag behind but has actually remained, for many years, one of the most afflicted in the world by this preventable disease?

Curiously, many interventions have been made to put an end to the scourge of malaria in Nigeria, without the expected level of success. For example, since 2008, the Nigeria Malaria Consortium, through its UK aid-funded Support to National Malaria Programme (SuNMaP), has made spirited and relentless efforts to combat the disease in the country. According to the non-profit organisation, its current programme (SuNMaP 2) aims to improve the planning, financing and delivery of sustainable malaria programmes across 165 local government areas in six states, which include Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Lagos, and Yobe.

It must be emphasised however

that regardless of the efforts and contributions of external countries and organisations, the battle against malaria – or any other prevalent disease, for that matter – cannot be won without the decisive commitment of the Nigerian government and the populace. Indeed, the Malaria Consortium itself recently admitted this, saying: "It is essential that there is government involvement and stewardship of SuNMaP 2, including through the allocation and release of funds, to ensure that the interventions are sustainable. Malaria Consortium and its partners will, therefore, work in collaboration with government structures at the national and sub-national levels to coordinate and harmonise the planning, implementation and evaluation of programme interventions."

This "government support and stewardship" appears to be the missing link in the malaria fight over the years, and if Nigeria hopes to make progress like other countries, then government must seriously begin to examine and address the factors perpetuating the malaria burden. To begin with, environmental factors, such as blocked drainages and poor conditions of living have been identified as some of the problems militating against attainment of zero malaria in

the country. In many cities in Nigeria, bad drainage system, poor sewage disposal culture and poor sanitary conditions have created the enabling environment for mosquitoes to breed, thereby increasing the chances of infection. This worrisome reality is further complicated by government's failure to painstakingly monitor the activities of its sanitary inspectors who are supposed to ensure that human environments meet the stipulated hygiene standards, especially in the local government areas.

Corruption in high places has also not helped matters. Most of the monies budgeted for health are not judiciously used. There have actually been reports of diversion of funds meant for healthcare delivery and malaria control into private pockets. It is worrisome to note that even donated equipment like mosquito nets and anti-malaria drugs are also diverted and monetised by corrupt government officials.

Therefore, to actualise the WHO's Global Strategy for Malaria 2016-2030 goals in Nigeria, government has to be more pragmatic about its obligation in formulating and enforcing policies that prohibit indiscriminate dumping of refuse on waterways and drainages, revamping of the economy with focus on access to quality and affordable healthcare through effective health insurance scheme. Most importantly, the culture of probity and accountability must be enshrined in the ministry of health, to ensure that all malaria-related funds allocated locally and internationally are used judiciously.

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Your destiny course

By Sir Ifeanyi Atueyi

God has foreseen each of us and predestined us before the foundation of the world. He crafted a perfect plan for your life and mine. Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT) says, **“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”**

If the divine plan is followed, it will bring you joy and satisfaction and, of course, glory to God. God has given us minds so we can make our own decisions and choices. We can follow our destiny courses or settle for something else. Therefore, we have roles to play in determining our directions in life.

One enemy that can cause us to derail from the destiny course is fear. It could be fear of change or the unknown. It could be fear of failure or even success. But 2 Timothy 1:7 (NLT) says, **“For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.”**

In 1978, I took a life-changing decision that shaped my destiny. I was serving as the editor of the Nigerian Journal of Pharmacy and was very much committed to it. As a result of my zeal, I introduced some improvements. I increased the frequency from four to six times a year to make it more profitable and changed the name to what it bears today. At that time, the Society lived mainly on the advert revenue from the journal. A few months after I was re-elected at the 1977 conference, I had an inexplicable and very compelling urge to resign as the editor.

My resignation was unexpected. The then president, Chief (Senator) Ayo Fasanmi and his deputy, Mr Lawrence Anyafulu, appealed to me to withdraw my letter of resignation but I remained adamant. On my side, I suffered a self-imposed loss of something I loved to do. The timing of my resignation made it more unacceptable. Normally, positions are changed during the annual conference. Therefore, my action was seemingly not right.

However, it was entirely my decision as I didn't seek anyone's advice, except the discussion I had with my wife. At the time I resigned, there was nobody ready to take over from me. In fact, it was some months after that Dr Femi Adebajo of the Faculty of

Pharmacy, OAU, Ile-Ife, was asked to hold the position until November 1978 conference.

It was when God's plans for me started unfolding that I realised that I had been divinely guided in my decision. Soon after, a friend, Douglas Egbuonu, marketing manager of Pfizer, introduced to me a programme of the International Marketing Management (IMI) in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA, which he had attended. I was excited and as the marketing manager of my company, I expected support to enable me benefit from it. Unfortunately, my requests were all turned down.

However, having set my mind on attending the programme, I mobilised financial resources for it. My desire was to become a better marketer and therefore more useful to my employers.

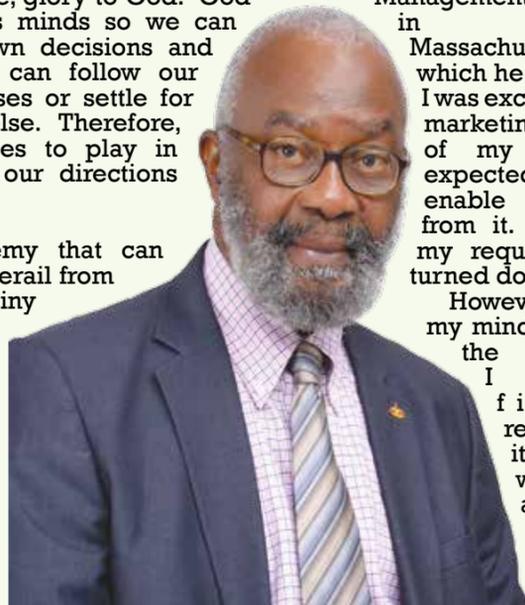
But, unexpectedly, the course caused me loss of favour with my boss. By the time I returned, our relationship had broken down and we could no longer work together. Amos 3:2 (NLT) says, **“Can two walk together without agreeing on the direction?”**

The following months were a period of disillusionment for me. The plans of sharpening my marketing skills and enjoying my job had been dashed because my future in the company had become bleak.

I spent time thinking and meditating on what else to do. I did not ask anybody for advice, except to share my thoughts with my wife. At that time, there was a limited number of big pharmaceutical companies. Consequently, I saw myself at the end of the road in employment.

It was then that I heard a still small voice telling me to go and start doing what I loved to do as editor of the PSN journal, as my business. The vision of *Pharmanews* got clearer in my mind towards the end of the year. My mind was cleared of all doubts and fear. The stage was set to resign my appointment and embark on my destiny course.

I have learnt that major decisions affecting one's destiny may not be a matter for public opinion or approval. Some ideas may sound reasonable and may even be popular but may not be God's plan. It is only God who knows the destiny of everyone and therefore He is the one to be asked for guidance and direction.



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Exploit goodwill

By George O. Emetuche

"Goodwill is the one and only asset that competition cannot undersell or destroy."

- Marshall Field

Selling in the 21st century will be relationship selling. So says the Harvard Business School. You can't go wrong in building robust and mutually beneficially business relationships.

Some years ago, our company got a marketing job from the Imo State Ministry of Youths and Sports to attract corporate sponsors for the Imo International Festival of Marathon that would host local and foreign athletes. My classmate at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Anaeye Estervera, connected us to do the job. This is another example of how goodwill and friendship help in selling. The enterprising Estervera sold our company to the planning committee as the company that would get the desired result within a short notice.

The expectation of the Local Organising Committee was high. They wanted result. We had our challenges on the job. The event was to be held in 30 days from the time we got the job. The official protocol involved in getting approval for such sponsorship in companies will usually go through processes; so, achieving top performance within that short period of time became a *tough nut to crack!*

But I didn't succumb to the negative thought that the task couldn't be done within that short period of time. My team and I just had to find a way to get things done. My principle to assignments is simple: "Say yes and find a way to make it happen." I don't give in to challenges; I do my best to discover solutions. This mindset has helped me a lot in life and in my career.

Place of goodwill

We later signed the contract papers and off we went. I slept over the situation and the intuition came. The strategy that came to my mind was to utilise already existing contacts; to use goodwill and referrals. I called our team and we agreed that we would reach out to contacts that would assist us in obtaining data of people who mattered in decision-making on sponsorship proposals in our target companies. This strategy would make our job half done. We didn't have enough time to reach out to numerous prospects; so, being strategic, intentional and precise was more realistic.

We later got some reasonable leads through our contacts on how to reach our targets and we began to make important sales calls. Just as expected, the strategy worked. We got to our targets within the first five days and by end of the subsequent four working days, we got reasonable feedback.

The 15th law in my book, *The 25 Unbreakable Laws of Sales*, says, "Sales is a number game but always strike on target." You must know the exact place to sell; you must know what to sell and how to sell when you get to the marketplace. Our strategy was efficient because it was direct and straight to our targets. We used referrals to send in our *tailored to fit* proposals. We also utilised already existing trust, goodwill and relationships. You

can't go wrong in selling with this strategy.

Goodwill and selling

Let me briefly illustrate with goodwill in the accounting profession. Goodwill is treated as an intangible asset in accounting because it is an identifiable long-term asset of a company that has no physical existence. Examples of goodwill include brand name, good customer relations, good employee relations, a solid customer base, among others. You will see that relationships play a big role here. Although goodwill has no physical existence, its benefit is enormous.

Successful salesmen take advantage of goodwill in their selling. In fact, relationship selling is regarded as one of the best selling

strategies because it explores the benefits of

goodwill. Smart sales folks apply this strategy. I have taken advantage of goodwill to close a good number of sales. This strategy puts you in an advantageous situation because it removes or minimises bottlenecks that could work against the sale.

A good example of this is the success you experience in referral selling. The buyer in this context buys for two reasons: the first is because of the person that recommended the salesperson and his product; the second reason is the satisfaction the buyer will derive from buying the right product. It is up to the salesman to develop a pleasant relationship after concluding the referral selling. Smart salespeople take every sales relationship to new heights.

Salesmen who exploit their "goodwill accounts," sell easier and faster - because buyers desire to buy from people they like and trust. Therefore, it is logical to say that the more you take advantage of the goodwill you built over time, the more you sell.

George O. Emetuche is a Brian Tracy endorsed bestselling author, accredited training consultant, life coach, sales and marketing consultant.



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Chaotic transport systems and public health

them. Some who left the highways simply moved to remote areas where they have intensified their reckless activities.

In places like Oshodi, Isolo, Mushin, Onipanu, Ojuelegba and Ikotun,

the menace of *okada* riders evokes unspeakable trepidation. When you walk around these areas, you must have the mindset that there is nothing like a one-way road. This is because you can be knocked down by a commercial motorcycle, no matter how right you think you are.

Unfortunately, the security and traffic agents who are supposed to call these people to order are trapped in a system where money answers all things. Reports have it that the transport union that oversees the activities of commercial motorcycle operators shares some of its largesse with both the police and LASTMA officials at the expense of the common good of the populace. This reality has emboldened the transporters to operate with impunity because they know that even when they are arrested for traffic offences, it would only take some money exchanging hands for them to be released.

In a place like Ikotun, the road leading to Ijegun and Abaranje has become an overflow of the Ikotun market. Half of this road is allotted to market women and other traders at daily rates. Most

of the traffic gridlocks and stress commuters experience on this road are due to the nefarious activities of miscreants who take advantage of traders who are struggling to find their daily bread.

None can quantify the level of damage stress does to healthy people, not to talk of people who are battling high blood pressure, diabetes, and other ailments. Such scenarios do not also encourage emergency medical services. For instance, an ambulance conveying a very sick person to the hospital may not make it to the hospital with the patient alive because of the nauseating gridlock occasioned by the activities of these transporters and their unions. And to think that these unwholesome activities happen very close to the palace of the Oba of Ikotun gives the whole saga an abysmally worrisome colouration.

State governments, the leadership of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and other relevant stakeholders should come together to fashion out innovative and strategic ways of improving the lot of road transportation in all the states of the federation. The safety, ease of movement and satisfaction of passengers and commuters should be of utmost priority and not the wanton extortion that takes place daily.

One of the several challenges that cast a very dismal shadow on many "mega cities" like Lagos is the unhealthy way the road transport systems are organised. For Lagos, in particular, although the state government has mapped out strategies to ease the burden of transportation with innovations like the Rapid Bus Transit, it has also allowed miscreants to dominate the transport system by failing to tackle the excesses of some transport unions in the state.

Most motor parks in Lagos and some other states are in themselves a pandemic that have been allowed to linger. How do you expect sanity among transporters, when sellers of alcoholic beverages, concoctions and cigarettes are allowed to do their business right inside the parks? I have heard some drivers say that smoking Indian hemp helps them to see the road clearly. For such drivers, entrusting them with the transportation of commuters from one point to the other is like taking a ride to doom.

While in many places, commercial tricycle operators

can be said to operate with some level of sanity, the same cannot be said of their counterparts in the commercial motorcycle business, popularly known as *okada* riders. These people have proved to be the most recalcitrant in Lagos and elsewhere. Most of them are very reckless and have sent many passengers to their early graves. For passengers who have managed to escape death, many have been maimed and disfigured for life. Some of the worst cases of bone dislocations and outright limb amputations result from commercial motorcycle accidents. The damage is usually collateral, as it does not only affect the individuals involved; government also bears the brunt as it is also indirectly affected whenever a citizen is injured or dies.

In some states, it appears that all efforts by the government to curb the excesses of motorcyclists have failed to yield the much desired results. The Lagos State Government has, on many occasions, banned them on specific roads, especially the highways. But no amount of deterrence, including the use of force has been able to stop

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Celebrating 41 Years of Uninterrupted Monthly Publication (1979-2021)

Vanguard Pharmacy opens new branch in Abeokuta

By Temitope Obayendo

In line with its mission “to create smart health benefits for people to succeed and thrive”, Vanguard Pharmacy Limited, headquartered in Monatan-Iwo Road, Ibadan, has opened another centre along MKO Abiola Way in Abeokuta, making this its second in the Ogun State capital and sixth nationwide.

Founded in 2006 by an enterprising couple, Pharm. Taofik Odukoya and Mrs Kawthar Odukoya, as chief executive officer and executive director respectively, Vanguard Pharmacy started operations in a 30-square-meter space, at 17A, Abegbe Shopping Complex, Iyana-Church, Ibadan.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Mr Odukoya, an alumnus of the Stanford University Seed Programme, said the company is following the transformation and scaling plan as set by its board and management in increasing the footprint of the indigenous brand.

He added that the Vanguard Pharmacy brand is set to dominate the retail space within the next five years as the team is set to turn the brand to a multinational retail company within the decade.

While noting that the gap in the retail space is still very massive in Nigeria, Odukoya stressed that indigenous players must continue to take initiatives. This, according to him, will help in creating massive impacts, such as creating employment opportunities for citizens and increasing tax generation by the government, among many others.

Mrs Odukoya also buttressed the CEO's remarks, saying that the increase in the number of physical outlets, along with the online store, will enhance the Vanguard brand's visibility and enable the company to serve its customers even better.

She also expressed gratitude to God Almighty, as well as the entire management and staff, key partners, customers, and family and friends who have made the company's continued success possible.

In his contribution, Mr Blessing Ojo-Thomas, head of Human Resources, noted that Vanguard Pharmacy remains highly positioned for delivering its objectives to customers, providing topnotch shopping experience with its array of dedicated and committed employees, adding that the entire team is ever ready to make customers happy and satisfied.

“One of our ambitious goals is to be a multinational retail chain store and to achieve this goal, we need to create more brand visibility for the business across Africa, hence the reason for opening the new branch” said Head of Accounts, Miss Adeniji Olajumoke.

The Head of Pharmacy Business, Pharm. Adedoyin Osho also said that Vanguard Pharmacy, MKO Branch, Abeokuta, was a dream come true. She added that it was gladdening to achieve the great feat at a time when Nigeria and the world at large are gradually recovering from the effects of COVID-19.

“The determination to make the world a better place is our

driving force. We will leave no stone unturned to ‘create smart health benefits for people to succeed and thrive’. People of Abeokuta and its environs will be happy beneficiaries of a pleasant customer experience and the ease that a one-stop shop model offers,” she said.

The Head of Veterinary Business, Dr Efe Ademokun, pointed out that despite the challenges arising from the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, the company is determined to expand its one-stop shop offerings of pharmacy, veterinary, supermarket and bakery products. This, she said, is in pursuit of its transformation and scaling journey of becoming an African multinational retail store, creating employment and eradicating poverty in the continent, as well as becoming one of the best places to work in the continent.



L-R: Mrs Kawthar Bolajoko Odukoya, executive director/co-founder, Vanguard Pharmacy Ltd; Vice-Chancellor, Chrisland University, Abeokuta, Professor Chinedum Peace Babalola; CEO/Founder, Vanguard Pharmacy Ltd, Pharm. Taofik Oladipupo Odukoya; and Personal aide to Prof. Babalola (behind her) at the opening ceremony in Abeokuta



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Relating with people the “write” way

By Dipo MacJob (Dr Write)

One major skill I think everyone needs to pay close attention to is relationship management skill. It involves the deployment of much wisdom because at times, it is not enough to know what to do, it is expedient to know when and how to do it.

Many have lost jobs, contacts, contracts etc, just because they missed it in the area of relationship management. They tried to be very sincere about it, but they ended up being sincerely wrong. To put it straight, everything or perhaps almost everything falls back to your relationship skills.

A very quick diagnosis would reveal that empathy is lacking to a very large extent; therefore, many struggle to fit themselves into the garments of those they are trying to understand in order to change their approach in relating with them. The good news is that one very powerful tool that can aid empathy and, ultimately, revive a relationship about to be jettisoned is graphology - the personality assessment of people through their handwriting crystallised on paper. Image may say a little, but the handwriting says a whole lot more.

In this edition, we shall be looking at some personality types and the role the handwriting can play in helping us to understand

their peculiarities and, perhaps, uniqueness. As we often say, “What you have written down is so loud, I cannot hear what you are saying to me”.

The low impulse-control individual

People have died in runway collisions that could have been prevented by a warning system that was delayed with the federal aviation administration for four years, the national transportation safety board has told the FAA in a blunt letter.

Some very common traits in the handwriting of a person with a low impulse control similar to the sample above are right slants, and full margins. In other words, this person writes in such a way that he or she leaves no space on the paper. He writes from one end of the paper to the other. Such people find it hard to understand where to draw the boundaries and if I may add, they tend to intrude into other people's affairs or personal space fairly regularly. The more right slanted the handwriting of that person is (DE or E+ slants), the higher the potential for him to lose his cool or calmness.

Such people usually find it hard to separate issues from the personality involved and would have reacted before thinking things through. They could get very emotional over issues and they do not struggle to “find tears” when there is a hurting situation at hand.

There is a higher chance

that these people will commit crimes more easily because their temper threshold is very short. They are generally very expressive and one very painful way of punishing them is asking them not to talk on a matter

that directly affects them.

The attention seeker

For a handwriting that has narrow spaces between words all through the written piece in addition to big letter sizes (alphabet sizes), you are definitely looking at someone who loves the searchlight to be on him or her. Such people want you to recognise them in public, especially when they have something. They would put all energy in being validated, celebrated and you better not forget their birthday, notwithstanding their age.

So, you can imagine if you



knew a bit about an acquaintance or prospective client, business partner, colleague at work or subordinate, by leveraging this tool. Definitely, the empathy level will be so adequate and it allows for better rapport and acceptance, driven by a deeper understanding of their personalities.

In our next edition, we shall be looking at some other character traits and how graphology can help throw more light on who they really are. Until then, always remember that if you must get it right, you must do it the “write” way.



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Celebrating 42 Years of Uninterrupted Monthly Publication (1979-2021)



New approaches in asthma management

Asthma is a chronic lung disorder that can make breathing difficult. It features narrow, inflamed airways (bronchial tubes). "Asthma" is an ancient Greek, which means "short breath." And as the name implies, it can leave you gasping for air. When the breathing tubes of the lungs become chronically inflamed, they can become sensitive to inhaled environmental allergens and irritants that can trigger asthma. These environmental triggers include pollen, pollution, and tobacco smoke. Exercise can also be an asthma trigger for some.

World Asthma Day

World Asthma Day is an annual event organised by the Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA) to improve asthma awareness and care around the world. World Asthma Day takes place on the first Tuesday of May.

The inaugural World Asthma Day was held in 1998. From then on, the event has continued to be used to raise awareness about asthma and improve the lives of

those affected by it.

Types of asthma

Allergic (Extrinsic): Allergic (extrinsic) asthma is the type triggered by an allergic reaction. This is an example of your immune system responding to an irritant. Allergic asthma is the most common form, affecting more than half of all sufferers. It can often be managed with medication and tends to be less severe than other forms.

Non-allergic (Intrinsic): Non-allergic (intrinsic) asthma is caused by factors other than allergies, such as exercise, stress, inhaling cold air, smoke, viral infections, and other irritants. This type of asthma is less common, develops more often in adults, and is more difficult to treat than allergic (extrinsic) asthma. In many cases, this type seems to be more severe.

Symptoms and signs of asthma

Different people experience asthma in different ways. When asthma is under control, you may have fewer symptoms or no symptoms. Symptoms of asthma

are the same for both allergic and non-allergic types. They include:

- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing
- Coughing
- Chest tightness
- Heavy mucus production

Not everyone with asthma will experience every symptom, and the severity of symptoms can vary, depending on the individual—even in an individual, symptoms may vary over time.

Acute asthma attack

An asthma attack is an acute worsening of asthma symptoms. During an acute asthma attack, there is inflammation, bronchospasm, and excess mucus production. These can lead to symptoms such as

- Difficulty breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing
- Coughing
- Interference with daily activities

Asthma exams and tests

There are several tests that

can determine whether you have asthma and how severe it is. Lung (pulmonary) function tests measure how functional your lungs are. These may include spirometry or peak flow metre tests.

A bronchial challenge test helps the doctor determine how reactive your lungs are to environmental triggers. This testing includes a methacholine challenge test, a histamine challenge test, and bronchoprovocation.

Blood tests measure the IgE antibodies that are released during an allergic reaction. Other tests may be used to rule out other causes of shortness of breath, including acid reflux and sleep apnoea. Sometimes chest x-rays or EKGs are performed to detect a foreign object in the lungs or another condition.

Risk factors

A number of factors are thought to increase your chances of developing asthma. They include:

- Having a blood relative with asthma, such as a parent or sibling
- Having another allergic condition, such as atopic dermatitis — which causes red, itchy skin — or hay fever — which causes a runny nose, congestion and itchy eyes
- Being overweight
- Being a smoker
- Exposure to second-hand smoke
- Exposure to exhaust fumes or other types of pollution
- Exposure to occupational triggers, such as chemicals used in farming, hairdressing and manufacturing

Complications

Asthma complications include:

continued on page 13

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Nearly all my classmates in the HSC programme had made up their minds on the courses to pursue in the university thereafter. A good number of us were studying Physics, Chemistry and Zoology for Medicine, in particular; while some chose Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics or other combinations. As for me, I could not imagine what to do after the HSC. I was confused. Medicine was my uncle's desire but not mine. I didn't know of Pharmacy at that time. But even if I had known of it, I might not have chosen it as at then.

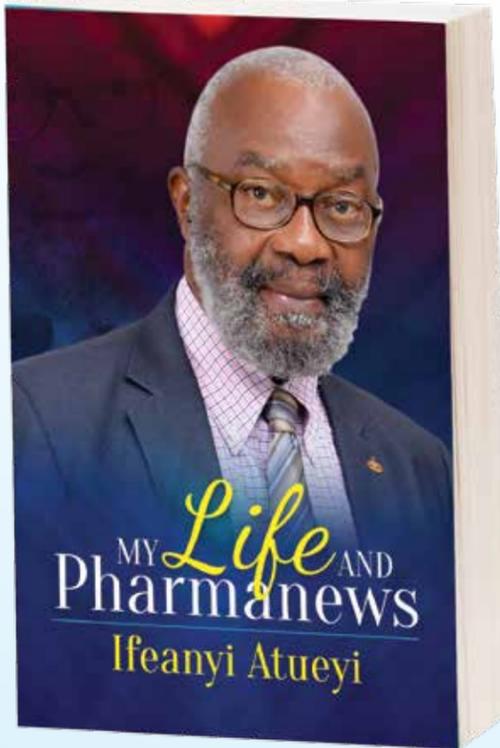
Some of my HSC classmates were Emma Agwuna, Pius Anadu, Christian Aneke, Benedict Arene, Gab Iloabachie, Emma Mgbenu, Eliezar Nwafor, Bertram Oguine, Sam Ugochukwu, Ernest Okafor and Vincent Osakwe. We were 19 in the class (17 males and two females). The females were Miss Florence Spiff and Miss Edith Owuala.

Life as a Teacher

Immediately after the Higher School programme in December 1960, I got an appointment as a Chemistry teacher at the Notre Dame High School, Abatete, through the influence of my school Principal, Mr S.O. Ogoazi. Mr Charles Osakwe, the then Principal of Notre Dame High School, employed me. The experience of teaching for some months was memorable. I had to start living as a man. I bought a bed, mattress, chair, cooking utensils and started living my life. Accommodation was provided in the house of one rich man, called Mbakwe in a neighbouring town, Abacha. Another young teacher, Polycarp Ndu, from Ihiala, was also employed

MY HIGHER EDUCATION 2

(Excerpts from *MY LIFE AND PHARMANEWS* by Sir Ifeanyi Atueyi)



as an English teacher and we lived together on the ground floor, while the Mr Osakwe lived upstairs.

At that time, the school was not well equipped for science subjects, compared with my alma mater, DMGS Onitsha, and I was often complaining for some apparatus to perform experiments. I did not know that the students had nicknamed me "Apparatus." I only knew this much later in 1999. A delegation of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria was scheduled

to visit Air Vice Marshall Canice Umenwaliri, the then minister of communications, in his office, in Lagos. Curiously, the minister wrote to say that he would only receive the delegation if I was brought along. I was surprised when I heard this because I wasn't sure I had heard the man's name before, and I had nothing to do with people in uniform. However, since he knew me by name, I decided to accompany the delegation on the appointed day.

As soon as we entered the minister's office, he sighted me, stood up and shouted "Apparatus." I thought it was a mistaken identity as I did not recognise him. I was actually embarrassed. He observed it and immediately disclosed that I taught him at Notre Dame High School, Abatete, in 1961, and the nickname given to me by the students was "Apparatus". He said he had been eager to meet me after so many years. With that explanation, I relaxed and greeted him well. It was a pleasant surprise.

Later, when I was reflecting on that incident, it occurred to me that it was possible that all those teachers we nicknamed at the DMGS Onitsha, had been ignorant of their nicknames - unless someone had disclosed it to them. Again, I reflected on professional teachers who spend a

good portion of their lives teaching and developing people, many of who go on to become great men and women. Their reward should not only be in heaven but also here, on earth.

I also recall having a memorable experience with the principal. Polycarp and I, though living in the same house with him, tried to avoid him as much as possible because he appeared to enjoy quarrelling. It was such that when I formally resigned, he seized my terminal pay for no reason and I had to get Mr Ogoazi to cause him to release it. He had a Volkswagen car to go to school but we preferred trekking to and from school which was a good distance. In any case, whenever he was in a good mood he would ask Polycarp and me to come up for a meal. But one day I lost my appetite because of the way he insulted his house boy.

Another memory I have of that period was an incident that happened in the Easter season of 1961, when masquerades were harassing people, especially strangers. As the masquerades were coming into our premises, we ran into the house but when Mr Osakwe sighted them, he came downstairs with the sleeves of his long-sleeved shirt folded. He harmlessly walked towards them and when he got near one of the masquerades, he swiftly lifted him and flung him on the ground. Seeing that, all the other masquerades took to their heels, while the one floored remained there. We feared that he had died until he got up after some minutes and staggered away. That was the end of masquerades coming to our premises.

continues next edition

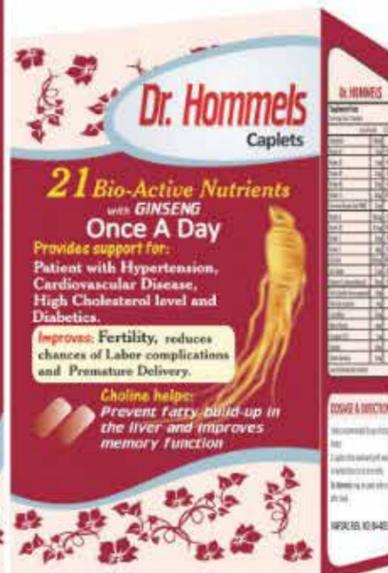
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New approaches in asthma management

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Signs and symptoms that interfere with sleep, work and other activities

Sick days from work or school during asthma flare-ups

A permanent narrowing of the tubes that carry air to and from your lungs (bronchial tubes), which affects how well you can breathe

Emergency room visits and hospitalisations for severe asthma attacks

Side effects from long-term use of some medications used to stabilise severely asthma

The proper treatment makes a big difference in preventing both short-term and long-term complications caused by asthma.

Prevention

While there is no way to prevent asthma, you and your doctor can design a step-by-step plan for living with your condition and preventing asthma attacks.

Follow your asthma action plan. With your doctor and health care team, write a detailed plan for taking medications and managing an asthma attack. Then be sure to follow your plan.

Asthma is an ongoing condition that needs regular monitoring and treatment. Taking control of your treatment can make you feel more in control of your life.

Get vaccinated for influenza and pneumonia. Staying current with vaccinations can prevent flu and pneumonia from triggering asthma flare-ups.

Identify and avoid asthma triggers. A number of outdoor allergens and irritants — ranging from pollen and mould to cold air and air pollution — can trigger asthma attacks. Find out what causes or worsens your asthma, and take steps to avoid those triggers.

Monitor your breathing. You may learn to recognize warning signs of an impending attack, such as slight coughing, wheezing or shortness of breath.

But because your lung function may decrease before you notice any signs or symptoms, regularly measure and record your peak airflow with a home peak flow meter. A peak flow meter measures how hard you can breathe out. Your doctor can show you how to monitor your peak flow at home.

Identify and treat attacks early. If you act quickly, you are less likely to have a severe attack. You also will not need as much medication to control your symptoms.

When your peak flow measurements decrease and alert you to an oncoming attack, take your medication as instructed. Also, immediately stop any activity that may have triggered the attack. If your symptoms do not improve, get medical help as directed in your action plan.

Take your medication as prescribed. Do not change your medications without first talking to your doctor, even if your asthma seems to be improving. It is a good idea to bring your medications with you to each doctor visit. Your doctor can make sure you're using your medications correctly and taking the right dose.

Pay attention to increasing quick-relief inhaler use. If you find yourself relying on your quick-relief inhaler, such as albuterol, your asthma is not under control. See your doctor about adjusting your treatment



Reducing the asthma burden

Although asthma cannot be cured, appropriate management can control the disease and enable people to enjoy a good quality of life. Short-term medications are used to relieve symptoms. Medications

such as inhaled corticosteroids are needed to control the progression of severe asthma and reduce asthma exacerbation and deaths.

People with persistent symptoms must take long-term medication daily to control the underlying inflammation and prevent symptoms and exacerbations. Inadequate access to medicines and health services is one of the important reasons for the poor control of

asthma in many settings.

Medication is not the only way to control asthma. It is also important to avoid asthma triggers - stimuli that irritate and inflame the airways. With medical support, each asthma patient must learn

what triggers he or she should avoid.

Although asthma does not kill on the scale of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or other chronic diseases, failure to use appropriate medications or to adhere to treatment can lead to death.

WHO strategy for prevention and control of asthma

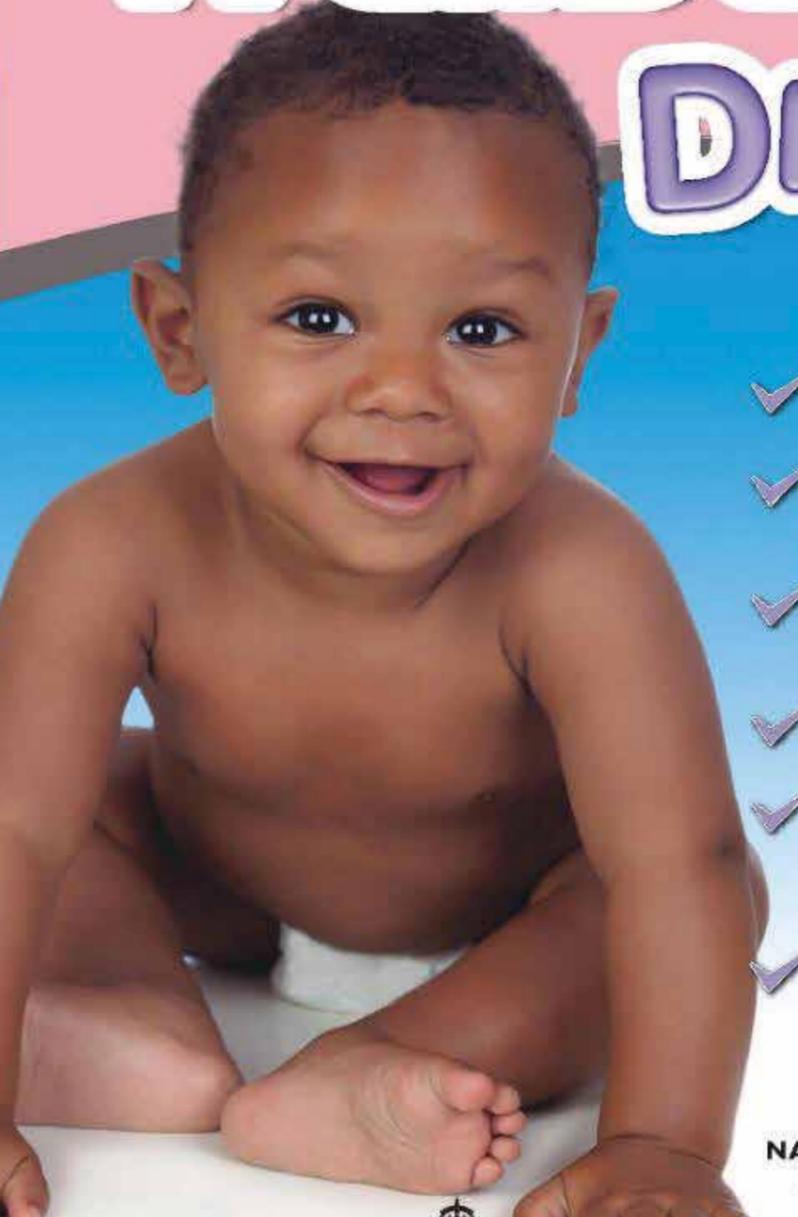
The World Health Organisation recognises that asthma is of major public health importance. The organisation plays a role in coordinating international efforts against the disease. The aim of its strategy is to support the member states in their efforts to reduce the disability and premature death related to asthma.

WHO's programme objectives are:

improving access to cost-effective interventions including medicines, upgrading standards and accessibility of care at different levels of the health care system; and surveillance to map the

continued on page 15

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New approaches in asthma management

continued from page 13

magnitude of asthma, analyse its determinants and monitor trends, with emphasis on poor and disadvantaged populations; primary prevention to reduce the level of exposure to common risk factors, particularly tobacco smoke, frequent lower respiratory infections during childhood, and air pollution (indoor, outdoor, and occupational exposure).

Asthma treatment

Asthma inhalers and nebulisers have advantages over oral medications and injections in that they deliver medicine directly to your airways. They also have fewer side effects than other forms of asthma medication.

Asthma Inhalers

The most common treatment for asthma involves a device called an inhaler. An inhaler is a small device that delivers asthma medicine directly to the airways. Inhalers come in two types:

Metered Dose Inhalers (MDI): MDIs are the most common type of inhaler. They spray medicine from the inhaler like an aerosol can.

Dry powder inhalers: Dry powder inhalers deliver a powdered medicine that does not spray from the inhaler. Instead, the user must inhale the medicine quickly and forcefully.

Sometimes MDIs are used along with a device called a spacer. Spacers help coordinate breathing with the release of the asthma medicine, and use smaller droplets of medicine, making it easier to breathe them in.



Nebulisers

An inhaler cannot be used for babies and very young children. For them, a nebuliser can be used. Nebulisers are powered by electricity to turn asthma medicine into a fine mist.

Medical treatment of asthma

Asthma medications are classified as either for long-term control, or quick relief. Most are inhaled rather than taken in tablet or liquid form, to act directly on the airways where the breathing problems start.

Long-term control medications include:

Montelukast, oral medicine that helps prevent wheezing and shortness of breath

Inhaled corticosteroids
Cromolyn, taken using a nebulizer or inhaler

Omalizumab (anti-IgE), given as an injection

Long-acting beta2-agonists (bronchodilators)

Leukotriene modifiers, taken by mouth

Theophylline, taken by mouth
Quick-relief medications include:

Albuterol and other short-acting beta2-agonists (bronchodilators)

Asthma medications

Common medications used with inhalers and nebulisers include the following three types:

Inhaled corticosteroids: Inhaled corticosteroids reduce airway inflammation. Sometimes these medicines are used even for people who don't have any asthma symptoms, as they can help prevent future asthma attacks.

Short-acting bronchodilators: Bronchodilators have no steroids. They work by relaxing the tiny

muscles that can tighten airways during asthma attacks. Short-acting bronchodilators relieve asthma symptoms quickly.

Long-acting bronchodilators: Long-acting bronchodilators are taken daily to help control asthma and prevent future asthma attacks. Types of long-acting bronchodilators include salmeterol and formoterol.

Asthma fast facts recap

Asthma is a chronic lung disorder that can make breathing difficult. It causes inflammation, swelling, and narrowing of the airways (bronchial tubes).

Asthma is diagnosed based on the physical exam and the patient's history. It is confirmed with breathing tests.

Asthma is caused by three major factors: inflammation, bronchospasm, and hyperreactivity.

Allergy plays a role in some, but not all asthma cases.

Allergens and irritants can cause asthma attacks. When they do, they are called "triggers."

The best way to manage asthma is to try to avoid triggers, which are different for everyone with asthma.

Medications can reverse or prevent bronchospasm.

Asthma Myths

1. **Asthma is «all in the mind: (False).** Asthma is not a psychological condition. However, emotional triggers can cause flare-ups.

2. **You will «grow out» of asthma: (False).** You cannot outgrow asthma. In about 50 per cent of children with asthma, the condition may become inactive in

continued on page 17

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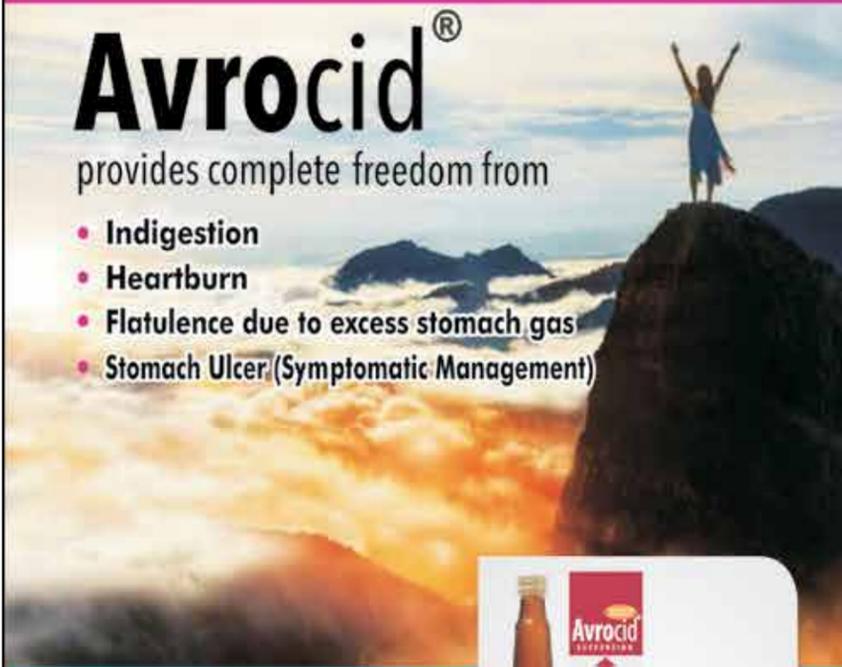
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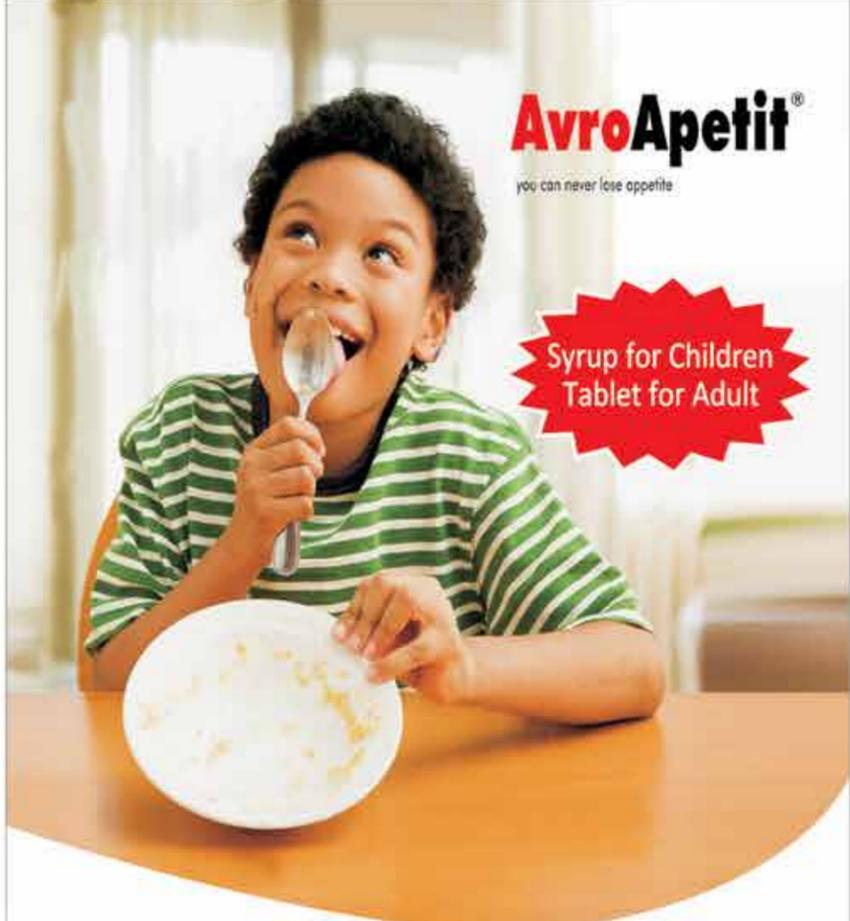

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Celebrating 42 Years of Uninterrupted Monthly Publication (1979-2021)

New approaches in asthma management

continued from page 15

the teenage years. The symptoms, however, may recur at any time in adulthood.

3. Asthma can be cured, so it is not serious and nobody dies from it: (False). There is no cure for asthma, but the disease can be controlled in most patients with good medical care. The condition should be taken seriously since uncontrolled asthma may result in emergency hospitalisation and possible death.

4. You are likely to develop asthma if someone in your family has it: (True). You have a 6 per cent chance of having asthma if neither parent has the condition; a 30 per cent chance if one parent has it; and a 70 per cent chance if both parents have it.

5. You can “catch” asthma from someone else who has it: (False). Asthma is not contagious.

6. Moving to a different location, such as the desert, can cure asthma: (False). A new environment may temporarily improve asthma symptoms, but it will not cure asthma. After a few years in the new location, many persons become sensitised to the new environment, and the asthma symptoms return with the same or even greater intensity than before.

7. People with asthma should not exercise: (False). Swimming is an optimal exercise for those with asthma. On the other hand, exercising in dry, cold air may be a trigger for asthma in some people.

8. Asthma does not require medical treatment: (False). Asthma is best controlled by having an asthma management plan designed by your doctor that includes the medications used for quick relief and those used as controllers.

9. Medications used to treat asthma are habit-forming: (False). Asthma medications are not addictive.

10. Someone with asthma can provoke episodes anytime they want in order to get attention: (False). Asthma attacks cannot be faked.

Asthma management in Nigeria

According to an article written by Dr Onyedum Cajetan Chigozie, of Respiratory Unit, Department of Medicine, College of Medicine, University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, Enugu, Nigeria, titled “Challenges in the Management of Bronchial Asthma Among Adults in Nigeria: A Systematic Review”, one of the major challenges facing the management of asthma in Nigeria is the diagnosis.

The researcher noted that the major clinical challenge facing asthma diagnoses are that there is no single satisfactory diagnostic test for all asthmatic patients, saying as a result, physicians often use different criteria in making a bronchial asthma diagnosis, adding that this means that simple prompt diagnoses are not achieved.

He said another challenge is that there are very few respiratory physicians in Nigeria, saying the overall effect of the diagnostic challenges will lead to under diagnoses, over-diagnoses, misdiagnosis, and sometimes undiagnosed and unreported cases of asthma, which leads to increased morbidity and mortality due to asthma.

Speaking on the challenges in



treatment, the varsity don noted high cost and unavailability of essential asthma medications, as well as the unaffordability of inhaled corticosteroids. He added that lack of essential devices like nebulisers and spacer devices that are used for effective medication administration constitute a strong challenge affecting correct management of asthma.

He said: “Even when the devices are provided, the technique of use of medication devices especially the inhalational drugs contribute to poor delivery of medications to the required site of action, poor asthma control, and the resultant increase in the health resource utilisation.”

While noting that the challenges facing asthma management in like Nigeria border on poverty, inadequate resources, weak health systems, and poor infrastructure, he however advised that efforts should be made to address the challenges by the Nigerian government through the provision of asthma diagnostic facilities at all levels of care, training of healthcare workers, and coverage of asthma care in the National Health Insurance Scheme in order to ensure affordability of asthma care.

Also speaking during the 2019 World Asthma Day, the President, Nigerian Society for the Asthmatic, Prof. Olusoji Ige called for increased public sensitisation and awareness to decrease the rate of sudden deaths associated with the ailment, saying asthma attacks were often a result of gradual worsening symptoms.

Ige, who is a consultant chest physician at the University College Hospital, Ibadan, while speaking with the press said that although there was no known cure for asthma, severe attacks could be prevented if the triggers for each person were identified.

Also speaking at the occasion, Mrs Grace Adekoya, assistant director of Public Health Nursing at UCH, said that smoking during pregnancy could significantly increase the risk of a child developing asthma, adding that asthma attacks which could result in frequent absenteeism from



school constitutes a huge public health problem.

Also, the Secretary General, Nigerian Thoracic Society (NTS), Mr Olanisun Adewole, said that no fewer than 15 million people have asthma in Nigeria, based on numerous studies.

Adewole described the ailment as one of the most common chronic lung diseases affecting no fewer than 400 million people worldwide, adding that with increasing urbanisation and uptake of western lifestyle in developing countries, the number of people with asthma would grow by more than 100 million by 2025.

When to seek help

Severe asthma attacks can be life-threatening. Work with your physician to determine what to do when the signs and symptoms worsen — and when one needs emergency treatment. Signs of an asthma emergency include:

- Rapid worsening of shortness of breath or wheezing
- No improvement even after using a quick-relief inhaler
- Shortness of breath when you are doing minimal physical activity

Contact your physician

If you think you have asthma. If you have frequent coughing or wheezing that lasts more than a few days or any other signs or symptoms of asthma, see your doctor. Treating asthma early may prevent long-term lung damage and help keep the condition from getting worse over time.

To monitor your asthma after diagnosis. If you know you have asthma, work with your doctor to keep it under control. Good long-term control helps you feel better from day to day and can prevent a life-threatening asthma attack.

If your asthma symptoms get worse. Contact your doctor right away if your medication doesn't seem to ease your symptoms or if you need to use your quick-relief inhaler more often.

Don't take more medication than prescribed without consulting your doctor first. Overusing asthma medication can cause side effects and may make your asthma worse.

To review your treatment. Asthma often changes over time. Meet with your doctor regularly to discuss your symptoms and make any needed treatment adjustments.

Conclusion (A quick recap)

1. Asthma is the most common chronic disease among children worldwide with around 235 million people living with asthma. The disease is more common in

children than adults, but adults are four times more likely to die from asthma than children. Over 80 per cent of asthma-related deaths occur in low-and lower-middle-income countries. The prevalence of asthma in Nigeria is high with approximately 13 million cases, ranking amongst

the highest in Africa.

2. Asthma is a common lung condition that causes sporadic breathing difficulties. It often starts in childhood, although it can also develop in adults, and affects people of all ages. It is a major non-communicable disease that varies in severity and frequency from person to person.

3. It is a disease of the lungs that makes the lining of the bronchial tubes swell, causing the airways to narrow, thereby reducing the flow of air in and out of the lungs. Symptoms include a whistling sound when breathing (wheezing), breathlessness; a tight chest that may feel like a band is tightening around it and coughing. These symptoms can sometimes get temporarily worse during the night or following physical activity — this is known as an asthma attack.

4. Asthma attacks can be fatal, accounting for most asthma deaths; but they are largely preventable and manageable. An attack may occur randomly or after exposure to a trigger. Common triggers include allergies (to house dust mites, animal fur or pollen, etc.), smoke, pollution and cold air, strenuous exercise, infections like colds or flu, extreme emotional duress, exercise, and certain medicines. The fundamental causes of the disease are likely to be a combination of genetics and these external triggers.

5. If a person appears to be having an asthma attack, they need to sit up straight and take slow, regular breaths, and take regular breaths from their “inhaler”, following their treatment plan instructions. If possible, a medical professional should be contacted immediately. Although asthma has no cure, the symptoms can usually be controlled with treatment modalities such that most people will have normal, active lives.

6. Even though asthma is incurable, affected individuals can live rewarding, fulfilling lives with the right treatment regime. Asthma is often treated using an inhaler to breathe in medicines. People with ongoing symptoms will need to take daily medication for the long term. It's also important for individuals living with asthma to avoid triggers. With medical support, individuals can identify what their triggers are and take steps to avoid them.

7. As manageable as it is, Asthma is a serious condition that can cause several problems leading to various medical complications. In the wake of the ongoing pandemic which has a deleterious effect on the airways, it is important, now more than ever to ensure that asthma is kept under control. We have had enough asthma deaths and so we must at this time unite our voices and our actions in putting up a fight to overcome this hurdle

Article compiled by Adebayo Oladejo, with additional contributions from medicinenet.com; The Global Alliance against Chronic Respiratory Diseases (GARD); Global Initiative for Asthma; Nigerian Society for the Asthmatic; American Family Physicians; WebMD; www.drug.com; Premium Times; News Agency of Nigeria; Wikipedia; Cleveland Clinic, Mayo Clinic, WHO; NHS; News Medical LIFE SCIENCES.



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Celebrating 42 Years of Uninterrupted Monthly Publication (1979-2021)

Pharmanews is God's business, I'm just a steward, says Atueyi

continued from page 1

business, saying any business built on dishonesty may make money for a while but will not prosper for long. He added that the integrity culture is so intrinsically woven into the Pharmanews business that every member of staff understands that it is a non-negotiable area when relating with clients.

The octogenarian also hinted on the succession plan for the business, saying the future of the business is primarily in God's hands, as well as in the unflinching dedication of the people around him who have bought into the company's vision and are passionately committed to making it a continued success. Enjoy the excerpts:

Congratulations on the 42nd anniversary of Pharmanews. Many businesses were adversely affected by the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic last year, with some unable to survive. How did your company manage the situation?

Your statement is true because many businesses were adversely affected in the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic last year but at Pharmanews, how we managed is still beyond my imagination. Last year, two key staff of the company left in the first three months of the year just before the lockdown. The remaining staff members could not come to the office but quickly adjusted to working from home. We couldn't print hard copies but only published online. Our meetings were held virtually, on Zoom.

Surprisingly, however, when the year ended, we discovered that we performed much better than the previous year. I realised that it was not because of our efforts but God's intervention. While some businesses recorded losses, we enjoyed the grace of God.

Our business primarily depends on satisfying the needs of the pharmaceutical industry and during that period, we did not relax. The staff kept reaching out to the companies and all transactions were accomplished online. I attribute our performance to simply the grace of God.

What are your views on pharmacists not being carried along in the vaccination process in Nigeria?

As a pharmacist, if I want to vaccinate anyone, I would join the team and undergo the necessary training for the vaccination process. There are pharmacists who are part of the process. There are non-pharmacists, non-nurses, non-healthcare personnel that have been recruited and trained for that purpose as well.

I cannot imagine a pharmacist showing interest in the vaccination process and the government rejects him. So, if you are a pharmacist and you are interested in the vaccination process, go ahead and present yourself as a volunteer to participate. At the centre where I received my jab of the vaccine, for instance, the

One thing I know is that, even though I say Pharmanews is my business, I am not truly the owner of the business. Pharmanews is God's business. I am just a steward taking care of His business and accountable to Him. This is my fundamental belief and that is why I have the confidence that, as God owns Pharmanews, He is committed to keep it going and to succeed.



Pharm. (Sir) Ifeanyi Atueyi

officials complained of shortage of staff.

You are nearly 82 years old and by any standard, you have lived a long and fruitful life; are there secrets you would like to share about your longevity?

I believe that if you live well and right, you are going to live healthy and long. Many things can bring problems to the body. For example, emotional stress is responsible for many diseases that afflict man. Therefore, I try to avoid living a stressful life.

The work I am doing at Pharmanews perfectly fits my life. If I were in any other place where I am not enjoying the work, maybe it might have affected my health. Here, I am relaxed. My work at Pharmanews is like my hobby and no more work. I love and enjoy it and see the results.

Another thing that is helping me is the fact that I have a sense of contentment. I am not a rich man but I do not lack anything good. There is nothing God wants me to have that I do not have. I don't envy anybody. I believe I am the most blessed of all the people I know. I am fulfilled.

Also, I am a serious worker, but I rest well. I do not miss afternoon nap. Since I started *Pharmanews* 42 years ago, I don't take lunch outside, except during certain functions. Coincidentally, my wife

From my experience, there must be honesty and integrity in business. Any business built on dishonesty can make money but may not prosper in God's eyes. At Pharmanews, we believe in integrity. We do not tell lies or deceive our clients. We do not give or receive bribes.

the future. Of course, God has asked us to plan according to Proverbs 16:3 and present the plans to Him. Proverbs 19:21 tells me that whatever may be the succession plans in my heart, it is the Lord's purpose that will prevail eventually.

Today, I am working in such a way that my input into *Pharmanews* is getting less and less and my worries and efforts are also less these days. That means that other people are doing most of the work, by delegation. There is nothing I am doing now that no one in Pharmanews cannot do. What is important in business is the vision. When people buy into the vision, you have succeeded.

We have vision. We have tasks we set for ourselves. We shall continue to be the leading health journal, claiming the promise in Deuteronomy 28:12, of being the head and not the tail. We shall not borrow. We have been the champion since the first edition in 1979 and we have never borrowed.

Pharmanews

will be published uninterrupted. Even if I go on sabbatical leave for a year or quench today, this vision remains undaunted. Those who are here will continue. Pharmanews has dedicated staff that work as a team and family. So, whether I am here or not, these things are engraved in the minds of the staff.

Also, I have wonderful children who will ensure that their father's business should not die with him. They know *Pharmanews* is their heritage. This is one great honour they will accord me posthumously.

Please bear in mind that God's purpose for *Pharmanews* is not just for me to make a living. God designed *Pharmanews* to impact Pharmacy in Nigeria and make it known to the whole world. By God's grace, we have continued to work towards that purpose to fulfil our destiny.

What are your advice to the upcoming business owners?

From my experience, there must be honesty and integrity in business. Any business built on dishonesty can make money but may not prosper in God's eyes. At Pharmanews, we believe in integrity. We do not tell lies or deceive our clients. We do not give or receive bribes.

My office door is never closed whenever I am in. Whatever you want to say, say it, let everyone hear. There is nothing to hide in my office. No secret. When my door is closed, that means I am not in.

Business owners should aspire to enjoy God's blessing by endeavouring to please Him in all operations. He is the source of our success and prosperity.

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This is no mean achievement - PSN

The President of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), Pharm. Sam I. Oluabunwa, OFR, MON, FPSN, on behalf of the National Executive Committee, Council and the entire members of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, heartily felicitates with the entire management and staff of Pharmanews on her 42nd anniversary edition of **Pharmanews** monthly publication. This is indeed no mean feat.

We wish you many more beautiful publications ahead.

Congratulations once again.

Pharm. Gbenga Falabi, FPSN
National Secretary

Pharmanews, record-setter in pharmaceutical journalism - Okonkwo

Despite the stranglehold of the COVID-19 pandemic on people and organisations worldwide, the one and only foremost pharmaceutical journal, **Pharmanews**, has continued to maintain its pre-eminent position of excellence for the past 42 years of uninterrupted monthly publication.

This is the first time we have witnessed such an unparalleled feat in pharmaceutical journalism in Nigeria. The icing on the cake is the fact that **Pharmanews** has continued to clinch all accolades in its class in the past few years.

I am pleased, therefore, to join other admirers of **Pharmanews** in its 42nd anniversary celebration and to congratulate the management and staff for keeping their flag flying. The sky will not be your limit.

Pharm. Eugene Okonkwo

Congrats to the flagship health journal - MacJob

The consistency of **Pharmanews** over the years is simply unparalleled; little wonder its leadership role as the flagship of medical/pharmaceutical publication in the African continent. I therefore join my voice with other well-wishers and partners to wish the entire management of Pharmanews Ltd a happy 42nd year anniversary.

Pharm. Oladipupo Macjob

Accept our smashing congratulations - ACPN

On behalf of the National Executives and National Executive Council of the Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN), I felicitate with **Pharmanews** for this great and relentless pursuit of showcasing and adorning the pharmanews, and by extension the health sector of our dear nation. Happy 42nd celebration. Please accept our smashing congratulations!

Dr Samuel Oluwaoromipin Adekola
National Chairman, ACPN

More years of unbroken publications and quality service - AHAPN

The National Executive Committee (NEC), Council and all members of the Association of Hospital and Administrative Pharmacists of Nigeria (AHAPN) heartily rejoice with the Managing Director, Board of Management and indeed all staff of PHARMANEWS LTD on the occasion of the 42 years of unbroken monthly publications.

We are proud of your achievements over the years and are particularly delighted that not even the dreaded coronavirus pandemic could stop your resolve and dedication to rendering continuous, unbroken pharmaceutical service to the Nigerian healthcare sector.

We wish you many more years of unbroken publications and quality service to the Nigerian people.

Please accept the esteemed regards of all hospital and administrative pharmacists.

For AHAPN National.
Dr. Kingsley Chiedu Amibor FPCPharm
National Chairman AHAPN

Dr. Hafiz Akande
National Secretary

Congrats to the Boss of pharmaceutical journalism - Pharm. Okwor

If there is ever a corporate history of **Pharmanews** and pharmacy journalism in Nigeria, it will start with Sir Ifeanyi Atueyi and end with Sir Ifeanyi Atueyi. You are not just another creative and amazing boss, you are the BOSS of pharmaceutical journalism.

One big lesson your Pharmanews experience teaches us is that "Success is not magical or mysterious. Success is the natural consequence of applying basic fundamentals consistently." In 1979, you did not go where the paved path led, today you have left a big trail

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Pharm. Azubike Okwor
Fellow of FIP

More years of impactful publication - Drugfield

On behalf the entire management and staff of Drugfield Pharmaceuticals Limited, I want to extend yet another congratulation to the management and staff of Pharmanews, as you celebrate your 42nd anniversary of uninterrupted publication. Your journal has impacted not only the pharmacy profession, but also the medical community and the nation as a whole.

Drugfield Pharmaceuticals Limited, over the years, has benefited from your excellent reportage of our many events, such as product launches, CSR and news events. We, as a company, are always eager to leverage the **Pharmanews** platform to advertise our products, especially those newly introduced into the Nigeria market.

Once again, we felicitate with Pharmanews on your 42nd anniversary and wish you many more years of impactful publications

Signed:
Group Managing Director,
Drugfield Pharmaceuticals Limited

Grow higher, from glory to greater glory - Prof. Ibezim

May I join your numerous partners and patrons to felicitate with you on this glorious occasion of 42nd anniversary of unbroken publication of one of the most outstanding health publications in the entire globe!

You have over these years, proved your mettle and shown that with determination, doggedness and dedication, any imaginable height can be achieved. I am so proud of you and your lofty achievements and only wish that you grow higher and higher, from glory to greater glory.

I particularly single out the Publisher of Pharmanews, an indefatigable pharmacist of no mean repute, a great achiever and numerous award winner, Sir Ifeanyi Atueyi. Sir, your sense of focus and vision is unparalleled. I have, indeed, learnt so much from you.

Congratulations.

Professor Emmanuel Chinedum Ibezim (JP, FPSN, MNIIA, MAW, MWAME)
National Chairman, Nigeria Association of Pharmacists in Academia (NAPA)

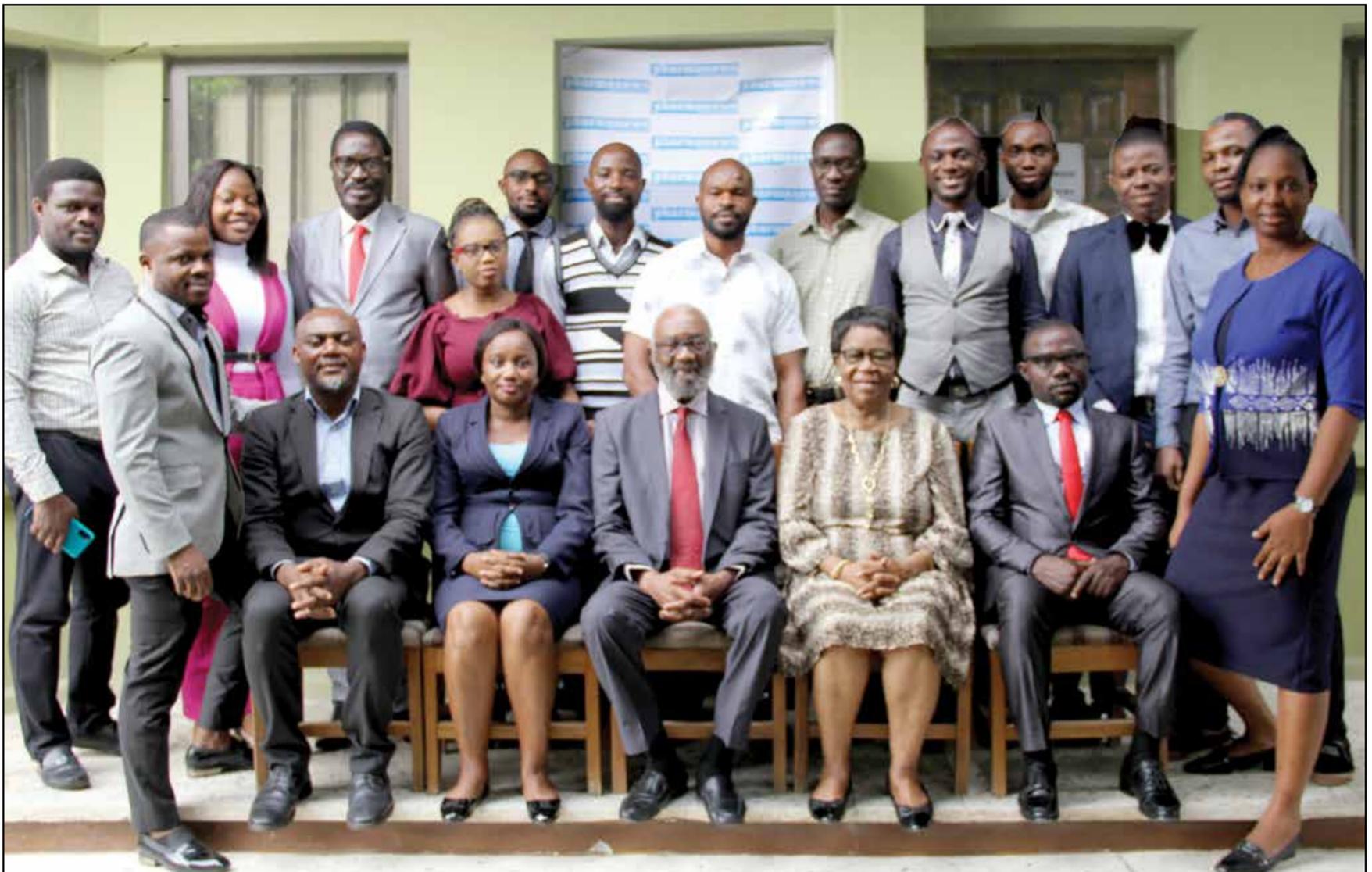
Salute to your indomitable spirit - Prof. Obiorah

It is a great pleasure to write this congratulatory on the auspicious occasion of your 42nd anniversary. I marvel at the innovation you have continued to introduce to enrich the journal. For PHARMANEWS to roll out monthly for the past 42 years is a major achievement.

I wish to congratulate the publisher and his management for their indomitable spirit which has made PHARMANEWS to remain on top of the pack.

Prof. Bona Obiorah

Management and Staff of Pharmanews Ltd in group photograph to mark the company's 42nd anniversary



► PANS Focus ◀

My primary dream is making PANS financially secure – Umoren

By Adebayo Oladejo

In this exclusive interview with *Pharmanews*, Precious Aniedi Umoren, the newly elected national president, Pharmaceutical Association of Nigeria Students (PANS), outlines the plans of his administration for pharmacy students nationwide. The 400-Level student of the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, also bares his mind on the state of pharmacy education in Nigeria and areas requiring improvement. Excerpts:

Why did you opt for Pharmacy as a course? Was it your first choice?

I actually applied to study Medicine at the university because my parents love medical practice and wanted me to become a medical doctor. To them, it would bring prestige to the family. It didn't work out at the first try; so I decided to look for something else, while fulfilling my passion. And Pharmacy found me, accepted me into her arms and we have been in love with each other since then.

Pharmacists are the most accessible healthcare providers and I derive so much joy in being able to solve the enormous health problems in our society and most importantly making these healthcare solutions readily available and safe.

Tell us about your experience as a pharmacy student in the last four years?

I must say that my experience in pharmacy school



Precious Aniedi Umoren

has been of all shades. It has been tough, very demanding and, of course, full of fun. My memories in pharmacy school

will remain ever fresh for a very long time.

What prompted your emergence as PANS national president?

Well, I would, first of all, see my emergence as the will of God coming into manifestation. Yes, I worked hard, did the normal things, but very importantly, I had prepared myself for the ropes of leadership at a very tender age. So, this was a factor too. Then, also, I feel the students saw me fit to be at the helm of affairs. This was what promoted the massive support I got from them.

What aspects of your responsibilities do you consider particularly challenging so far?

So far so good, things have been fairly smooth and I want to attribute this to all pharmacy students, our patrons and mentors in the profession, who have made this possible through their support and contributions.

The major challenge PANS has faced so far is funding, as we have been carrying out our activities with very meagre funds – and thus retarding us from doing a lot of things. But I believe that with support, donations and contributions from our leaders in the profession, we will be able to achieve a lot.

The present Faculty of Pharmacy, UNIUYO, took off in 1990 as a department in the Faculty of Science. Over the years, what would you say are the challenges facing pharmacy education in the school, and how can they be surmounted?

Challenges facing pharmacy education in Nigeria generally are quite numerous. These include the bulky curriculum; limited time to cover a lot of things, prepare for exams and incorporate other activities; very strict marking scheme, which has led to a lot of menacing failure in the school; lack of proper student-lecturer interactions; inadequate facilities in most pharmacy schools in the country, leading to so many inadequacies and many others.

As the Faculty of Pharmacy, continued on page 24

Celebrating 42 Years of Uninterrupted Monthly Publication (1979-2021)

COVID-19: Adelusi-Adeluyi, Adigwe, others seek collaboration among researchers, healthcare workers

- As Babalola advocates evidence-based research to manage disease

Experts and stakeholders in the health sector have reiterated the urgent need for collaboration among healthcare researchers and professionals, stressing that this is the most effective way to advance the nation's health system.

The experts made the call at the recent Media Week on COVID-19, jointly organised by the Nigeria Academy of Pharmacy (NAPharm) and the Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) with the theme "COVID-19: Facts, Myths and Way Forward."

Speaking at the gathering, held via zoom, the stakeholders in separate remarks noted that collaboration will help to overcome COVID-19 and other challenges in the health sector.

In his remarks at the event, the President, NAPharm, Prince Julius Adelusi-Adeluyi, emphasised that team work will help health professionals achieve better results in their endeavours.

"Everybody achieves more with team work. It is by embracing networking that we pharmacists can attain greater heights in our profession. In the area of funding, we need to engage the people in the private sector. If we can convince people in the private sector, they will get funds to optimise research institutes," Adelusi-Adeluyi said.

Speaking during a panel discussion on "The role of professionals, universities and research institutes in COVID-19", the Director General, National Institute for Pharmaceutical Research and Development (NIPRD), Dr Obi Adigwe, called on relevant individuals and organisations in the private sector to provide grants for pharmaceutical research and development in the country.

He stressed that collaboration is very important among researchers, for them to be able to make significant discoveries that will lift the health sector, especially the pharmaceutical sub-sector. The NIPRD boss called for researchers to involve in what he called "out of the box collaboration."

Adigwe lamented that many Nigerian senior citizens are yet to understand the importance of research and development, noting that lack of understanding of R&D has resulted in lack of funding which he said is the major challenge NIPRD has been grappling with since he joined the institution.

He also reiterated the need for pharmacists to be involved in policy making in the health sector, stressing that there will be no one to argue the cause of Pharmacy, if pharmacists are not involved in policy making in the health sector.

Adigwe also noted that, despite the noticeable disconnection between manufacturers and researchers in the past, he is working assiduously to bridge the gap, adding that the connection between the two parties is already yielding good result, as some products from NIPRD have already been launched into the market.

Also speaking at the event, the former Chief Executive Officer, National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Professor Abdusalam Nasidi, who was also one of the panelists, decried Nigeria and Africa's dependence on foreign donors for the COVID-19 vaccines, saying the continent must urgently look in the direction of vaccine production.

Nasidi, who commended the

By Ranmilowo Ojalumo

NCDC for efficient management of the pandemic, said Nigeria has, so far, fared well but there is room for improvement.

The former NCDC CEO however warned Nigerians against disregard for COVID-19 vaccines and safety protocols, saying the pandemic is a deadly one that everybody must take seriously.

He said: "Those who don't believe in COVID-19 do so at their peril. Don't worry about the origin of the virus but worry about your survival. Whatever vaccine that is available, please take it. You will have yourself to blame at the long run, if you refuse to take the available vaccine. The vaccines are safe to use."

While revealing that many countries have started experiencing the third wave of

the pandemic, Nasidi urged the government and other stakeholders in the health sector to work hard towards ensuring that Nigeria does not join the list.

Another member of the panel, Pharm. Folashade Lawal, in her remarks, pointed out that pharmacists can educate the general public by providing evidence-based information.

Lawal, who is the managing director, Victory Drugs Limited, said: "Pharmacists have the advantage of reaching out to the general public at all times because we are very close to the people. We can do a lot better that we have done. COVID-19 is a common enemy that we all need to fight together, but we need to be more transparent."

"Collaboration and synergy

among professionals is key. We can come together; we can empower patients by providing useful information to them. From my experience, I can attest that healthcare professionals are willing to work together. We need to go back to the drawing board to see how we can synergise and work together for the benefit of patients."

On his part, Dr Mike Omotosho, another panelist, lamented that health issues are often being politicised in Nigeria, saying this should not be.

Omotosho who is the president, Hepatitis Zero Nigeria Commission, therefore called for a concerted effort and strong political will to transform the nation's health sector.

"We need to develop a database for the health sector. We need to make health insurance available to everybody. We need

continued on page 24

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COVID-19: Adeluyi, Adigwe, others seek collaboration among researchers, healthcare workers

continued from page 23

to invest massively in the health sector. We also need to develop national planning on how to tackle and respond to pandemics," Omotosho said.

Also speaking, the moderator of the panel discussion, Pharm. Olumide Akintayo, a former president of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), urged practitioners in the health sector to avoid all acts that can hinder the development of the sector.

He also charged healthcare workers to begin to synergise and build a formidable frontier through collaboration.

Meanwhile, the Vice Chancellor, Chrisland University, Abeokuta, Professor Chinedum Babalola, had earlier called on



**Prince Julius Adelusi-Adeluyi
NAParm President**

healthcare professionals and researchers in Nigeria to embark on evidence-based research that will

ensure efficient management of COVID-19 in the country.

In her address titled "The role of professionals, universities and research institute in COVID-19", Babalola, who was the keynote speaker at the NAParm event, pointed out that COVID-19 is a pandemic of misinformation, noting that deep knowledge of the virus and infection process is the only measure that will help to prevent and contain the spread.

Sharing from her experience at a conference held by African leaders on 12 and 13 April, Babalola said, so far, only 2 per cent of vaccine

clinical trials have taken place in Africa and less than 1 per cent of Africans have access to COVID-19

vaccines.

According to the professor, Africa imports 99 per cent of vaccines and produces only 1 per cent as of April, 2021, stressing that there is an urgent need to invest in universities and research institutes.

While highlighting the roles of professionals and researchers in managing COVID-19 and remedy for the pandemic, Babalola called for evaluation of literature to sift validated information from the tons of junk circulating, especially on social media. She added that there is need for production of factual literature on the pandemic.

Babalola also pointed out that there is need for professionals to show public example in observing COVID-19 protocols, and as well promoting good policies of the government, even as she urged professionals to keep advising the government on possible way forward.

Babalola further urged universities and research institutes to identify research gaps and agenda as they emerge.

"Build new infrastructures, and update old ones for the COVID-19 pandemic. Build critical human capacity for cutting-edge research about the pandemic and also encourage knowledge sharing on the pandemic", the VC said.

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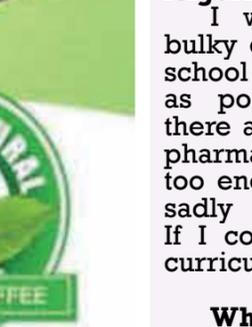
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My primary dream is making PANS financially secure – Umoren

continued from page 22

UNIUYO, gears up for PharmD takeoff, what is your advice to other schools of pharmacy who are yet to commence the programme?

Schools that have not yet enrolled for the Pharm.D programme should do well to work towards taking a part in it, because this new qualification in the profession will give the pharmacist a lot of edge in the healthcare profession.

If you have the privilege of changing some things about pharmacy education in Nigeria, what would they be?

I would ensure that the bulky curriculum of pharmacy school is streamlined as much as possible. Truth be told, there are so many parts of the pharmacy curriculum that are too enormous, ambiguous and sadly very unnecessary. So if I could, I would make the curriculum a bit friendly.

Where do you see PANS national, by the time you would be leaving office as president?

I have a dream of creating a financial future for PANS national before I leave office. The trend of raising funds and putting all of it in use will come to an end in my tenure. Finally, I see PANS national as a student advocacy body that will achieve a lot in the future to come.

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Benefits of bay leaf

By Pharm. Ngozika Okoye
MSc, MPH, FPCPharm
(Nigeria Natural Medicine Development Agency)



Laurus nobilis

Bay leaf is an aromatic leaf from the evergreen bay laurel tree, native to the Mediterranean. The true bay leaf, scientifically known as *Laurus nobilis*, is a green shrub that belongs to the family, Lauraceae.

Constituents

The leaf is exceptionally rich in vitamins A, C and folic acid, as well as copper, potassium, calcium, magnesium, zinc, iron, selenium and manganese. It also contains essential phytochemicals like parthenolide, volatile oils, organic compounds, caffeic acid, rutin, cineol and Lauric acid.

Preparations

Bay leaf may be used as fresh or dried, whole or crushed flakes, or powdered. It may also be used as oil, paste, tea, poultice or vapours. It is an ingredient in food preparation, such as sauces and dressings.

Pharmacological actions and medicinal uses

Bay leaves tea can help reduce cold and flu symptoms and can also provide relief from bronchitis. The tea is effective in reducing fever. Inhaling the vapours of bay leaves might help loosening up phlegm and removing harmful bacteria in the respiratory system. Bay leaves are an excellent natural treatment for viral and bacterial infections of the respiratory tract.

Bay leaves contain valuable compounds such as rutin, salicylates, caffeic acid and phytonutrients which boost heart health and improve heart function, thereby providing protection against cardiovascular diseases, such as heart attacks and strokes.

Bay leaf oil is increasingly being used in cosmetics, as it helps in reducing pigmentation and also cleansing and smoothening skin. Bay leaf essential oil helps to improve the scalp that supports hair strength and removes dandruff.

The consumption of bay leaf improves insulin function, causing reduction of blood glucose, cholesterol and triglyceride levels which is why it is beneficial for diabetics. According to a study in 2009, taking capsules that contain 1-3g of bay leaf daily can help lower and manage glucose and cholesterol levels in people with diabetes.

Drinking a concoction of bay leaf tea with hot water can alleviate common digestive disorders like constipation, acid reflux and

irregular bowel movements, heartburn and flatulence. Bay leaf has diuretic, astringent and

appetite stimulant properties. Bay leaves may reduce food cravings, thereby promoting weight loss.

A study found that an extract from the bay leaf plant is a natural option that might be able to help kill cancer cells by assisting apoptosis, or programmed cell death.

The anti-inflammatory property of the bay leaf makes it useful in arthritis and pain, both orally and topically.

Bay leaf is also reported to have ulcer prevention, antibacterial, antifungal, anti-seizure, sedative, stress-relieving, wound healing, insect repellent properties

Adverse effects

Contact dermatitis and eczema breakouts have been sporadically reported. If you are allergic to other members of the Lauraceae family, then you are likely to be allergic to bay leaf as well. Moreover, bay leaves should not be consumed whole. The leaf remains intact and cannot be digested. It may become lodged

in the throat or cause damage to the intestinal tract.

Also, it has been reported that bay leaf may increase blood sugar

Economic uses and potentials

The consumption of herbs and spices is fueling the demand for bay leaf in the global market. Bay leaves cost between 1,200 and 2,000 for a pack of 125g in the Nigerian market. There are opportunities in the cultivation, stocking, distribution and sales of bay leaf. There are also prospects for bay leaf in food and beverages, pharmaceutical, nutraceutical, personal care and cosmetic industries.

Reference: Koganti S (2020): Bay Leaf: Potential Health Benefits, Nutrition, And Side Effects. Available at: <https://www.stylecraze.com/articles/benefits-of-bay-leaf-for-skin-hair-and-health/>. April 3.

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...Excelling in Healthcare

Necessity of task shifting primary eye care to community pharmacies

continued from last edition

By Temitope Obayeno

Essence of task shifting

Concerning task shifting, Dr Lobga Babila Galega, a primary healthcare medical doctor said: "I think task shifting is quite important and necessary for more efficacy within the health system. However, the challenge is that of oversight provision, so that the services are provided within ethical boundaries. It is also important for appropriate and sustainable mechanisms to be put in place, to ensure competency on the job."

To this end, community pharmacists, who work at the frontline of healthcare in cities, towns and villages, have continued to offer such services and oversight in their licensed premises across the world. They are currently playing a pivotal role in distribution and administration of the COVID-19 vaccine in many countries and will remain relevant at grassroot levels for primary healthcare.

The community pharmacy is where patients can receive advice, often without prior appointment; access quality and efficacious medicines; obtain pharmaceutical care in dosing, storage and compliance to medication therapy, as well as instructions on self-testing kits for several illnesses, including non-communicable diseases like diabetes. Little wonder, pharmacists are regarded as one of the most trusted health professionals around the world. Having been licensed to practise as drug experts, pharmacists



undergo series of clinical trainings, certifications and continuing education to enable them deliver premium value to their patients. This makes them pivotal to UHC.

It is a wise step to task shift

primary eye care to community pharmacists given their background in the biological sciences, their expertise in filling eye prescriptions e.g. eye drops, as well as the health education and promotion activities which they carry out in their pharmacies and the environs.

Studies have shown that in Nigeria, patients visit community pharmacies as much as primary healthcare centres, if not to a greater degree. Patients also shop for eyeglass frames and support for prescription glasses in pharmacies. As the roles of pharmacists in patient care continue to expand, access to quality care will become more achievable for the common man, especially those at the BoP (bottom of the pyramid - which constitutes a huge proportion of the population in Nigeria), and this will bring the country a step closer to achieving universal health coverage. Multitudes in this segment battle with poor vision and this hampers their productivity!

Community pharmacists' role in the provision of eyeglasses

To bridge the gap in provision of prescription glasses, Advantage Health Africa (AHA) through its work at the franchise chain known as myPharmacy, signed a partnership with DOT glasses, a Czech company that has developed a radical solution to address the needs of the world's one billion people who are visually impaired without access to prescription eyeglasses. Now, patients can walk into any community pharmacy near them for vision screening and prescription glasses.

The feedback has been encouraging. The prescription glasses are for persons with refractive errors - both short- and long-sightedness (myopia and hypermetropia). Typical distribution channels for the DOT team include primary healthcare centres, pharmacies, mobile clinics,

government programmes etc. With this partnership, myPharmacy facilitates the distribution of the eyeglasses to community pharmacies and works with the DOT team to facilitate trainings to empower pharmacists to utilise the simple vision testing tools as well as provide oversight as needed. DOT Glasses is supported by the European Investment Fund and Czech Development Agency and is a member of EYELLiance.

Speaking at the launch of the partnership at its head office in Lagos, Nigeria, the Operations Manager of AHA, Pharm. Yewande Adekoya said the initiative offers community pharmacists an opportunity to optimise quality service delivery, which is the thrust of their presence in cities, towns and villages. She expressed optimism that, with DOT Glasses made available through community pharmacies, there is hope for more visually impaired persons above the age of nine, and the glasses promote the mission of bringing vision to the world, including Nigerians.

Undoubtedly, a collaborative effort with community pharmacists will enable the efficient delivery of primary eye care services to the community. It will largely contribute to health systems strengthening by improving access to affordable quality healthcare. It will also foster inter-professional collaboration, as pharmacists will partner with relevant professionals and clinics for referral of major cases. To sustain this model successfully, the AHA manager has called for a further enabling regulatory framework.

CEO of AHA, Pharm. Abimbola Adebakin said, "We must also begin to ponder on how an effective task shifting policy can be implemented in our healthcare system. An efficient, cost-effective and quality healthcare system is not farfetched, if we utilise creative models like task shifting for the benefit of the BoP". Her 2020 interview with some visually challenged athletes can be found here <https://youtu.be/GFaIMTP2iS8>.

Citing from the 2005-2007 National Survey of Blindness and Visual Impairment, she said it is estimated that 1.13 million individuals aged 40 years and above are currently blind in Nigeria. A further 2.7 million adults in this age category are estimated to have moderate visual impairment while an additional 400,000 adults are severely visually impaired. 4.25 million are visually impaired or blind and the numbers might be much more now in 2021, she explained.

Advantage Health Africa (AHA) promotes access, affordability and quality healthcare through various novel initiatives. It was first in setting up an aggregated online pharmacy platform (my-medicines) in 2017. It also launched first franchise pharmacy chain in February 2020 with 51 franchises (myPharmacy), while also serving a large number of Health Maintenance Organisations (HMOs) with its medicines fulfilment programme (myCare). The organisation also recently began the distribution of genuine locally manufactured pharmaceuticals through Advantage Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

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Nigeria Academy of Pharmacy (NAPharm) and Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE)



NIGERIA ACADEMY OF PHARMACY (NAPharm) AND NIGERIAN GUILD OF EDITORS (NGE) PROGRAMME ON COVID-19 PANDEMIC COMMUNIQUE

The Nigeria Academy of Pharmacy (NAPharm) in partnership with the Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) organised a six-day virtual programme on COVID-19 Pandemic from Monday, 12th to Saturday, 17th April, 2021. The theme was COVID-19: Facts, Myths & Way Forward

The daily events were structured as follows:

Day 1: **Theme-COVID-19: Facts, Myths & Way Forward**
Chairman - Dr Osagie Ehanire, Hon.

Minister of Health

Keynote speaker - Dr Chikwe Ihekweazu, DG,

NCDC

Panel Discussion Moderator - Pharm. Ahmed Yakasai, Past President, PSN

Day 2: **Sub-theme: Roles of the Media in the Management of COVID-19 Pandemic**

Chairman - Prof. Tonnie Iredia, Former CEO, National Orientation Agency.

Keynote Speaker - Dr Reuben Abati, Media Consultant.

Panel Discussion Moderator - Dr U.N.O. Uwaga, Past President, PSN

Day 3: **Sub-theme: Roles of Professionals, Research Institutes & Universities**

Chairman - Dr Faisal Shuaibu, ED/CEO, NPHCDA

Keynote Speaker - Prof. Chinedum Babalola, VC, Chrisland University, Abeokuta.

Panel Discussion Moderator - Pharm. Olumide Akintayo, Past President, PSN

Day 4: **Sub-theme - Drug Use And Misuse During the Pandemic**

Chairman - Prof. Isa Marte Hussaini, Commissioner for Health, Borno State,

Keynote Speaker - Prof. Ike Uzochukwu, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Panel Discussion Moderator - Prof. Mbang Femi-Oyewo, Chairman, Board Fellows of PSN

Day 5: **Sub-theme: Roles of Regulatory And International Bodies**

Chairman - Mazi Sam Ohuabunwa, President, PSN

Keynote Speaker - Prof. Mojisola Adeyeye, DG, NAFDAC

Panel Discussion Moderator - Pharm. Azubuike Okwor, Past President, PSN

Day 6: **Sub-theme: Lessons of the Pandemic and the Way Forward**

Chairman - Mr Tony Akiotu, GMD, DAAR Communications

Keynote Speaker - Pharm. Clare Omatseye

Panel Discussion Moderator - Pharm. Mohammed Budah, Past President, PSN.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Government should make grants available to institutions, organisations and individuals in order to encourage them to expand the scope of research works on COVID-19, bearing in mind the fact that the virus may not leave us soon.

2. The Federal Ministry of Health and other agencies under its supervision should accord journalists unhindered access to crucial information bordering on the coronavirus outbreak, government's efforts and financial investments towards the containment of the pandemic.

3. NAFDAC should intensify efforts towards ensuring that a local vaccine is found from the list of over forty samples submitted to it for clinical trials as this would help cut down any form of dependence on any foreign country for imports.

4. As critical stakeholders in the Nigerian healthcare delivery system, pharmacists, especially those in hospital and community services, should be included in the vaccine administration process, bearing in mind their proximity to the masses.

5. Government should review and improve the welfare packages of all frontline health workers involved in the management of COVID-19 and should ensure that a robust insurance system is sustained for those who lose their lives in the course of their duties.

6. In order to ensure medicines security and improved manufacturing of pharmaceutical products, it is imperative for the Federal Government to create a Local Content Law (Act) to serve as a guideline for manufacturers and regulatory agencies.

7. NAPharm/NGE also seek holistic public-private partnership in resolving issues surrounding shortage of vaccines, funding for local vaccines production, vaccines administration, provision of medicines raw materials and technological innovation; which will portray us as a nation that has learnt from our systemic failure in our approach to the pandemic.

8. NAPharm/NGE charge universities and researchers to embrace a paradigm shift from being only academic-based to becoming entrepreneurial-oriented, which will enhance their attainment of financial advantage through commercial and industrial application of research. While appreciating TETFund and CBN for their roles, we call on government to support research and development reasonably in order to compete with developed nations.

9. The coalition calls on professionals and researchers in Nigeria to embark on evidence-based research that will enhance efficient management of COVID-19 in the country, while seeking enhanced and sustained multi-sector and multi-stakeholder collaboration towards winning the war against COVID-19 as well as making preparations for future public health emergencies or global shocks that will require trans-disciplinary and multi-cultural efforts.

10. NAPharm/NGE earnestly plead with the Federal Government and major private sector stakeholders to commit more seriously to investment in broadening and deepening the frontiers of scientific knowledge, through improved funding and better motivation of researchers to enhance their capacity; while seeking to achieve critical objectives which are to complement efforts by government and other organisations to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our people.

APPRECIATION

The Nigeria Academy of Pharmacy and Nigerian Guild of Editors deeply appreciate all the chairmen, keynote speakers, moderators, panelists, facilitators, and rapporteurs, members of the planning committee, invited guests and the public that participated in this programme to make it a huge success.

Prince Julius Adelus-Adeluyi
President
Nigeria Academy of Pharmacy
Editors

Mr Isa Mustapha
President
Nigerian Guild of

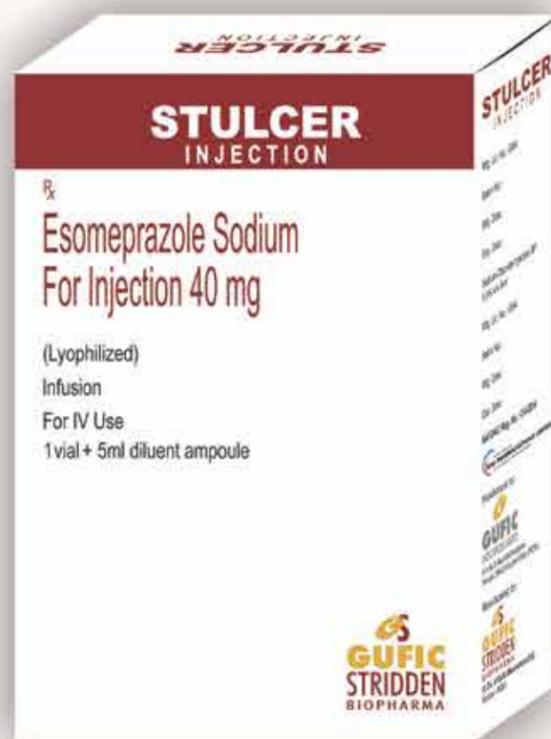
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Unilorin faculty of pharmacy to establish ultramodern Drug Information Centre

As part of efforts to provide relevant and up-to-date information on drugs and pharmaceutical developments to students and staff, the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Ilorin, has concluded plans to establish an ultramodern Drug Information Centre.

Disclosing this in an interview with *Pharmanews* recently, Acting Dean of the faculty, Dr Mohammed Amali, stated that the project, when completed, will serve multipurpose functions for the faculty and ultimately contribute immensely to the advancement of the pharmaceutical industry.

Amali, an alumnus of the University of Liverpool, UK, noted that the faculty is working hard to be the leader in the training of pharmacist in the country, stressing that the faculty will not relent in its commitment to producing competent personnel that will continue to serve the needs of the pharmaceutical sector.

In his words: "The Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences University of Ilorin is continuously striving to be a leader among its peers in the training of pharmacists and development of the pharmacy profession. As a result, the faculty is among the six faculties of pharmacy in Nigeria that have adopted the Doctor of Pharmacy curriculum for the training of pharmacists.

"The faculty is also at the terminal stages of the establishment of an ultramodern Drug Information Centre, which will double as a resource centre for staff, students and the wider community. The potentials of this centre may also extend to pharmacovigilance and thus cannot be understated. The computerisation of some laboratory functions in pharmaceuticals is also ongoing"

The erudite pharmacologist added: "It is the desire of all of us at the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences here in Ilorin and also all of us at the University of Ilorin to produce pharmacists that can hold their heads high among their peers. I desire our graduates to be able to deliver standard healthcare services wherever they may find themselves, either here in Nigeria or abroad. It fills me with joy to say that as I speak, none of our graduates has been found wanting in the discharge of their duties so far."

Amali further revealed that the advent of COVID-19 has brought about some ingenious concepts in the faculty and the institution as a whole, adding that the institution will take advantage of every opportunity during the pandemic period to attain greater heights.

According to him: "The advent of COVID-19 has also brought about some innovative concepts, though the pandemic has also exposed the shortfalls in the local pharmaceutical drug development and manufacturing sectors. The faculty has within this period tried to take advantage of the different opportunities offered by the federal government to try to enhance local production. The

major drawback has been the paucity of funds to execute the proposed projects.

"Most recently, there has been an initiative by the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria (PCN) to develop and improve the manufacturing of consumables for the prevention of COVID-19 infection in Nigerian universities. We, as a faculty, are currently in discussion with the university management on the modalities on how to take advantage of this initiative. This is to enable us undertake full scale drug production in addition to hand sanitizer production."

The acting dean also disclosed that many research works are being conducted by staff of the different departments in the faculty, noting that the outcome of the studies will contribute immensely to the pharmacy profession, adding

By Ranmilowo Ojalumo

that some of the research works have been funded by different granting agencies.

According to Amali, the studies that staff of the faculty are conducting include "The characterisation of drug hypersensitivity reactions in patients taking some beta lactam antibiotics and anticonvulsant drugs."

He added: "Studies on the influence of selected host genetic factors on the pharmacokinetics of nevirapine in HIV-infected adult Nigerian patients is also being carried out in the department of Pharmaceutical chemistry. Research is also being conducted to develop new drug delivery platforms, dosage designs and formulations in the department of Pharmaceutical Technology.

"The faculty is also working



Dr Mohammed Amali

closely with the African Centre for Herbal Research and Innovation (ACHRI), based in Ilorin, on identifying and assessing the efficacy of plants with medicinal potential."



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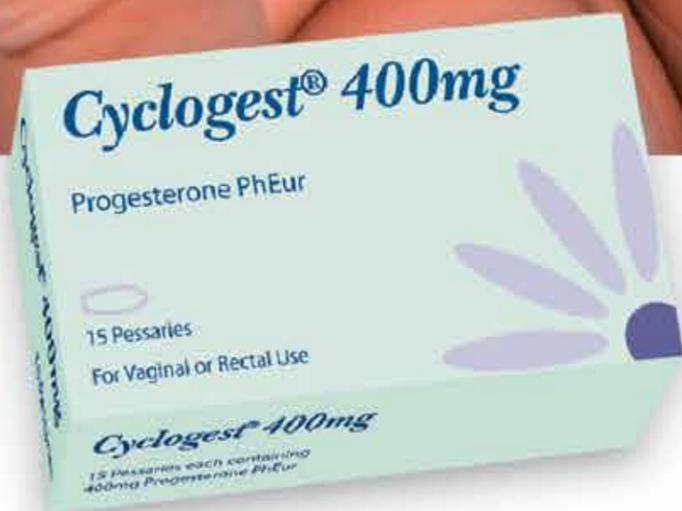
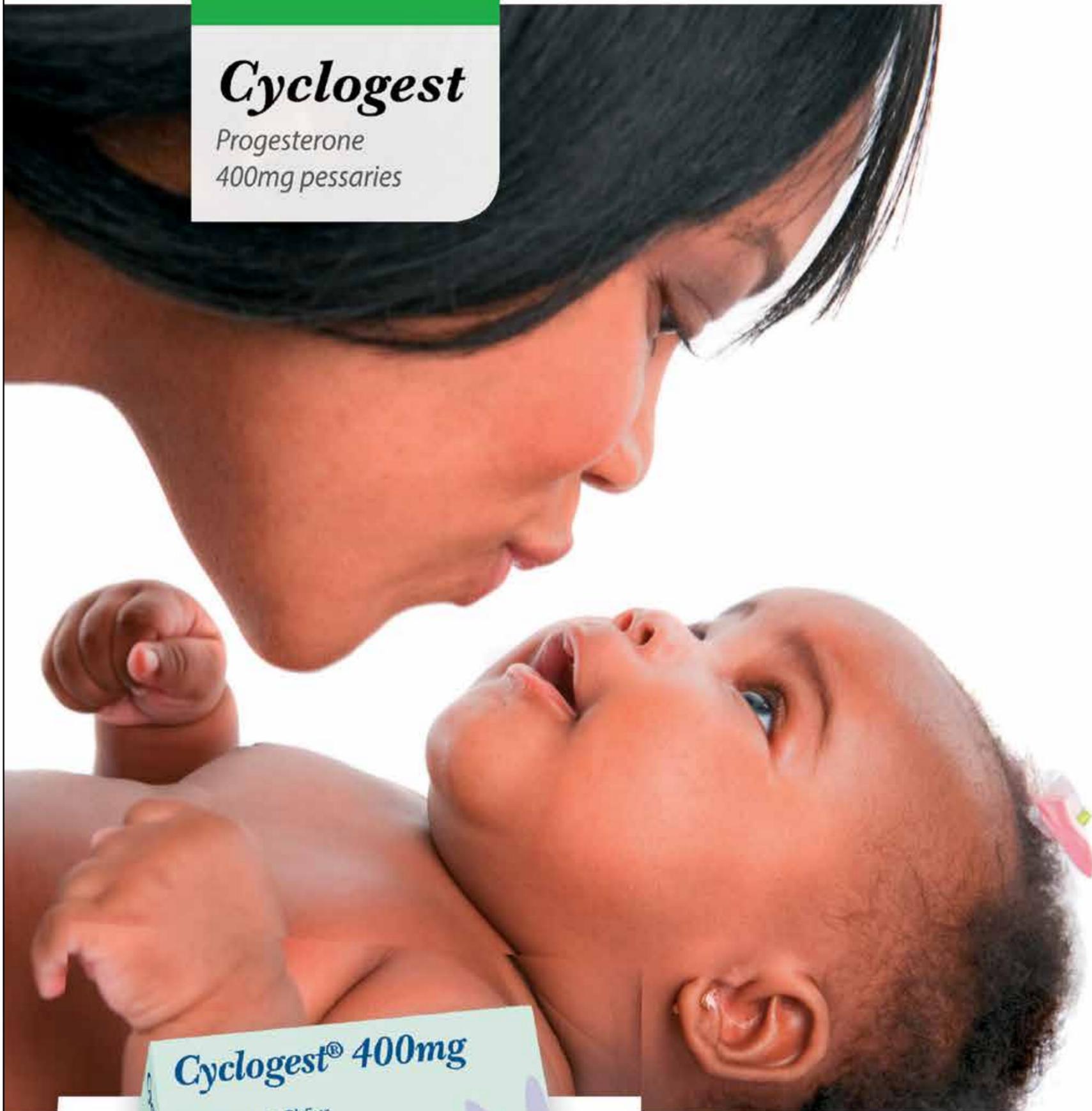
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What will you be remembered for?

By Pharm. Sesan Kareem

Intuitively, we all agree that life has an end. But one question that arises from this grim fact is, what will you be remembered for after death? The wise words of Nathan Schaeffer give us a clue: "The question will not be, how much have you got? But, how much have you given? Not, how much have you won? But, how much have you done? Not, how much have you saved, but, how much have you sacrificed? It will be, how much have you loved and served? Not, how much were you honoured?"

The part that strikes me most in Nathan Schaeffer's submission is the concluding part, "How much have you loved and served? Not how much were you honoured. This means that the ultimate determinant of success in life is not how much wealth you have at your disposal, or how many educational achievements are in your curricula vitae, or the number of awards, titles and encomiums bestowed on you by others. The ultimate success is in loving, caring, helping and serving others.

In addition, it means at the end of our lives, it is not the number of children that we had that really counts but the number of people that were successful through us. It is not the millions we had in our bank accounts but the number of millions who were able to put food on their table through us. It is not the number of houses we

built, but the number of those who were able to put a roof on themselves and their family directly or indirectly through us.

Sincerely, if we strongly believe that life has an end and our days on earth are numbered, then we would be careful and watchful what our report sheets and stories would be at the end of our lives. However, this story can either be good or bad. A large number of people have passed away, but it is a harsh fact that those who truly leave footprints in the sand of time and who impacted the world positively are so few, like a few athletes to tens of thousands of spectators.

There is a myriad of wealthy, influential, famous and successful individuals that are not remembered anymore after their death because they lived for themselves and not for others. For you to be remembered for a worthy cause in this beautiful yet challenging world, you must live for others.

A life is important based on the impacts it has on other lives. Those who are always remembered for living a worthy life are those who were focused. They are those who did not spend five years on one thing then another few years on another thing. They are those who invested many years, even decades, doing a single thing in various ways.

Great authors, innovators, presenters, politicians, freedom

fighters, actors, religious leaders, artists, entrepreneurs, environmentalists are those who spend their entire lifetime focusing on one aspect of life. They are individuals who set the standard so high, stretched the limits of norms, and raised the bar above people's expectations and left indelible mark in their fields due to the power of concentration.

On a daily basis, I meet young people who aspire to be a blessing to the world. But their number one excuse is that they believe they are still a work-in-progress. They want to acquire enormous wealth, wisdom, fame or power before they can help others. But this shouldn't be so.

The fact remains that you will always be a work-in-progress, if you are keen to make your short life worthy. Another bitter truth is that we are not guaranteed how long we will live on this earth. Therefore, you have to start helping others with what you currently have.

My organisation started a programme in 2011 tagged, "Help our youths the truth to know." With the support and commitment of some of my friends, we were able to touch and inspire over 20,000 secondary and university students within two years. Although, my dream is to impact the world positively, I know that I have to start from my home, street, local government, state, country and continent, before being on the world stage.



For questions or comments, mail or text sesankareem2@gmail.com/08072983163

In this quest, as a young Nigerian, I started using what I had to add value to other young Nigerians. You too can start making impact where you are with what you have. Oh yes, you have something you can use to add value to humanity. There are many ambitious young kids that need your experience, guidance, counselling, motivation, advice or little financial assistance to become somebody. Do this: Help them out.

Action plan: Be conscious of how you live your life. Be intentional in living a life of service to others. Focus on your focus until you become the focus in your career.

Affirmation: I live consciously. I am blessed and highly favoured.

PS: This month's contribution was culled from the book, "Life Is Short But It's Really Worth It" by Sesan Kareem. First published by United pc, United Kingdom in September 2013.

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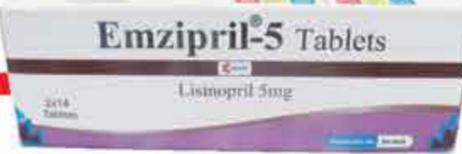
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Waste management: Health and environmental hazards in Nigeria

By Pharm. Morenike Gbadebo
(PSN-Young Pharmacists Group, Lagos)

In Nigeria, hills of waste have become perpetual features of the landscape in major cities. It is estimated that Nigeria generates an average of between 32 to 42 million tons of solid waste on annual basis, the highest in Africa. Out of this volume, only between 20 to 30 per cent are collected and properly disposed. The deployment of appropriate waste disposal strategy is a major challenge in the country and even the continent.

Improper collection and disposal of municipal waste is leading to an impending environmental ruination as the country currently lacks adequate budgetary provisions for the implementation of integrated waste management programmes across the states.

In most cities in Nigeria, residents adopt self-help strategies to discard their household and industrial wastes - despite the existence of waste management authorities in every state in the country - including burying and burning of waste, or dumping on the streets and drainages. It is estimated that up to 80 per cent of residents in most Nigerian cities dispose their waste illegally.

The generation of waste and the collection, processing, transport and disposal of waste—the process of “waste management”—is important for both the health of the public, aesthetic and environmental reasons. Waste is described anything discarded by an individual, household or organisation. As a result, waste is a complex mixture of different substances, only some of which are intrinsically hazardous to health.

Several classifications of waste management exist in different countries. The most commonly used classifications are physical or solid waste (municipal waste or black bag waste), liquid (gaseous waste), source (household/domestic waste, industrial waste, agricultural waste, commercial waste, demolition and construction waste, mining waste), environmental impact (hazardous waste, non-hazardous waste).

Municipal solid waste (MSW) consists of many different things, including food and garden waste, paper and cardboard, glass, metals, plastics and textiles. This is also generated by commercial and industrial organisations, although large volumes of chemical and mineral waste are produced in addition, depending on the sector. Agricultural waste comprises mainly slurry and farmyard manure with significant quantities of straw, silage effluent, vegetable and cereal residues. Most of this is spread on land. Certain types of waste are defined as hazardous because of the inherent characteristic to cause harm (e.g. toxic, explosive).

Hazards of waste

There is no doubt that given the diversity of material coming under the heading of waste, there is considerable potential

for hazardous exposure to occur through waste management. High levels of contamination of air, soil and water in a few well publicized situations have led to widespread unease about the potential health effects of waste management processes, particularly within communities living in proximity to relevant sites.

Some waste will eventually rot, but not all, and in the process it may give off offensive odours or generate methane gas, which is combustible and contributes to the greenhouse effect. Leachate produced as waste decomposition may cause pollution. Badly-managed landfill sites may attract vermin or cause litter.

The population living near landfill sites is highly exposed to high levels of many of the toxic substances, such as cadmium, arsenic, chromium, nickel, dioxins and PAHs, some of which are considered to be carcinogenic. In addition to carcinogenicity, many of these substances can produce other toxic effects (depending on exposure level and duration) on the central nervous system, liver, kidneys, heart, lungs, skin, reproduction, etc.

For other pollutants, such as SO₂ and PM₁₀, air pollution studies have indicated that there may be effects on morbidity and mortality at background levels of exposure, particularly in susceptible groups such as the elderly. Chemicals such as dioxins and organochlorines may be lipophilic and accumulate in fat-rich tissues of the human body and have been associated with reproductive or endocrine-disrupting endpoints.

Reproductive effects associated with landfill sites have been extensively researched and have been found to have given rise to low birth weights (less than 2500 g), foetal and infant mortality, spontaneous abortion, and the occurrence of birth defects.

A UK study found significantly elevated risks for several defects, including neural tube defects, hypospadias and epispadias, abdominal wall defects and surgical correction of gastroschisis and exomphalos. Although there was a tendency for a higher risk in the period before opening compared with after opening of a landfill site, for several anomalies.

A small (12 per cent) statistically significant risk of congenital malformations was associated with maternal proximity to a site which increased with off-site chemical leaks. Significant associations were found for pesticides with

musculoskeletal system defects, metals and solvents with nervous system defects, and plastics with chromosomal anomalies.

Gastrointestinal, oesophageal, stomach, colon and rectal cancer have also been significantly reported. Many of the studies investigating health outcomes other than birth defects and reproductive orders and cancers have been community have been reported.

The health problems investigated include respiratory symptoms,

irritation of the skin, nose and eyes, gastrointestinal problems, fatigue, headaches, psychological problems and allergies. Dumping of refuse, sewage, waste materials close to the stream and rivers may contaminate the water with microorganisms and heavy chemicals, hence affecting the freshwater ecosystem due to toxicity. If such water is not treated and is swallowed it may cause gastroenteritis, cholera, and other life-threatening diseases. If used to bath it may cause skin irritation such as Swimmer's itch as well as eye, ear and throat infections.

Poor waste handling and disposal can lead to environmental, air and water pollution, which encourages the breeding of disease-vector insects, animal scavengers and rodents resulting in a range of diseases through different routes of exposure such as faeco-oral and soil transmitted mechanisms.

Disease and death

Dumping of plastics in traffic can result in blockage of sewers, drainage networks, and choking of water bodies. In raining season these plastics will prevent the flow of water, leading to flood which causes loss of lives and properties. An example is the major flood incident reported at Omiyale, Ibadan, Nigeria, due to indiscriminate disposal of waste.

Various diseases outbreaks like cholera in some northern states are as a result of environmental pollution caused by open defecation and environmental hazards. Dumping of refuse or waste illegally predisposes us to health risks, including COVID-19.

Pollutants associated with incineration are particles, acidic gases and aerosols, metals and organic compounds and exposure to these increases overall mortality and emergency hospital admissions, particularly



cardiovascular and smog effects (asthma, emphysema, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases) mortality and morbidity. Air pollutants have a negative impact on plant growth, primarily through interfering with resource accumulation. Once leaves are in close contact with the atmosphere, many air pollutants, such as O₃ and NO₂, affect the metabolic function of the leaves and interfere with net carbon fixation by the plant canopy.

Air pollution is harmful to human health and also can harm pets and wildlife. Air pollution causes the formation of acid rain, which raises pH (a measure of acidity) in rivers and streams and destroys plants and trees. It can also cause climate change, deterioration of fields and extinction of animal species.

Lack of adequate and free flowing drainage(s) results in increased breeding of mosquitoes and if exposed to mosquitoes one may get infected with the plasmodium organism and eventually come down with malaria.

Some of the problems plaguing efficient waste management in Nigeria include the proliferation of unplanned settlements, traffic congestion, insecurity, and ignorance.

The greatest challenge however, is to eliminate the effects of factors which might relate to both health outcome and environmental exposure, such as age, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic or deprivation status, smoking, access to health care and occupational history.

What is the way forward?

Given the rate of population growth, industrialisation, and urbanisation, forward-looking and effective waste management plans need to be set in motion for the protection of public health. Such plans must involve all stakeholders, including the waste generators, the private sector, the informal sector, and regulatory agencies.

Community participation towards waste collection and source level segregation for individuals are a vital role for managing municipal waste. Public participation will be the major role for collection of waste at source level and its treatment processes are

continued on page 54

In most cities in Nigeria, residents adopt self-help strategies to discard their household and industrial wastes - despite the existence of waste management authorities in every state in the country - including burying and burning of waste, or dumping on the streets and drainages. It is estimated that up to 80 per cent of residents in most Nigerian cities dispose their waste illegally.

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NAPharm, NGE and COVID-19 management

By Patrick Iwelunmor

The six-day programme organised by the Nigeria Academy of Pharmacy (NAPharm), in conjunction with the Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE), has come and gone; yet it left a great food for thought, not only for pharmacists but also for all healthcare professionals. Tagged "COVID-19: Facts, Myths and Way Forward", the event paraded some of the finest professionals Nigeria has ever produced from various fields of human endeavour. Pharmacists of different cadres, medical doctors, academics, journalists and other health experts deliberated on knotty issues concerning the management of the COVID-19 pandemic and also proffered solutions.

While it remains very expedient for scientists to continue to chart new and innovative paths in their quest for problem-solving, involving the media in their activities has been identified as one of the fastest ways of resolving emergencies like COVID-19. Distinguished broadcaster and former Director General of the Nigerian Television Authority

(NTA), Prof. Tonnie Iredia, and foremost journalist and Group Managing Director of Leadership Newspaper, Mr Azubuike Ishiekwene, highlighted the significant role the media played in shaping public behaviour during the outbreak of the virus up until the roll out of vaccines by different countries.

In their submissions, they agreed that one of the things the media did well was providing adequate information about the virus which came with a novelty toga that has since been demystified through accurate information dissemination and knowledge sharing.

The role pharmacists are playing in the management of the pandemic was also brought to the fore, even though they have not been included in the list of professionals handling vaccine administration in Nigeria. Director General of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Prof. Mojisola Adeyeye, pointed out that the reason Nigeria did not record more casualties, compared to other countries in Europe and America, was due to the accessibility of

The programme has once again underscored the importance of collaboration among professionals from different fields. The NAPharm/NGE programme will go a long way in charting a strategic direction for all efforts geared towards the fight against COVID-19. It will also inspire other professional bodies within the health sector to fashion out ideas that can help in the management of the pandemic.



Prof. Mojisola Adeyeye
NAFDAC DG



Dr Chikwe Ihekweazu
NCDC DG

pharmacies to the populace. She described pharmacists as the backbone of the Nigerian healthcare system because of their proximity to the masses.

Corroborating her submission, the immediate past Coordinator of the Presidential Taskforce on COVID-19 (PTF), Dr Sani Aliyu, added that the PTF would not have achieved much success without the contributions made by pharmacists, whom he described as critical stakeholders in Nigeria's primary healthcare delivery system.

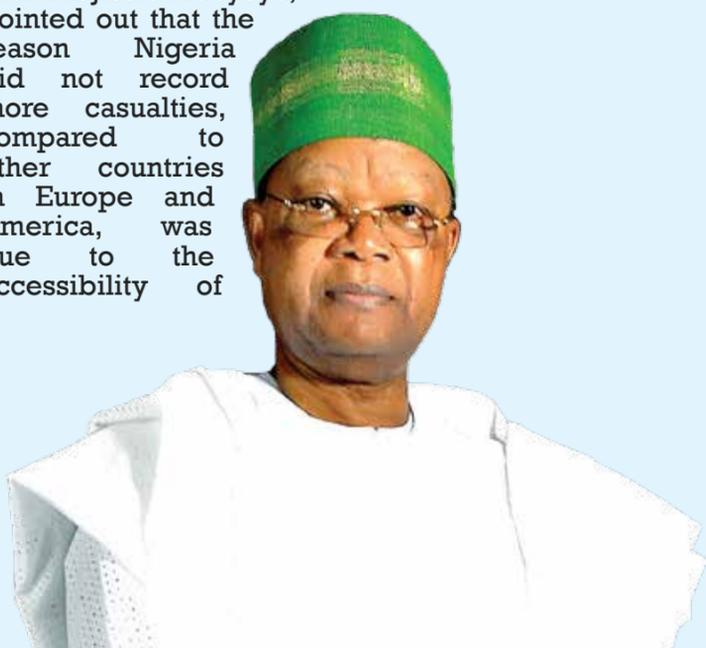
Speaking on the topic, "The roles of professionals, research institutes and universities in COVID-19", Prof. Chinedum Babalola, Vice Chancellor of Chrisland University, Abeokuta, lamented the failure of African countries to move as fast as their counterparts in other parts of the world in terms of clinical trials for vaccines. According to her, only two per cent of vaccine trials have been undertaken in Africa, where less than one per cent of the population have access to COVID-19 vaccines.

For Prof. Ike Uzochukwu, former dean, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, vaccine hesitancy and outright anti-vaccination sentiments must be eschewed in order for all stakeholders to win the fight against the virus. He also discouraged the spread of factors such as obnoxious religious beliefs which encourage the development of vaccine hesitancy sentiments.

On his part, the Director General of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Dr Chikwe Ihekweazu, bemoaned the socio-economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and how it has led to fractured nations and economies all over the world. He said that over \$28 trillion have been lost to the pestilence with over 2 million deaths recorded globally. He harped on the need for Nigerians to brace up for possible future pandemics, adding that there is a need for capacity building and the use of digital surveillance in the training and protection of healthcare workers.

The programme has once again underscored the importance of collaborations among professionals from different fields. The NAPharm/NGE programme will go a long way in charting a strategic direction for all efforts geared towards the fight against COVID-19. It will also inspire other professional bodies within the health sector to fashion out ideas that can help in the management of the pandemic.

The programme which started on Monday 12 April, 2021 and ended on Saturday, 17 April 2021, was attended virtually on Zoom and physically at the Business School Netherland, Ikeja, Lagos. It had in attendance the following dignitaries among others: the President, NAPharm, Prince Julius Adelus-Adeluyi; Vice President, NAPharm, Pharm. (Sir) Ifeanyi Atueyi; NAPharm Director of Programmes, Dr Lolu Ojo; Dr Olufunsho Awodele; Dr Victor Ikumawoyi; Dr Jimmy Adeyeye Arigbabuwo and Distinguished Prof. C.I Igwilo.



Prince Julius Adelus-Adeluyi
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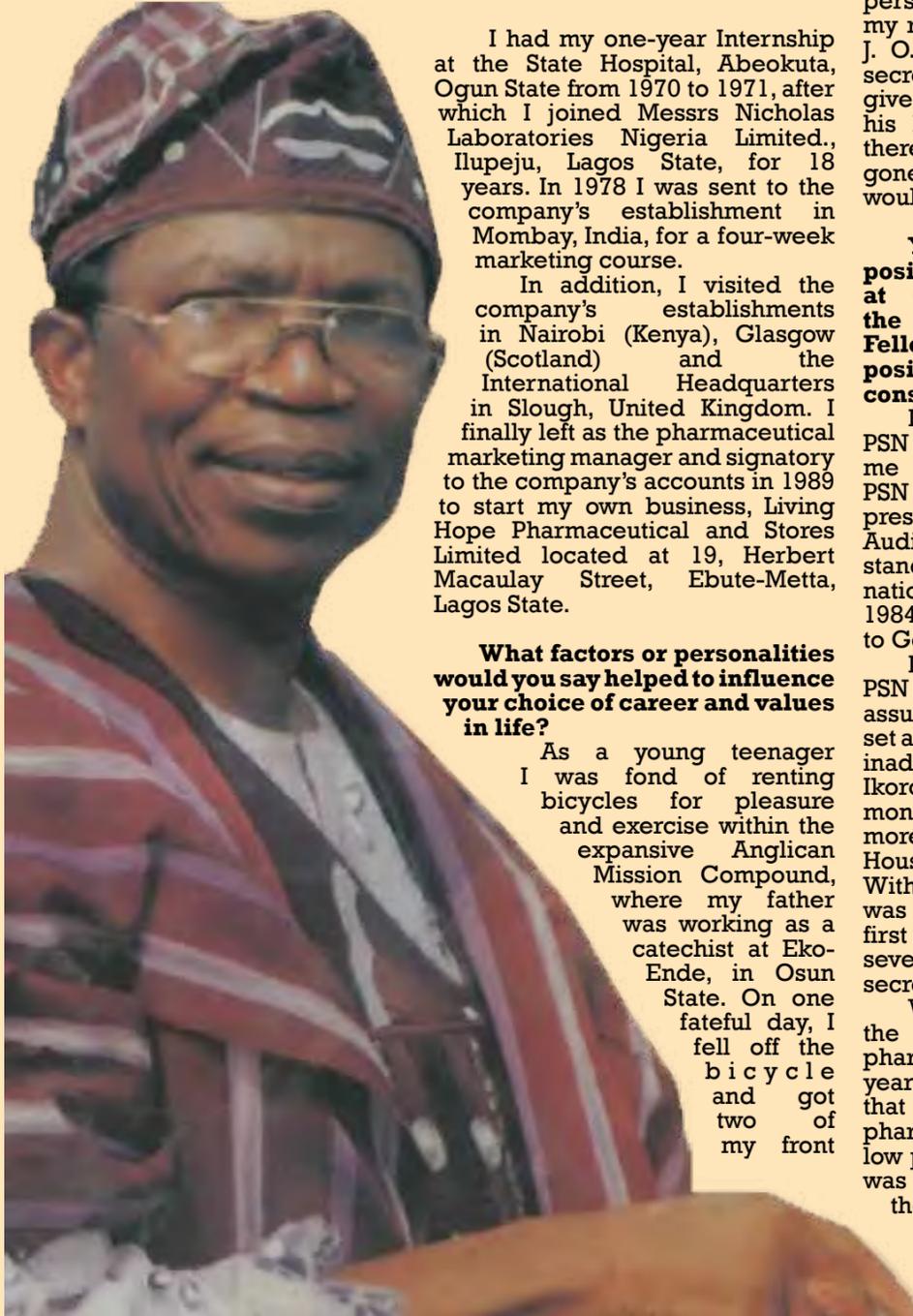
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How we insisted on university degree as minimum qualification for pharmacists - Adeleke

By Moses Dike

Pharm. (elder) Ebenezer Adeyeye Adeleke is a respected Fellow of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN) and former chairman of the PSN Board of Fellows. In this exclusive interview, Adeleke, who will be clocking 79 in September this year, goes down memory lane to describe the moments, challenges and achievements that shaped his many years of service to the pharmacy profession. He also speaks about his family, childhood days, education and the circumstances that led him to settle for Pharmacy as a profession. Excerpts:



Pharm. (Elder) Ebenezer Adeyeye Adeleke

It is our great pleasure to have you as our "Senior Citizen of the Month". Please tell us about yourself, especially your education and early childhood experiences.

I was born at Oke-Opin in Ekiti Local Government Area of Kwara State on 23, September 1942. I had my primary education at four different schools, three of which were in Eko-Ende, Ilesha and Ikirun, all in Osun State; while the fourth place was at Central School, Oke-Opin, in Ekiti Local Government Area of Kwara State.

I completed my Secondary School Education at Titcombe College, Egbe, Kogi State, in 1962 before proceeding for my sixth form at Gindiri Boys Secondary School in Plateau State. Thereafter, I obtained my pharmacy degree through the Northern Nigerian Government Scholarship in 1970 at the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University).

I had my one-year Internship at the State Hospital, Abeokuta, Ogun State from 1970 to 1971, after which I joined Messrs Nicholas Laboratories Nigeria Limited., Ilupeju, Lagos State, for 18 years. In 1978 I was sent to the company's establishment in Bombay, India, for a four-week marketing course.

In addition, I visited the company's establishments in Nairobi (Kenya), Glasgow (Scotland) and the International Headquarters in Slough, United Kingdom. I finally left as the pharmaceutical marketing manager and signatory to the company's accounts in 1989 to start my own business, Living Hope Pharmaceutical and Stores Limited located at 19, Herbert Macaulay Street, Ebute-Metta, Lagos State.

What factors or personalities would you say helped to influence your choice of career and values in life?

As a young teenager I was fond of renting bicycles for pleasure and exercise within the expansive Anglican Mission Compound, where my father was working as a catechist at Eko-Ende, in Osun State. On one fateful day, I fell off the bicycle and got two of my front

teeth damaged. In my first year at Titcombe College in 1958, I was advised to see a dentist at the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) Hospital, Egbe, Kogi State.

On entering the white man's office, I saw a very neat and good-looking dentist, Dr Tracey, in his sparkling and very attractive apartment. He politely attended to me and had my teeth replaced at an opportune time. There and then, I got attracted to Dentistry and made up my mind that I would study Dentistry.

This love for Dentistry was with me until early 1966. On another fateful day, I had a train journey with one of my very good friends, Elijah Aina. While discussing, he beautifully sold the profession of Pharmacy to me. This later encounter swayed me to apply in 1966 for both Dentistry and Pharmacy at The University of Lagos (UNILAG) and University of Ife (UNIFE) respectively.

Fortunately, I got admitted to the two institutions. I was finally

persuaded to cling to Pharmacy by my respected senior cousin, Chief J. O. Aje, who was a permanent secretary in Ilorin, Kwara State. I give thanks to the Lord God for his leading ever since. It could therefore be seen that if I had not gone in for Pharmacy, Dentistry would have been my profession.

You have held a number of positions in PSN and, in fact, at some point you became the chairman of the Board of Fellows. Tell us more about these positions and which of them you consider most challenging.

I was national treasurer of the PSN from 1977 to 1984. This makes me one of the longest serving PSN national treasurers. After the presentation of the Treasurer's/Auditors Report, I was given standing ovation by the entire Benin national conference in November 1984. I felt very happy and grateful to God.

I was also chairman of Lagos PSN from 1988 to 1991. When I assumed office in January 1988, I set a target of relocating our grossly inadequate secretariat from 52A Ikorodu Road, Lagos. By the second month, we had secured a much more spacious office at Olatunji House, 299, Ikorodu Road, Idi-Iroko. Within a short time, our secretariat was air-conditioned for the very first time. The place was utilised for several years, until a purpose built secretariat was provided at Ogudu.

We also worked hard towards the integration of hospital pharmacists into the PSN. In the early years of my tenure, I had observed that hospital and administrative pharmacists in the state had a very low professional outlook and there was a clear disconnect between them and the PSN. I reacted by appointing my vice chairman, Pharm. Paul Enebeli, FPSN, as the sole administrator to help reverse the ugly situation. He did a very good job to stimulate a

great interest. A few years later the hospital pharmacists had got so integrated into the PSN body that they were assuming leadership positions.

Later, I had audience with the then Commissioner for Health, Dr Adekunle Desalu. I sought his permission to visit the pharmacy department of the state hospital for on-the-spot assessment. He granted us the permission. We randomly selected the hospitals and later produced a report. We itemised our observations and suggestions for improvements. He was happy with the outcome and implemented many improvements.

Again, we initiated the first Merit Awards in Lagos State. For the first time, ten merit awardees were inducted in 1988. There were some initial oppositions to this scheme but these fizzled out within a short time. This scheme has now become popular in very many states.

We also helped to ward off the unwarranted opposition that greeted the appointment of Pharmacist Abdulkareem

as commissioner for health in Kwara State. The appointment of this pharmacist was greeted with opposition by

the state branch of the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA). The appointment was described as "a square peg in a round hole."

I quickly called a press conference in Lagos and drew the attention of the whole nation to what obtains in other climes of the world, including UK and USA. The list of past commissioners of health in Nigerian history also pointed to the fact that other professionals other than medical doctors had successfully held the post. A similar reaction greeted the appointment of Prince Julius Adelusi-Adeluyi as federal minister of health.

We also helped to make case for the need for graduate pharmacists. You would recall that a federal minister of health once said that Nigeria did not really need university-trained graduate pharmacists. I countered this retrogressive postulation, drawing his attention to the situation in other climes. In the European Union the minimum qualification to practise Pharmacy is a master's degree, while very many states in the U.S require Pharm D. Thanks be to God that the ridiculous postulation by that minister did not see the light of the day.

Tell us a little about your family. Did any of your children take after you to study Pharmacy or other health-related courses?

I got married to my lovely wife Mrs Elizabeth Olufunmilayo Adeleke (Nee Ajayi) on 21 April 1973, at St. Jude's Anglican Church, Ebute-Metta, Lagos. She is a Fellow of Medical Laboratory Scientists of Nigeria.

The marriage is blessed with four surviving children of three boys and a girl. Oluwaseun Adeleke and Oluwaropo Adeleke are medical doctors, while Oluwaseyi Adeleke has a master's degree in Quantity Surveying from the University of Lagos. The baby girl, Oluwaremilekun, who initially showed love for Pharmacy, later graduated in Statistics at the University of Jos. She and her family have migrated to Canada.

What are your thoughts about COVID-19 and the various efforts aimed at finding a solution to the pandemic?

The insidious manner through which the coronavirus emerged late in 2019 in China and the rapidity with which it has spread to over 200 nations clearly show that the world has become not only a global village but that pathogenic species/strains of fungi, bacterial and viral organisms are ubiquitous and can strike at will.

On 27 February, 2020, Nigeria recorded its first case. In fact, since its emergence, virtually all countries of the world have, in varying degrees, suffered its devastating consequences.

Unfortunately, many Nigerians are yet to be fully convinced of the reality of this scourge. The disbelief is more serious in many inner states and villages, despite the concerted publicity of the print, social and electronic media. Pharmacists and other health personnel have a duty to inform and convince our people. I have personally witnessed, at a very close range, the reality of the disease.

Tell us about your other engagements outside of

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Despite shocking EndSARS attack, we emerged stronger - Shekinah MD

By Adebayo Oladejo

Pharm. Tolulope Olugbadebo Ajayi is the managing director and chief executive officer, Shekinah Specialties Limited, a retail chain pharmacy in Lagos and Ogun States, whose headquarters in Lagos was savagely attacked during the recent EndSARS protest. Ajayi, who is the Treasurer, Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN), Lagos Chapter speaks on the challenges posed by the attack, as well as the recovery process. He also speaks on the menace of drug abuse in the country, which has worsened since the COVID-19 lockdown, and how it can be tackled.

Tell us about your outfit, Shekinah Pharmacy. What is the philosophy behind this enterprise, and where do you hope to take it in the next 10 years?

Shekinah commenced operations as a retail pharmacy outfit in August 2011, with a vision to provide high quality and cost-effective healthcare products and services that meet and exceed customer expectations. The name "Shekinah" depicts God's revealed glory and that is embedded in the company's slogan - promoting total health, impacting lives.

The company has grown over the years to a household pharmaceutical care outfit across six locations and hopes to further strengthen the retail chain, integrate alternative service platforms and diversify into other related aspects of practice.

Tell us about your relationship with the people of this community and the most common health conditions that bring them to your pharmacy.

As healthcare providers, we are trained and groomed to provide care to those with health challenges and promote lifestyle practices that sustain health. Common health conditions managed within the community like most others include allergies, nutritional deficiencies, malaria, infections like STDs, SSTIs, URTIs, monitoring of response to treatment of chronic conditions like diabetes, hypertension as well as medication reviews and refills, and soon.

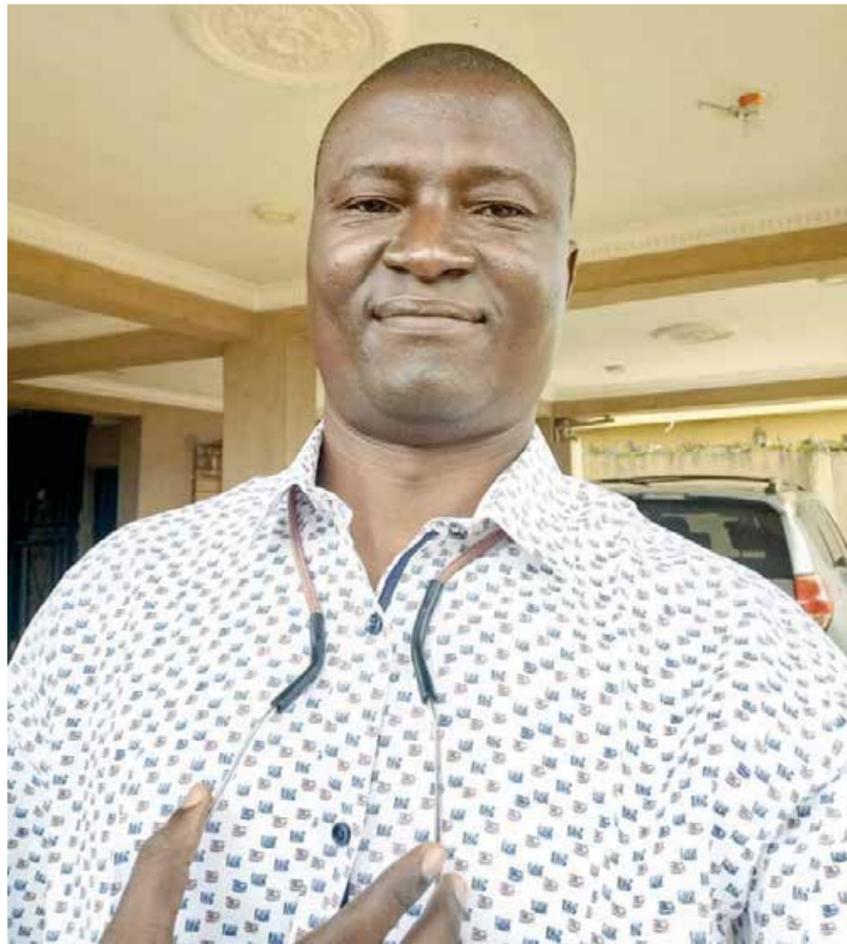
How lucrative is community pharmacy practice in this area?

As community pharmacists, our focus is on value creation rather than profitability. The former will always deliver the latter, be it in the short term or ultimately in the long run. While the location is important to a business for ease of accessibility by stakeholders, patronage will always follow after value wherever it can be found.

How would you describe the business climate, before, during, and after the COVID-19 lockdown?

The pharmaceutical care business climate has experienced shifts from the pre-COVID days to the COVID and the post-COVID lockdown era. To start with, products that expectedly experienced a sharp rise in demand during the COVID-19 lockdown era included those with direct impact on the body immune system like zinc, selenium, vitamins C, D, E etc.

Protective products like sanitizers, hand gloves, face masks, non-contact thermometers, and disinfectants also expectedly experienced a sharp rise in demand. On the other hand, the increased demand volume for products in this category coupled with increased hurdles faced by importers, despite waivers given, led to a sharp rise in product prices.



Pharm. Tolulope Olugbadebo Ajayi

The challenges with travel restrictions across the globe had a negative impact on importation and, by extension, product availability and quality of service delivery. The negative impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on the economy has no doubt redistributed resources and put strains on the disposable income of a larger majority, leading to higher selectivity on purchasing patterns.

On the flip side, lockdowns have drawn more attention to the possibility of doing more with fewer resources, especially via the e-platforms for service delivery, information dissemination, training, meetings, presentations etc.

One of your pharmacies was seriously affected during the EndSARS protest, how was the recovery process?

The attack occasioned by the

As community pharmacists, our focus is on value creation rather than profitability. The former will always deliver the latter, be it in the short term or ultimately in the long run. While the location is important to a business for ease of accessibility by stakeholders, patronage will always follow after value wherever it can be found.

EndSARS crisis was quite shocking and very devastating because it was on our flagship premises that also housed the corporate head office. The impact of disrupted operations was huge on cash flow, psychology of workforce etc. But all glory to God that no life was lost during the incident and we are able to come out from the experience stronger.

The recovery process involved a bold and deliberate move to rebuild while keeping the team in high spirits. We also had to quickly re-strategise and reorder priorities. Gratefully, resources came in from our Insurance company and the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF). Welfare supports also came from the ACPN (at the zonal, state and national levels), colleagues, family, friends and many others.

The prayers and well wishes that kept flowing in from the elders of our profession and colleagues were highly encouraging, showing that indeed we are men of honour, joining hands. Thanks to God, we came out stronger.

You have been involved in pharmacy activities and politics for some time - as the deputy zonal coordinator, ACPN, KING Zone, as well as the current treasurer, ACPN, Lagos State. How would you describe your experience so far?

My leadership and political experience in Pharmacy has been quite interesting and impactful. I have been privileged to lead planning committees for state programmes like the World

Pharmacists' Day and the Pharmacy Week, with appreciable results.

Leadership, for me, will always be an opportunity to use potentials, abilities, experience and acquired skills for laudable impacts, in conjunction with others. I am working with the new ACPN-Lagos executive team, led by Pharm. Lawrence Ekhaton, to further consolidate on the gains from the past administrations of Pharm. Olabanji Obideyi and Pharm. Abiola Paul-Ozieh, and our thrust is to keep empowering the pharmacist and protecting the people.

What should community pharmacists be doing to enable them to contribute more to healthcare delivery, especially at this crucial period of COVID-19?

As the most trusted and easily accessible healthcare providers in our various communities, we are to continue to provide patient health education, especially on COVID-19 preventive measures - correct the myths and misconceptions about COVID-19, encourage the public to embrace the COVID-19 vaccination, as part of preventive measures, and collaborate with other health facilities through referral of suspected cases of COVID-19 for testing and treatment.

Drug abuse has been on the increase lately, due to the lockdown. What are your thoughts on the campaign against drug misuse and abuse and how can community pharmacists help to tackle the menace?

The increased idle moments, coupled with reduced earning capacity, that is associated with the COVID-19 lockdown logically explains the rise in crime rates and drug abuse in our communities. Control of drug abuse revolves around assess control. So, to stem the tide, we must continue to advocate for passage of the Pharmacy Bill that will provide, among other things, for an ordered and regulated National Drug Distribution System. While this will not totally eradicate, it is sure to drastically reduce the menace.

Drug misuse, on the other hand, can be curtailed through increased advocacy and public enlightenment on the unique role of Pharmacists in healthcare delivery. The public needs consistent reminders on why their prescriptions are to be filled and refilled at all times from registered pharmacy premises. They are to be deliberate about interfacing with the pharmacist on duty for professional guidance, in spite of the issuance of prescriptions by physicians.

Pharmacists, as medication experts, will counsel and provide guidance on rational medication use, medication reviews for avoidable drug therapy problems (DTPs) and drug interactions - bearing in mind that drugs are not mere articles of trade.

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Why PCN, NUC should include immunisation in pharmacy curriculum - Omehe

By Temitope Obayendo

Emmanuel Omehe is a community pharmacist practising in the United States of America and Nigeria simultaneously. He is a partner at Total Pharmacy, Dallas, Texas, USA, and president of SKP Pharma Ltd., in Ogba, Ikeja, Lagos. He is also the treasurer of the Nigerian Association of Pharmacists and Pharmaceutical Scientists in the Americas (NAPPSA). In this in-depth interview with **Pharmanews**, he charges the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria (PCN) and the National Universities Commission (NUC) to work towards including immunisation training and certification programmes in the pharmacy curriculum, saying this is the only way pharmacists can be readily qualified to participate in vaccination activities. He also x-rays pharmacy practice in Nigeria and outlines contemporary roles that pharmacists can assume to maximise their potentials and relevance. Excerpts:



Emmanuel Omehe

Tell us a little about your background and professional practice.

I am an independent community pharmacist and partner at Total Pharmacy, Dallas, Texas. I have been in community practice since 1993 and pharmacy ownership since 2004, after having worked as a pharmacy manager at Walmart Pharmacy Inc.

I obtained my Bachelor of Pharmacy from the University of Benin, Benin City in 1988 and a Doctor of Pharmacy from Howard University, Washington DC.

I am a Fellow and current treasurer of the Nigerian Association of Pharmacists and Pharmaceutical Scientists in the Americas (NAPPSA). I am also a director on the Board of Independent Pharmacy Academy (IPA) of the Texas Pharmacy Association - the body that represents all pharmacists in the great state of Texas.

I am the President of SKP Pharma Limited in Ogba, Ikeja, and a member of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria. Thus, I practise in both the United States and Nigeria.

For this purpose, I make frequent trips to Nigeria, which afforded me the opportunity to be intune with the practice in Nigeria.

Prior to immigrating to the US, I was pharmacist-in-charge and VP at Zevis Pharmaceuticals Limited, Lagos. Pharmacy advocacy is a strong passion of mine, to advance the practice of Pharmacy both here in the United States and in Nigeria. I believe that unless one passionately fights for the rights of our profession, our value will not be appreciated or adequately compensated, and we may continue to be regarded as afterthoughts in the healthcare sector.

What informed your decision to study Pharmacy and why specialise in community pharmacy?

I knew I always wanted to be a pharmacist since my high school days because I wanted to be an entrepreneur and own my business. I also knew I love to help people and the pharmacy profession is a confluence of both desires of mine. I actually got admitted twice to study Pharmacy in the University of Benin both after my O' and A' levels. Pharmacy for me was more of a calling than a choice and I have enjoyed every moment of it.

I chose to specialise in community pharmacy after working in the industry and hospital and I did not get the satisfaction that I sought from both areas. Two

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H. PYLORI IS A RISING CONCERN IN NIGERIA AND IT NEEDS A DIFFERENT APPROACH

International Treatment Guidelines

(According to the American College of Gastroenterology)

According to European¹³ and North American²¹ guidelines, there is a first-line therapy for treating H. pylori infection. It consists of a standard triple therapy including a proton pump inhibitor (PPI) with any two antibiotics among amoxicillin, clarithromycin given for 7-14 days to adults.

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ADVANTAGE

Nutritionists say abstinence from iron-rich foods in pregnancy dangerous for mothers, babies

By Temitope Obayendo

Titi, a 35-year-old pregnant woman was in her fifth month but had hardly experienced any respite in her body since she took in, as she constantly battled diverse health challenges. The newly pregnant lady wondered what the cause of her daily sickness might be, as she went from headaches, dizziness, and fatigue to vomiting, heart palpitation, infections, restless legs, depression, cold hands and feet, and so on.

Eventually, the worst happened on a fateful Saturday as she suddenly fainted and was rushed to the hospital, where she was taken to the intensive care unit, as her life and that of her unborn baby were on the line.

Sequel to the numerous tests conducted on Titi, she was diagnosed to be suffering from severe anaemia, due to long term Iron-deficiency, which had become life-threatening in her state. She had, in fact, deliberately abstained from nutrient-rich diets, having believed some erroneous cultural teachings on dietary habits in pregnancy, hook, line and sinker.

Titi's case isn't peculiar, however. Studies have shown that many women are embracing such misleading and unscientific beliefs on dietary habits in pregnancy and infancy. Unsurprisingly, this has increased mortality and morbidity among women and children, with 58 per cent of women of reproductive age in Nigeria suffering from anaemia.

It was for this reason that the Head of Nutrition, Federal Ministry of Health, Dr Binyerem Ukaire, warned that iron-deficiency is a public health challenge that is impacting the Nigerian socioeconomic situation with negative indices, such as higher morbidity and mortality in children, adolescents and women of reproductive age; lower work productivity, impaired reproduction, impaired growth, among others.

Citing from the National Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) 2018 data, which pegs the iron-deficiency burden in Nigeria among women of reproductive age at 58 per cent, while that of children of 5-59 months is at 68 per cent, with 81 per cent of 12 - 17 months children anaemic, Ukaire calls for a change in dietary habits among Nigerian women and children to avert an epidemic.

The nutritionist who advised pregnant women to shun superstitious beliefs that forbid consumption of nutrients-rich foods, pointed out some of the widespread cultural factors that prevent women from taking Iron and Folic Acid (IFA) nutrients or supplements.

"It could arise from the influence of male spouses and older women; misconception about IFA posing danger to mother and baby 'as IFA makes baby big'; women are seen as being 'strong' when they deliver at home, thus don't need IFA; utilisation of herbal concoction, faith-related factors, and so on."

Widespread problem
Our correspondent's



interviews with some pregnant women across the country confirmed the reality of these harmful beliefs and practices, as some of them confided in her when asked about their level of IFA intake before and during pregnancy.

One of them who spoke on the ground of anonymity said as someone who was raised in the village, she had grown up with the notion that women of reproductive age did not need supplements to aid their blood supply. She added that her mother specifically told her that she had no need for IFA to be strong in pregnancy because there are various concoctions to make a pregnant woman stronger than taking any iron-rich foods.

She however acknowledged that she usually experienced certain symptoms (consistent with iron-deficiency) when pregnant, despite all she had been told by her late mother. "Since I usually patronise local birth attendants or sometimes deliver at home, I don't know what is called iron or anaemia, but what I know is that I easily become tired or feel dizzy when I'm pregnant. I used to think it was the baby that was draining me. But since I have known now, I think there will be a change from now on," she narrated.

Another lady in her twenties also admitted experiencing paleness and loss of hair whenever she has a heavy menstrual flow, but never considered it to be due to shortage of iron or anaemia. She revealed to us that she assumed that was how other ladies felt while menstruating too; so she usually managed her sickly condition when on.

She said: "Naturally I have apathy for anything drug - whether supplement or multivitamins - as they make me over sleep or eat too much; so I don't take them for any reason. I believe eating according to my natural appetite without any supplement can always supply the required nutrients for my body. Although I have my reservations

for some fruits and vegetables, I believe that the food I take should be adequate for my blood supply".

Although most of the interviewed women eventually admitted the need to take more of iron-rich foods, their initial state of mind is a confirmation that there are several women in the society who are still ignorant of how iron-deficiency affects them or their children. Indeed, many have died during delivery or due to post-partum haemorrhage.

Specific health risks

A Professor of Nutrition/Consultant Nutritionist, Matilda Steiner-Asiedu, emphasised the dangers of iron-deficiency in pregnancy and infancy, saying it is a major cause of infant and maternal mortality, especially when it is discovered at a later stage when doctors can do little or nothing about it. She asserted that anaemic pregnant women are at risk of death whether through vaginal delivery or C-section, adding that same applies to their unborn babies.

The expert, from the Department of Nutrition and Food Science, School of Biological Sciences, College of Basic and Applied Sciences, University of Ghana, defined anaemia as "a condition in which the blood has a lower-than-normal red blood cells." She identified three types of anaemia, but stressed that iron-deficiency is the most common globally.

Steiner-Asiedu further emphasised the need to scale up consumption of iron-rich foods to avert a surge in infant and maternal mortality rates in the country.

"For pregnant women short of iron in their system, they are at risk of death before, during and after delivery. This is why pregnant women with iron-deficiency in pregnancy are usually very weak, with paleness and they are also prone to deliver anaemic babies.

"At times, at the point of delivery, when a baby is born

anaemic, doctors intervene to administer iron syrup after assessment. But if an anaemic pregnant woman delivers in a sub-standard hospital, there is the possibility of both mother and baby dying of shortage of blood.

"Also in the process of delivery, if an anaemic mother loses a lot of blood through bleeding, that might also lead to death. Since it is established that iron-deficient pregnant women experience weakness, pushing out the baby might become a challenge at the point of delivery, as she may lack the energy to do so, because iron is needed to help haemoglobin to carry oxygen. In such instances, doctors might carry out a C-section, which could still put the woman at risk, and death can also occur.

"If the child is born normally but develops anaemia during a cold, it will affect the mental capacity. The brain might lack enough oxygen, so the baby will not be able to think probably. And that is why we say that between 0 and 5 months, their IQ can be very low and they can't perform properly, as they also feel very weak," she stated.

Reversing the negative trend

To improve the health of women, especially the pregnant ones, Prof. Steiner-Asiedu, countered cultural notions that forbid pregnant women from eating iron-rich meals like snails, saying such foods are natural provisions to supply our nutrients needs, which should not be disputed by anyone as they have loads of benefits for the human system.

For women who avoid beans due to the gaseous element in it, she urged them to remove the husk and prepare it in different ways to supply their needed nutrients, such as making *moi moi* or beans stew; or they could mix beans with vegetables and greens, which will also enrich the iron content.

Expectant mothers are encouraged not to be addicted to certain meals but to try out a variety of meals with more of greens and vegetables. Even when allergies are developed against certain foods such as dry fish, they can always find a way around it such as pounding such foods into soup or stew which will help boost their iron content.

It was apparently the enormity of the challenge of iron deficiency that propelled the recent campaign by Nestle Nigeria Plc themed: "Live Strong with Iron", which centred on increasing the consumption of local iron-rich and iron-fortified foods to improve healthy living.

The organisation encourages pregnant women to eat more of locally available foods, arguing that they have more nutrients for them than packaged foods.

Some of the recommended iron-rich local foods are: dark green leaves, egusi, beans, nuts, meat, fish, chicken, offal and whole grains. Such foods are also known to provide other essential nutrients like folate, calcium, fibre and protein.

Brain drain in health sector requires urgent attention - Adenekan

By Ranmilowo Ojalumo

Chairman of the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), Lagos State Chapter, Dr Adetunji Adenekan has called on the Nigerian government to demonstrate a more serious commitment towards ending the continuous brain drain syndrome in the health sector.

Speaking in an interview with *Pharmanews* recently, Adenekan, an ophthalmologist at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH) and lecturer at the College of Medicine, University of Lagos, lamented the rate at which trained and experienced health workers are jetting out of the country, stressing that there is shortage of qualified hands in the health sector already and things may get out of hand if not addressed urgently.

Adenekan also urged Nigerians to take good care of their eyes, while avoiding self-medication when confronted with eye problems, noting that it is not all cases of red eyes, or irritations that require steroids.

Below is the full interview:

What is your assessment of the Nigerian health sector?

While I would say the Nigerian health sector is not performing at its optimal, the sector has also recorded improvements in some areas. However there are many areas that need to be worked on. There are some challenges facing the sector over the years, one of which is the issue of disharmony among the healthcare professionals. I believe this is getting better and of course we are still trying to understand ourselves more. We are conscious of the fact that it is on that

ground that we will be able to deliver good healthcare service.

Another challenge has to do with government support on the ability to provide good and quality healthcare service to the country.

Talking about harmony among the healthcare workers, what is the situation like in Lagos where you happen to be the chairman of NMA?

Well, Lagos is the foremost commercial centre of the Nigerian economy, with the largest population. There is a huge healthcare workforce in Lagos that is about 35 per cent to 40 per cent of the total health workforce in the country. What we have been able to do now is to keep talking and discussing our differences, and making sure that we work together as one.

I would say that our relationship in Lagos is much better than other parts of the country. In Lagos, we can't afford not to work as one. NMA Lagos has always worked in the interest of all. Even if there are differences, NMA always makes sure we speak for all health workers. During this period of COVID-19, we have continued to



Dr Adetunji Adenekan

work together, because we are all frontline workers.

Does this include pharmacists?

We have been speaking for every healthcare worker. We have been having meetings and I know we will be having another one soon. We have been meeting at various points for official and non-official meetings, and even at government meetings. We will continue to work together with all sense of responsibility and humility.

Nigeria has been facing a mass exodus of healthcare workers to Europe and other countries. How do you view the development?

It is a serious issue in the Nigerian health sector. We discuss the issue in our state official meeting just a few days ago. The situation is sad. It is worrisome. It is alarming and it is disappointing. Something drastic must be done, as urgently as possible, before it gets out of hand.

I know two competent consultants that just resigned and if consultants at that level resign, the cost of the brain drain is huge because they are relocating. They have secured jobs elsewhere - where there is better remuneration, better security, better management and welfare. It is a huge loss for this country.

Doctors are leaving, so also are pharmacists and many other healthcare workers. Professionals are leaving in thousands. The situation is so bad that if you call for an interview, only few will respond. And even if you employ many people, within few years, if not months, many of them will resign, when they see the situation on ground.

Many healthcare workers now see employment in Nigeria as a temporary engagement for them to stabilise, after which they leave. The state of the brain drain in the country now is really worrisome. I must also say that there is what we call internal brain drain.

Can you explain that?

Internal brain drain involves health workers moving from one state to another to work. For instance, a lot of healthcare workers from other states want to work in Lagos for better welfare and remuneration. Also, because

of insecurity, especially in the north, many healthcare workers are relocating.

Internal brain can also occur within the state where workers will want to move from the state hospital to federal hospital because of better payment and better conditions of service. It could also be from a private hospital to a federal hospital within the same state. All these need to be looked into holistically and addressed.

There should be an enabling environment that will enable private hospitals to pay well, as much as government. However, I must say that the problem goes beyond the payment itself; the question is, when you get the money, what do you want to use it for? Feeding, housing, paying children's school fees are among the things everybody in the country are struggling to do. And health workers are not exempted from the hardship in the country. Truly, we are one of the highest paid workers in the country, but when you compare it with what is obtainable in other countries, you would know that it is a far cry from what it should be.

This is what is making our people to leave for where there is better management, better payment, insurance, better security and conditions of service. Although they have to really work hard over there, they know what they are working for. As a matter of fact, we have been discussing brain drain for a very long time, and I can tell you that the statistics is increasing every day.

When you have a specialist that is being trained with tax payers' money and after spending a huge amount of money on the specialist, you then lose him to other country, how do you describe it? And I can tell you point-blank now that there are many people that are still considering leaving. Some are already half-way between; many are using different means to leave. It is really sad.

Are you saying there is shortage of healthcare workers in Nigeria?

Yes, there is a massive shortage of healthcare workers in the sector. I am speaking from my end as the chairman of NMA in Lagos and also as a practising physician, a surgeon precisely. I can tell you the number of fellows that I have participated in training that are no longer here. We are just producing them and sending them away to other countries like Saudi Arabia, Australia, US and Europe, even to South Africa.

Could the shortage of hands be responsible for the rampant medical tourism, especially among the elites, including the president?

If we look at it holistically, three things are responsible - which are human resources, equipment and infrastructure. Go to foreign hospitals, you will notice that the buildings may be small, whether government-owned or private-owned but when you enter, you will know that you are in a hospital. From outside, you may not know that it is a hospital, but when you enter, the ambiance, the equipment you will see will surprise you; they also have good service.

Some of the hospitals that our big men in Nigeria travel to are not even as big as some of the hospitals in Nigeria, in terms of physical building. But the difference is service and human resource. There is nothing they have over there that we can't have here, if we place priority on human resource, service

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Why PCN, NUC should include immunisation in pharmacy curriculum - Omehe

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mentors during my internship personified the ideal patient care experience. Patients always left the pharmacy with smiles on their faces and I wanted to have the joy of taking care of my patients while being my own boss.

Since you are conversant with the practice in both Nigeria and USA, what are the gaps in Nigerian practice compared to what obtains in the USA?

In the United States, Pharmacy education and practice revolve around the Pharmacists' Patient Care Process (PPCP), which includes collecting - where a pharmacist obtains information from a patient; assessing - information gathered is assessed and analysed to optimise the therapeutic outcomes of the patient's regimen; planning - in collaboration with other healthcare providers and caregivers, a patient-centred plan of care is devised; implementation (of the care plan) - in collaboration with other healthcare professionals; and follow-up - where the pharmacist reviews outcomes of the plan and modifies in coordination with the other team members if need be.

As you can see, the patient is at the centre of the care process, in collaboration with other members of the healthcare team. In Nigeria, the product is still the focus of medication therapy and that leaves several gaps in the patient care process, while missing out on multiple practice settings and employment opportunities for pharmacists. It also portrays pharmacists as dispensers only, who "count and pour".

This is however changing with the advent of clinical pharmacy curriculum in colleges of Pharmacy and in hospital settings.

One of your beliefs is fighting for the profession, but is this called for in the US?

You bet! The business aspects of the pharmacy profession is still being largely dominated by Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) who are middlemen between the health insurance companies or government (payers) and healthcare providers, whose primary objective is to maximise profits for themselves at the expense of the pharmacist.

Pharmacists have to fight for their profession through advocacy, otherwise they will not have a profession to hand to the younger professionals. In some situations, we are reimbursed below what it costs to purchase the medication. Also, certain patient care services were not reimbursed because the pharmacist would gladly do them without being paid. However, that is changing. With the recent US Supreme Court decision (Rutledge vs PCMA), states are now going to be able to better regulate the PBMs, and all of that came through the efforts of advocacy.

This has also led to expanded roles for the pharmacist, such as prescribing certain class of medications, performing CLIA-waived diagnostic test and treating ailments, such as strep throat and flu.

The role of pharmacists in COVID-19 management is considered paramount in the US,

but the Nigerian government is yet to engage them in vaccination. What's your view on this?

Pharmacists are the most accessible healthcare professionals and those in the US have leveraged this to expand the scope of practice to include administration of immunisations. As a result, immunisation training programmes were included in the colleges of Pharmacy curricula and APhA developed Immunisation Certification programmes for those out of school.

In Nigeria, immunisation is currently mainly available via the primary healthcare domain. That needs to change if we are to vaccinate majority of our teeming population of almost 200 million people. Who else is better equipped with the knowledge of immunology, vaccine storage, safety, adverse effect and contraindications, response to anaphylactic reactions and patient education than the

pharmacist?

Also, the PCN and the NUC need to include immunisation training and certification programmes as part of the pharmacy curriculum in all faculties of pharmacy in Nigeria. In the interim, to meet current vacuum, those of us in the diaspora can be called upon to help institute a "train the trainer" certification programme.

You own a pharmacy in Nigeria while practising in the US. How do you guard against fraud?

I own a drug importation and distribution company in conjunction with two other partners based in Nigeria and the US. It is not surprising that you ask about guarding against fraud because dishonesty, fraud and corruption are big problems in Nigeria. We mitigate against such with frequent trips to Nigeria, use of technology, tight inventory control, constant

monitoring and adequate training to give our employees a sense of ownership. These have helped but have not been able to completely eliminate shrinkage.

Aside from vaccination, what other new roles are appropriate for Nigerian community pharmacists in the face of disease outbreaks?

The focus of the community pharmacist needs to shift from the product to the value and quality of patient care through clinical pharmacy services. This will reduce practice redundancies and drive better health outcomes.

Disease state management, such as diabetes, high blood pressure and high blood cholesterol are services that pharmacists can acquire specialised skills on and these services have been shown to improve medication adherence and clinical outcomes for patients with chronic conditions.

Pharmacists can also play important roles in improving

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¹ van Walsers A, et al. Arthritis Res Ther 2015;17:66

² Derry S, et al. Cochrane Database Sys Rev 2015;7:CD004768

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Brain drain in health sector requires urgent attention - Adenekan

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and equipment with maintenance.

COVID-19 is still shaking the world, including Nigeria. How have doctors in Lagos state been able to cope and manage the situation till date?

In every state, there is a COVID-19 incident commander and our incident commander in Lagos state is the Governor, Mr Babajide Sanwo-Olu. The deputy incident commander is the Commissioner for Health, in the person of Prof. Akin Abayomi. The kudos first goes to those two people. Prof. Abayomi is one of our distinguished members. He has done a lot of work, just like his predecessor also did a lot of work.

I must say here that Nigerian health workers are very committed. We are dedicated. When there is trouble in the land, we don't chicken out, even when we don't have kits to work with. Even when we were shouting that there was no Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), we were still working.

Healthcare workers in Lagos state are very committed. Money is not really the drive, because if it were, most of us would not be in the system again. It is not as if we do not like to be taken care

of, but when we see a sick person, other thoughts disappear and the only focus will be how the sick person will receive treatment.

In Lagos, I must say that we are glad - along with our incident and deputy incident commander - that we have worked and we are still working. I can assure everyone that we are going to beat Covid-19. That doesn't mean we have not lost some of our members; many

healthcare workers have died in the line of duty because that is what we have sworn our oath to do. We are doing all we can to beat the pandemic. We have beaten the first and second wave, we are winning.

But some countries are already talking about a third wave?

Yes, while we are hoping and praying that the third wave will not come, we are here and committed to doing our best. But our people also need to do their best by teaching everybody around on the safety guidelines of COVID-19.

I must also say that COVID-19 has really united all healthcare givers, because we are all facing one common enemy. It has made us to understand ourselves better. We are appealing to Nigerians to do their part by wearing their masks because it is not yet *uhuru*.

There have been talks for and against the COVID-19 vaccines, what is your take?

Yes, we call it vaccine acceptance and vaccine hesitancy. It is an issue we have to deal with. Before the vaccines came out, there were several rumours based on ignorance. So, we have to keep educating people.

I want to recommend that we look in the area of using women in educating Nigerians because there is a saying that when you educate a girl, you educate a nation. A woman can easily convince her husband.

Although some strategic leaders have taken the vaccines to convince the people, but I can tell you that most of the leaders don't move the people and that is because the people don't trust them. But I can tell you categorically

that healthcare workers still move people. When a patient see that his or her doctor has received the vaccine, he or she will be convinced and willingly take it.

Nigerians trust health workers than Nigerian politicians. But I would say it is better and I would rather take COVID-19 vaccines than to wait for the virus infection to give me immunity.

You are an ophthalmologist, what is your message to Nigerians with regard to their eyes?

Eyes are the gateway to the soul and that is why you can predict certain ailments by mere looking at someone's eyes. The eye is not just an object of sight but also an object of beautification and that is why people will look at you on the eyes and say you are beautiful.

There are many causes of eye impairment all over the world. Studies have also shown that, apart from death itself, the next thing that put fear in people - that is, what they don't want to lose - is their sight. When you lose your sight, you are connected to death.

But our primary concern is to let people know how to take care of their eyes. So I want to enjoin Nigerians that if anything happens to your eyes, don't just apply anything, because chemical injury can occur. People should know that it is not on every red eyes or irritation that you apply steroid. If you have complaints with your eyes, see a physician or your healthcare workers, so that they can direct you on what to do. Nigerians should imbibe the culture of checking their eyes regularly.

What is your message to the



Dr Adetunji Adenekan

government on the brain drain issue in the health sector?

Government needs to do something urgently and fully address the issue. The situation is getting worse and that is why government needs to do something urgently. I know a meeting with the president ought to have come up but such a meeting needs to be with sincerity and must be purposeful like the COVID-19 committee meeting that is known for immediate action and without any delay.

During the first term of President Buhari, there was a meeting where we discussed, but what has happened? To date, people are still talking about hazard allowance. The condition of service is poor. There are many issues in the sector that need to be addressed holistically and solved, not solving one and ignoring the others.

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Garlic, a natural antibiotic

By Chima Ejimofor

Garlic and aloe come from the family of lilacs, and both have medicinal properties. Garlic is characterised as possessing a buried stem in place of a root. Many varieties of garlic exist, the most common is *Allium Sativum*.

Garlic is rich in sugars, proteins, calcium, potassium, phosphorus, sulfur, iodine and silicone. In addition, it contains vitamins A, B1, B2, B3 and C.

Nutritional contents of garlic

Allicin - a powerful natural antibiotic, in many cases stronger than penicillin and tetracycline.

Ajoene - a compound discovered by Dr Eric Blok of the University of New York, Albany. This component impedes the formation of blood clots in the arteries and thus prevents strokes, as well as helping to control cholesterol levels in the blood.

Selenium - this is needed for neutralising free radicals and therefore it prevents a countless number of illnesses. Selenium is an antioxidant helping to slow the effects of cell oxidation and aging. Combined with vitamins A and E, the rejuvenating power of both is increased.

Saponins - a class of compounds which helps lower blood pressure, thus preventing strokes.

Fructose-this carbohydrate helps to stimulate the immune system.

Health benefits of garlic

Antibiotic and germicidal power. Its effect has been well demonstrated against bacteria like staphylococcus, streptococcus, salmonella and other germs that cause diarrhoea and gastrointestinal and bronchopulmonary infections. It also works against problems caused by fungi like ringworm and candidiasis.

Lung decongestant. Garlic acts as a great lung decongestant, helping to loosen the harmful, infectious secretion of bronchial tubes. In addition, it helps to prevent head colds and the flu.

Cough suppressant. Dr Irwin Ziment, an expert in lung medicine, comments that garlic and some hot peppers (chilies) work well as expectorants.

Anthelmintic. Since the beginning of time, cloves of garlic have been used to get rid of oxyuriasis (combats parasitic intestinal worms) in children, working quite well to completely eliminate amoebas.



and its low molecular weight sugars.

Reduces fat in the blood.

It has been demonstrated that garlic promotes a decrease of low density lipoproteins (dangerous) from about 7 to 22 per cent and increasing the high density lipoproteins (favourable/good) from about 15 to 31 per cent. In addition, it lowers cholesterol and triglycerides 17 to 20 per cent. Studies done in different universities, along with other prestigious institutions, have corroborated the reduction in levels of detrimental cholesterol (LDL) as well as an increase in beneficial cholesterol (HDL) when a little garlic is given daily to patients.

Garlic, taken with thyme, multiplies its antibiotic power and makes it more digestible. Garlic, mixed with lecithin, has greater power of assimilation. Odourless garlic-thyme is now obtainable as a nutritional supplement, without bothering about the strong odour of garlic.

Reference

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Google

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Antirheumatic. Rubbing ground garlic, mixed with hot aloe lotion calms and eases pain caused by inflamed and aching joints, a result of rheumatism.

Fights hyperthyroidism. Garlic contains a lot of iodine which helps people who suffer from hyperthyroid, a deficiency of this mineral.

Prevents arteriosclerosis and thrombosis: In 1990, scientists, co-sponsored by the US Department of Agriculture and the Pennsylvania State University, united at the first annual convention of "The Health Significance of Garlic and Garlic Constituents." Studies done revealed that daily ingestion of garlic in a month diminished coagulation and the destruction of clots from 72 to 85 per cent. (i.e. lowers fat and cholesterol in the blood).

General revitaliser: Since ancient times, garlic has been associated with vigour, physical strength and force, and promoting great strength in athletes.

Muscle toner and reconstructor. Muscles can be toned by taking garlic. It is also a great muscle relaxant.

Digestion aid. Taking garlic prevents the blockage

It has been demonstrated that garlic promotes a decrease of low density lipoproteins (dangerous) from about 7 to 22 per cent and increasing the high density lipoproteins (favourable/good) from about 15 to 31 per cent. In addition, it lowers cholesterol and triglycerides 17 to 20 per cent. Studies done in different universities, along with other prestigious institutions, have corroborated the reduction in levels of detrimental cholesterol (LDL) as well as an increase in beneficial cholesterol (HDL) when a little garlic is given daily to patients.

of gastric, pancreatic and intestinal juices which are responsible for digesting nutrients, by nerves or stress. In addition, it helps promote a relaxed and toned digestive system.

Hypertension. Garlic acts as a vasodilator, which helps to widen blood vessels, making blood flow smoother. This helps to lower blood pressure.

Diuretic. Garlic is highly diuretic due to its essential oils



Why PCN, NUC should include immunisation in pharmacy curriculum - Omehe

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population health, especially in areas such as tobacco cessation and obesity. Here in the US, pharmacists in some states can interpret common diagnostic tools, such as for influenza and strep throat infections and prescribe routine medications to treat them in a "test and treat" model. Hopefully, that will be the case legally in Nigeria someday.

Pharmacists do have significant roles to help address the issue of vaccine hesitancy through continuous patient education, as well as the ever-evolving potential treatment options for the COVID-19 disease, such as monoclonal antibodies.

Nigerian pharmacists need to be an integral part of the CACOVID initiative, if it is to achieve its stated goals of combating the disease and to provide tests and treatments, such as vaccines and new therapies, which include convalescent plasma and monoclonal antibodies.

In what ways can the Nigerian government assist pharmacists in the community to make more impact?

Immediate implementation of all segments of the National Drug Distribution Policy, especially the sale of medications only at approved sites/premises.

The government needs to provide enabling environments for private firms to set up chemical plants for the manufacture of

Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients. COVID-19 did reveal the national emergency associated with the restrictions by major sources of APIs in the world, leading to scarcity and high prices.

Government should also make it easier for pharmacists to access low interest loans for small scale drug manufacturing, in the same manner it has done for the agricultural sector through various Central Bank of Nigeria programmes. Currently, these loans are through the commercial banks and they are not easily accessible.

What is your advice to young pharmacists in Nigeria?

Never stop learning. Always improve your skills and knowledge through continuous education. Promotion or advancement happens when opportunity meets preparation. I attend a lot of conferences and trainings to keep updated with current trends in pharmacy practice and that has helped in being a resource to other community pharmacists and young professionals. I recently went back to school to obtain my Doctor of Pharmacy degree after several years of being out of school.

Be active in your local pharmacy associations; this will improve your networking abilities and increase your sphere of influence. Strive for excellence in all you do and get into leadership roles when opportunities present themselves for such.

Events in pictures



L-R: Dean, Faculty of Pharmacy, Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU), Dr (Mrs) Yemisi Bamiro; Former Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Pioneer Dean, Faculty of Pharmacy, OOU, Prof. (Mrs) Mbang Femi-Oyewo, and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academics, OOU, Prof. Deji Agboola, during the Valedictory Lecture of Prof. Femi-Oyewo, held recently at the New Auditorium, Olabisi Onabanjo University Teaching Hospital (OOUTH), Sagamu Campus.



The Deputy Governor, Mr Kayode Alabi, being presented an award plaque by Pharm. Olumide Akintayo, former president, PSN, at the inauguration ceremony of the new PSN leadership in Kwara State.



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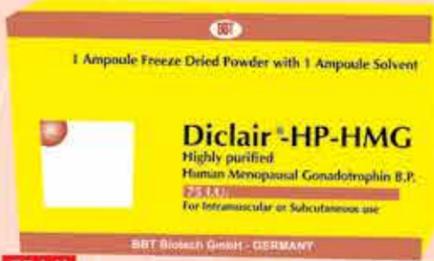
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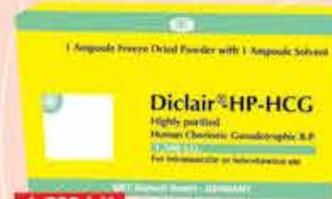
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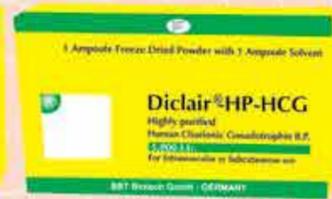
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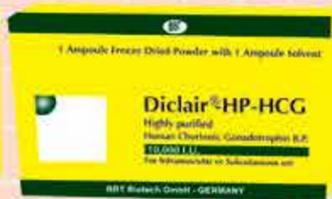
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How we insisted on university degree as minimum qualification for pharmacists - Adeleke

continued from page 42

Pharmacy and how they have affected your personality.

I am an active member of the Gideons' International Ministry. Since 1974 when I joined the ministry, I have held various positions at the camp and national levels, culminating in my being elected as national president from 1997 to 2000. I have also attended and continue to attend state, national and international conventions in various cities within Nigeria and USA.

I have also been involved in a number of political activities. I have aligned myself with and held various positions and pursued various ambitions with various political parties emerging as a result of the zigzag exchanges of batons between the civilian and military interventions since the 70's. I was a successful campaign chairman at the general elections in 2015 as well as that of the local government elections in 2017. All our candidates were successful.

Finally, what advice would you give to the younger generation of pharmacists on how to make the best use of their calling as healthcare professionals to impact humanity positively?

As at the time I graduated in Pharmacy in June 1970, there were only three schools of pharmacy in Nigeria - Ahmadu Bello University, Obafemi Awolowo University and University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Therefore, very many job opportunities were chasing the attention of these young

graduates. For example, I finished my final exams on a Friday and I started internship employment the following Monday, even before the exams results were released.

The situation is not quite the same any longer today where over 18 faculties of pharmacy are turning out young graduates who have to scout for places of internship before proceeding for the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) programme. I would advise these young colleagues not to waste their time insisting on particular popular institutions for their internship placement.

I do strongly advise the various governments to create and approve suitable internship outlets for these young professionals. There should also be proper remuneration and proper recognition for registered pharmacists to reduce massive exodus to better climes.

All graduates should also have copies of the new PSN Constitution which should be properly digested and adhered to. Our motto is "As men of honour we join hands" This means that there is fortunately no gender discrimination in our profession.

I also advise the young professionals to be seriously committed to the aims and objectives of the PSN because in unity lies our strength. Without the PSN, the practice of Pharmacy would have been worse off today. I say this with a sense of responsibility, having seen the achievements of the PSN over the years.

Waste management: Health and environmental hazards in Nigeria

continued from page 38

effective and efficient with urban waste management authorities. Individuals and communities must take responsibility and ensure the environment is kept.

Environmental sanitations must be enforced. Plastics should be picked up from the streets, communities, and drainages. Waste recycling which involves the collection of waste materials, their processing or manufacture into new products, and the purchase of those products, which may be recycled should be improved on and in so doing there will be more job opportunities.

Health workers and hospital cleaners must be provided with training and proper enlightenment on how to handle and dispose clinical waste and its direct impacts on infection control.

Nylons containing waste (medical, agricultural, commercial and industrial) should be tied, stored, and kept safe in dustbins, and should not be exposed to rodents and cats, and disposed appropriately to the designated bodies or authorities.

Waste management enlightenment should be made available to the public via radio jingles and TV series in all languages for effective communication. Waste management personnel should ensure standard operating procedures are carried out upon collection and disposal

of waste. The federal and state government should enforce and implement laws to achieve a cleaner, conducive and habitable environment.

Liquid wastes, which can be disposed of via sewer networks or lost to ground water, and hazardous wastes, will require tighter environmental controls, because of their potential to cause environmental harm.

The most important reason for waste collection is the protection of the environment and the health of the population. Since factors such as population increase, communities lead to increase waste generation, efforts should be directed towards making projections far ahead in order to ensure that new and existing settlements are adequately planned so as to accommodate possible increase in the volume of waste generation in future. Effectively planning ahead will prevent indiscriminate disposal and other harmful practices so as to prevent the build-up of open dumps and breeding ground for rats and other vermin which poses health risk.

Acting on the above suggestions will afford an enlightened population, thus leading to decreased transmission of infections, diseases. Holistically, unnecessary consumption of medications (most especially antibiotics) will be prevented, and personal hygiene is improved.

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Bloom Public Health unveils Cameroun office

- Pledges to fix public health challenges in Africa

By Patrick Iwelunmor

In furtherance of its commitment towards ensuring the unrestrained availability of strategic health solutions in Africa, and especially in the pharmaceutical sector, Bloom Public Health has unveiled its Cameroun office in Yaounde.

According to a press statement sent to pharmanewsonline by the company's Communication and Branding Lead, Mr Chukwuemeka Maduagwuna, the Yaounde office was unveiled in mid-April, during which a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Bloom's CEO, Professor Chimezie Anyakora and Director-General, National Drug Quality Control and Valuation Laboratory (LANACOME), Dr Ngonu Rose Mballa.

The statement read that Bloom Public Health and LANACOME had previously signed an MoU, which included a promise to help develop Cameroon's public health system. Thus, the official unveiling of Bloom's office in Yaounde is a step in fulfilment of the understanding the two parties had reached earlier.

"Bloom's presence in Cameroun aims to support the Ministry of Public Health in capacity building, strengthening of regulatory activities, development of a post-marketing surveillance system,



L-R: CEO Bloom Public Health, Professor Anyakora exchanging the renewed MoU with the Director-General, LANACOME, Dr Ngonu Rose Mballa.

and other functions. The new office will allow Bloom Public Health to operate seamlessly in the Central African region," the statement read in part.

"The opening of Bloom Public Health's new Yaounde office is an important step in

realizing our goal of achieving better healthcare in Africa," said Prof. Chimezie Anyakora, Chief Executive Officer of Bloom Public Health during a press conference in Yaounde Cameroun. "The new office shows our commitment to

ensure a sustainable plan to solve African public health issues rather than just an intervention."

The Director-General, LANACOME, Dr Ngonu Rose Mballa, expressed her joy at the commitment of Bloom Public Health to supporting the Cameroun Public Health system and pledged her support to aid Bloom activities in ensuring that the Cameroun pharmaceutical industry experiences positive development.

Early in April 2020, Bloom Public Health had announced the collaboration and advancement of its operations in Cameroon, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with LANACOME and during the press conference at LANACOME, reestablished their commitments by renewing the MoU signed last year.

Bloom Public Health, a technical partner of the National Institute for Pharmaceutical Research and Development (NIPRD), and other institutions in Africa, has been in the forefront of championing developmental campaigns aimed at proffering top-notch solutions to health problems in Africa. It would be recalled that, it was recently involved in the establishment of West Africa's largest pharmaceutical manufacturing park tagged Pharmacy, in Ebonyi State, Nigeria, in conjunction with the Association of Industrial Pharmacists of Nigeria (NAIP).

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Marketing and branding for pharmaceuticals

Over the last few editions, we had focused on the basic universal concepts and principles of marketing. In the first part, we had discussed (and defined, where necessary) terms and concepts such as marketing itself, need, wants, demand, exchange, transaction, market, and other related issues. In the second part, we treated value chain and distribution network, product, price, promotion, distribution, the four Ps (plus the corresponding four Cs) and the marketing mix.

In the last edition, we treated marketing orientations (product, production, selling, marketing and society orientations), segmentation, market targeting, differentiation and ideas associated with them.

However, specifically for the pharmaceutical industry, it is essential to point out the following:

The pharma industry is uniquely different and pharmaceuticals generally are very different from other goods and services in many respects. This uniqueness impacts how pharmaceuticals are marketed, especially with respect to marketing communications and distribution. How is the pharma industry as discussed earlier

	Pharmaceuticals	FMCG
Consumer is decision maker	Mostly not true	True
Consumer pays directly	Not true most times	True
Brand Loyalty	Not true	True
Government regulations	Very high	Low
R&D	Complex	Less complex
Price sensitivity	Low	High

Specifically, the patient, in terms of his or her needs is, at the centre of the pharmaceutical sector. What the patient gets in the final analysis is influenced by:

Primary service providers - as in, hospitals, healthcare facilities, laboratories, etc.

Third parties. Though yet to be popular here, insurance companies are the payer of the services enjoyed by the patient in search of good health and restoration. The government, as payers, have considerable influence.

Healthcare professionals. Unlike the other markets, the end-user has little influence over what he consumes. Rather, it is the doctor and the other healthcare professionals that decide the specific product and brand to be consumed by the end-user.

Pharma companies are the primary vehicle for research into new products and innovations. They are also the manufacturers, distributors and marketers of the products. Needless to say that in the Nigerian environment, most players are only into importation, sales and distribution.

Employers as full or part payers

Regulators, of HCP and of the



Discovery-to-market is long and expensive



Par Excellence with Pharm. Tunde Oyeniran



Sales. Marketing. Leadership. Management

industry, selling is also uniquely different in a lot of ways, such as:

The key customers type, especially for ethical or prescription medicines are the healthcare professionals - doctors, pharmacists, nurses, laboratory technologists, physiotherapists, etc.

The physician and other healthcare professionals, as the customers, have three aspects to their personalities - an HCP, a businessperson and a human-personality

In selling to them, these personae must be considered.

“Needs” in pharma marketing has a special lingo, based on the science of human health and wellness. It is originally clinical as in efficacy, safety, tolerability, speed of action, quality, cost, side effects, etc. However, new paradigms have extended it to include patient lifestyle, quality of life, redefining the patient population, redefining disease yardsticks and consideration for personal needs (security, social acceptance, self-esteem, self-actualization, etc.)

Tunde Oyeniran, a Sales/Marketing Strategist, Selling/Sales Management Trainer and Personal Sales Coach is the Lead Consultant, Ekini White Tulip Consulting Limited, Lagos. We deliver Training, Recruitment, Online Medical Communications Service and Field Force Management Solutions Feedback. Channels 080-2960-6103 (SMS/WhatsApp) / ekiniwhitetuliptraining@gmail.com or check out https://fb.me/EkiniWhiteTulipConsulting

We already noted that the patient is the sun around which other stakeholders in healthcare revolve. But the patient is not a “constant”; that is:

Each patient is different from the other in terms of needs, wants and rights.

Buying decisions are more complicated; buying decision is sometimes beyond the payer.

The extent to which the patient adheres to the professional advice/instruction of HCPs has a huge impact, from the pharmaceutical marketing perspective. Furthermore,

30 per cent of Rx are never filled

50 per cent of patients don't follow the dosage

Reasons for non-compliance include complexity of dosage regimen, perception of disease, family influence, age, and poor communication.

Clinicians and other HCPs are never constant, as their behaviour is influenced by:

Pros and cons of current treatment available

Technical ability to understand the drug, heavily influenced by marketers and their efforts.

Knowledge of standard practice that helps how patients are viewed and treated by physicians

This enables the brand manager to develop SWOT analysis

Pharmaceutical selling

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12 years and above: 10ml

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Celebrating 42 Years of Uninterrupted Monthly Publication (1979-2021)

How Pharmanews has impacted us – Pharmacists

As *Pharmanews* marks 42 years of uninterrupted publication and service to healthcare professionals, manufacturers, policy makers, regulators, educators, students and indeed all stakeholders in the healthcare sector, our reporter, **OMOLOLA FAMODUN**, sought the opinions of some of our readers on what they think of the journal. Their views are presented below:

Pharmanews, foremost source of information and awareness on public health - Pharm. (Engr) Olatunji Koolchap

Pharmanews has become the foremost healthcare journal over time in Nigeria, West Africa and the Diaspora. It is a widely read pharmaceutical journal and has served as a source of information, education and publicity about medicines and current trends in public health and creation of awareness.

It is a medium for showcasing the activities and programmes of healthcare professionals and organisations, local and international. Activities of all the technical arms of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria (PCN), and the Nigerian Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC) are so ubiquitous through this medium. Students affairs and young professionals practising also become visible through this medium.

Pharmanews has been consistently produced for 42 years and this is why I really felicitate with the publisher, Pharm. (Sir) Ifeanyi Atueyi, who is also the vice president of the Nigeria Academy of Pharmacy (NAPharm), on this august occasion. The organisation will continue to go from strength to strength, while I pray for sustainability and continuity.

God bless the publisher, the members of staff and Pharmanews Limited abundantly, Amen.



Pharmanews sensitised us to the practice environment, as students - Pharm Abiodun Ajibade FPSN (Immediate past chairman, PSN Oyo State Branch)

In my days at the pharmacy school of the University of Ibadan, in the late 80s and early 90s, there was always a big stack of *Pharmanews* kept in our school library, from month to month. It was always sent to the library in a cellophane bag and, as students, we had the opportunity to be familiar with several brands of pharmaceutical products advertised. As students, we were having information on the real world practice environment in Nigeria and the personalities in pharmacy leadership.

To me, I was getting the information about my future and that perhaps might have been the reason for my interest in coming forward for leadership positions in Pharmacy. All through my student life and after qualifying as a pharmacist, this journal remained like a rock of Gibraltar!

Congratulations to the entire team that has made this journal part of Pharmacy story for the past 42 years. Congratulations to our own highly revered and dear Sir Ifeanyi Atueyi, FPSN, for his resilience and commitment through thick and thin. *Pharmanews* is obviously part of our life and we celebrate this uncommon success over these four decades.



Pharmanews, paragon of resilience, consistency and editorial excellence - Pharm. Taiwo Olawehinmi

Pharmanews represents, for me, the evidence of sheer resilience and admirable consistency. Being an advocate of representation for the pharmacy profession, it is great to

see a national publication for pharmacists, by pharmacists.

It is also delightful to see the inter-professional collaboration reflected in some of the articles. It is my hope that *Pharmanews* will continue to ride on the waves of innovation and technology, to deliver premium health contents to healthcare professionals in Nigeria and beyond. Indeed, *Pharmanews* represents for me (and I believe many pharmacists), the quintessence of editorial excellence. I am excited about what the future holds for *Pharmanews*. Happy Anniversary, *Pharmanews*!



Pharmanews has excelled to become transgenerational - Pharm. Biola Paul-Ozieh FPCPharm, FPSN

It is with great delight that I congratulate the Founder/Publisher, Sir Ifeanyi Atueyi, and the management team of *Pharmanews* on the 42nd anniversary of the foremost pharmaceutical journal.

I recall my brief stint at *Pharmanews*, between June 1995 and December 1996, as an associate editor. I joined *Pharmanews* then to edit the Nigerian Drug Index and thereafter worked with the editorial team for the monthly production of *Pharmanews*.

That was a trying period for *Pharmanews* and with the benefit of hindsight I can say our boss, Pharm. Ifeanyi Atueyi FPSN, displayed a rare sense of responsibility and courage in the face



of daunting challenges. Many other pharma publication have come and gone but here we are celebrating *Pharmanews* at 42.

Sir Atueyi, I celebrate your tenacity of purpose, sense of commitment to Pharmacy, agility to serve, as well as your leadership role in attracting and retaining young and vibrant team players, who stood by you to cause a turnaround in *Pharmanews*. You are an epitome of determination, hard work, thoroughness and discipline.

The reinventing and repositioning of *Pharmanews* in the early 2000s as not only a pharma journal but a healthcare journal was a great achievement that has yielded better results and improved *Pharmanews'*

acceptability and coverage in the health sector. *Pharmanews* has therefore become transgenerational.

My stay at *Pharmanews* provided me with opportunities to write editorials and proofread scripts. It was not a wasted time as what I learnt then became useful when I served at the ACPN National Drug Information Centre in my early years in community pharmacy, as a member of the Drug Bulletin editorial team.

Once again, congratulations to you, sir, and your entire editorial team. Wishing *Pharmanews* greater strides in the years ahead.

Pharmanews still a pacesetter and record-breaker - Daniel Eze



an epitome of pharmacy practice, the pedagogy of food and nutrition, news and online polls. These attributes are in line with its mission statement: to be the number source of timely, accurate and insightful information relating to health and wellbeing of the general public. (The *Pharmanews* app is now on Play store, download and thank me later).

Pharmanews recognises innovation and active involvement of young pharmacists and pharmacy students in public healthcare, community health/social development, and drug research and development, among other evidence-based criteria. The publishing firm continues with such initiative to honour whoever emerges the *Pharmanews* Young Pharmacist of the Year and *Pharmanews* PANSite of the year through rigorous processes.

I see *Pharmanews* Nigeria as my pacesetter. I have no doubt to rate *Pharmanews* as a firm characterised by high level of excellence, uncompromised integrity, unbiased transparency and fair play.

Iwish to unveil my knowledge, attitudes and perceptions (KAP) about *Pharmanews*. Wow! It is 42 years old. It has grown old, yet still waxing strong, breaking records and setting the pace in all and sundry.

For me, *Pharmanews* is the hub of public health information,

Pharmanews App now available on Google Play store, Apple Store, Windows Store

How politics and corruption are killing West Africa's health systems

By Patrick Iwelunmor

The availability of adequate and quality medicines in West Africa has, for so long, depended on what foreign manufacturers ship into the sub-region. This development has not portrayed us as a serious-minded people who can fix the very many challenges facing our health care systems. It is even sadder to come to terms with the fact that most West African countries have failed to build structures that can foster a sound healthcare system. They prefer to travel to the developed countries of Europe and America for medical tourism, while their own healthcare systems are in shambles. This problem has continued to fester like an untreated sore, even though politicians in these countries have not stopped using promises of a perfect healthcare system to seek electoral votes.

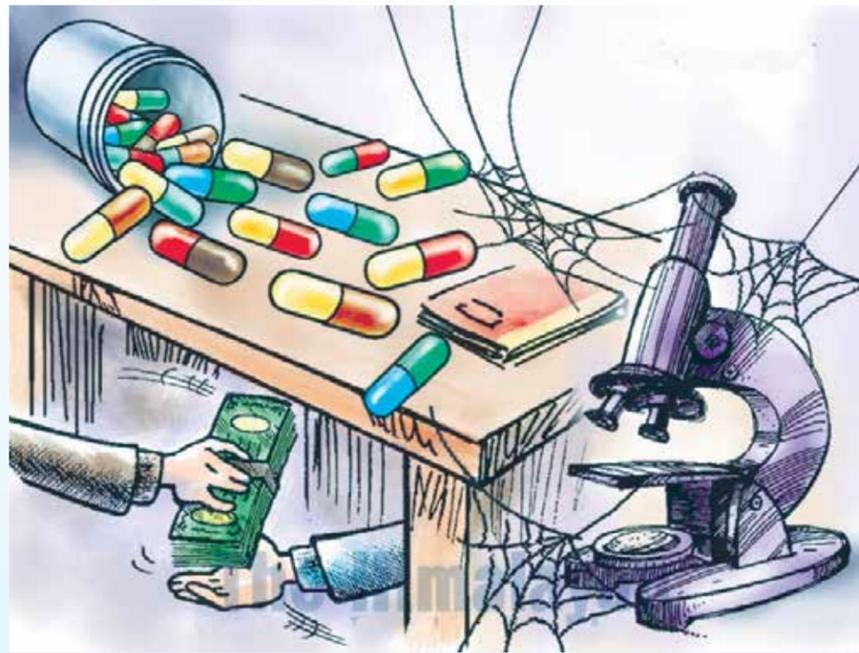
The deliberate and blatant refusal of successive governments to build on the few gains recorded by their predecessors in the health sector has led to the abandonment of laudable projects that could have impacted positively on the populace. In such instances, party politics, ethnicity, religious sentiments and a passion for mediocrity come into play, at the expense of collective progress. This does not portend any good for in Africa which is still struggling to meet up with the sophistications of the developed nations of the world.

Burden of pharma manufacturing

In many West African countries, pharmaceutical manufacturing is a very terrible venture, due to the many infrastructural problems the manufacturer grapples with. It is no longer news that raw materials, such as ordinary water, are no longer readily available to pharmaceutical manufacturers in countries like Nigeria, where the water has to be treated before being used for production.

It is even more worrisome to know that the treatment of the water costs money. This is one of the reasons most pharmaceutical manufacturers are heavily dependent on China and India for their raw materials. Sadly, this does not end with Nigeria; it is also the same case with many West African countries. The big question is, why must these West African countries continue to depend on Asia for their raw materials?

The answer is not far-fetched. Most African leaders only pay lip service to the issue of quality healthcare, which they have turned into a campaign tool. All flowery promises they make during elections about how they will transform their respective health systems usually die with the conclusion of the elections. As pointed out earlier, they prefer to have their



health systems in coma, while they travel abroad for medical tourism, at the expense of their nation's hard-earned resources. This perhaps explains the reason diseases like malaria are still ravaging the continent, in spite of the massive resources that some of the countries are blessed with.

Ravages of corruption

In some West African countries, unimaginable corruption has been the greatest bane of quality healthcare delivery. In such countries, politicians embezzle even monies donated by foreign agencies for the provision of healthcare, leaving the vulnerable populations to suffer untold health challenges.

In some cases, things that are supposed to be free medical provisions, such as mosquito nets, face masks and common drugs - such as analgesics donated by donor agencies - are sold to patients at outrageous prices. Some are also stolen by the healthcare workers themselves only to sell them to unsuspecting members of the public.

In other instances, truancy and absenteeism by some health workers constitute another form of corruption. In many of Nigeria's primary healthcare centres, this is the order of the day. Health workers who are supposed to attend to the urgent, daily needs of patients either report late to their duty posts

or do not report at all. Their reasoning is that as long as their remuneration is not affected, they can do whatever they like with government work.

This mindset, which, unfortunately, has developed into a mentality, is one of the reasons public service in Nigeria is almost like an exercise in futility. Government invests huge resources and reaps nothing in return. Ironically, such malpractices have continued unabated, even when brought to the attention of government. This is usually because of the shared corruptibility among those who populate government circles. A thief does not indict a thief. If this happens, all hell will be let loose. And if all hell is let loose, there wouldn't be an enabling environment for the enjoyment of the loot.

Endemic scourge

In the abstract to the scholarly article, "Corruption in Anglophone West Africa health systems: a systematic review of its different variants and the factors that sustain them", published in *Health Policy and Planning* (Volume 34, Issue 7, September 2019), Obinna Onwujekwe, et al stated that: "West African countries are ranked especially low in global corruption perception indexes. The health sector is often singled out for particular concern, given the role of corruption in hampering access to, and utilisation of health services,

representing a major barrier to progress to universal health coverage and to achieving the health-related Sustainable Development Goals".

In a related indictment, Pius Agbenorku of the Reconstructive Plastic Surgery and Burns Unit, Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital, School of Medical Sciences, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana, stated in his research paper, "Corruption in Ghanaian healthcare system: the consequences", published in the *Journal of Medicine and Medical Sciences* (Vol. 3, 2012), that: "Ghana's public healthcare system has been faced with some issues of corruption. In its 2006 Global Corruption report, Transparency International has identified the health sector of Ghana as a corruption prone area with evidence of bribery and fraud across the breadth of medical services. This is said to have emanated from petty thievery and extortion, to massive distortions of health policy and funding, fed by payoffs to officials in the sector".

These references show that the issue of corruption in the West African healthcare system is becoming endemic, bearing in mind the fact the Nigeria and Ghana are major stakeholders in the sub-region, in terms of investments and regional cooperation.

Stemming the tide

To salvage the already precarious situation of the healthcare delivery systems in the West African sub-region, the respective governments of countries that make up the region must imbibe the global best practice principle and abhor all forms of mediocrity. Putting the most qualified people in sensitive positions will go a long way in curbing the problem because anyone who is worth his qualification would not want to cut corners or support any process that short-changes the masses.

Before corruption can thrive in a system, it has to first receive the support of a group of people. In Nigeria for instance, ethnicity, religious sentiments and political orientation are factors that have been allowed to fragment the smooth running of the healthcare system. Appointments are made, not based on merit, but on the aforementioned factors. Moreover, expertise and competence are made subservient to nepotism and favouritism. Yet, the best healthcare systems in the world are not built on such retrogressive sentiments.

West African leaders must, as a matter of utmost importance, prioritise the entrenchment of an enviable healthcare system and discourage the laughable medical tourism to Europe, Asia and America.

The deliberate and blatant refusal of successive governments to build on the few gains recorded by their predecessors in the health sector has led to the abandonment of laudable projects that could have impacted positively on the populace. In such instances, party politics, ethnicity, religious sentiments and a passion for mediocrity come into play, at the expense of collective progress.

Why pharmacists should be involved in vaccination programmes - Amibor

By Temitope Obayendo

Dr Kingsley Chiedu Amibor, national chairman, Association of Hospital and Administrative Pharmacists of Nigeria (AHAPN), has condemned the practice of restricting hospital pharmacists in the country from participating in vaccination programmes, describing it as unacceptable.

Amibor, who communicated with *Pharmanews* in a recent email interview, noted that, as drug experts, pharmacists must be at the forefront of vaccination processes, from the receipt of vaccines to the administration on patients.

The AHAPN helmsman, who lamented that hospital pharmacists are often mistreated, called government's attention to the ugly scenario in the country that allocates one pharmacist to about 50,000 population, which is contrary to the WHO's ratio of one pharmacist to 2,000 population.

Amibor, who disclosed other issues confronting his members, such as unpaid arrears of 2018 and career stagnation, also seized the opportunity to outline his achievements so far, as he prepares to hand over in August.

Below is the full interview:

Hospital pharmacists are among the frontline healthcare workers who have been playing key roles in the war against COVID-19. Now that vaccination is ongoing, are they part of the exercise? If not, why is it so? If yes, how have they been coping with the exercise?

Thank you very much for recognising that hospital pharmacists are frontline healthcare workers and that we have played and are still playing key roles in the war against COVID-19. Of a truth, vaccination efforts against the virus are ongoing in the country, but reports reaching us from our members across the country indicate that hospital pharmacists are not being carried along in the vaccination process.

It would appear that the entire exercise is being coordinated by the public health department of various hospitals. Hospital pharmacists are restricted to pharmacovigilance activities, such as adverse events documentation, arising from vaccination of patients. Other than that, it would appear that pharmacists are not involved in other roles.

But this scenario is not acceptable to us as pharmacists, because we are dealing with a drug here, in this case the AstraZeneca vaccine. Pharmacists, as drug experts, are supposed to be involved at every stage of the vaccination process, from receipt of the vaccines, to the documentation, storage and maintenance of the cold chain process. They are also supposed to be involved in issuing of the vaccine for administration to patients.

Right now, gaps exists in the supply chain process and this is not acceptable to us as an association. The worst case scenario is that the process should be collaborative between the hospital management, the pharmacy department and the public health department of

various hospitals. So, this is our stand as an association.

Again, different conspiracy theories propagated by foreign healthcare workers have taunted the efficacy of the vaccines, coupled with various reports of adverse reactions to the AstraZeneca vaccine, in particular. Do you think the AstraZeneca vaccine is safe for citizens?

Thank you very much for that question. Of a truth, all kinds of news are flying about regarding adverse events with the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine, some bordering on blood clots reported in some patients. One is almost at a loss as to what to believe.

However, if reports from our colleagues (pharmacists) here in Nigeria who have received the vaccine are anything to go by,

then it would appear that the vaccine is safe, after all. Some of those who have received the vaccine complained of mild reactions, including pain at injection site, which is not peculiar to AstraZeneca vaccine alone.

So, by and large, it may be safe to assume that the vaccine is safe for use, based on reports from majority of those who have received the vaccine so far.

Germany recently reported a third wave of COVID-19, and Nigeria is still grappling with the aftermaths of second wave. Is the third wave still a possibility in your own view?

What I can say is that if there is continued compliance with COVID-19 prevention protocols,

Dr Kingsley Chiedu Amibor

we are not likely to witness a third wave in Nigeria. I am talking *continued on page 64*



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Why pharmacists should be involved in vaccination programmes - Amibor

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Dr Kingsley Chiedu Amibor

especially about observance of social distancing, hand washing and use of face masks. There is also need to avoid overcrowding which is a potential means of spreading the infection.

But, by and large, I believe Nigeria is doing well in terms of control efforts. Besides, number of new daily cases is on the decline and that is a good omen that the pandemic may be under control and, as such, we may not witness a third wave in this country.

Your term of three years as the National Chairman of AHAPN is ending by August. Kindly tell us some of the set goals you have achieved during the tenure.

As you may recall, during my campaign for the office of national chairman of AHAPN, I had an 8-point agenda which I clearly had from God to pursue. My motto then was to rebrand and reposition hospital and administrative pharmacy practice in Nigeria.

Well, after three years, I want to believe that even non-pharmacists will want to agree that Pharmacy in Nigeria has made some good progress in the last couple of years. Permit me to summarize progress on the 8-point agenda as follows:

Adoption of pharmaceutical care as our new philosophy of pharmacy practice in Nigeria. This is already on course. Recall that in November 2020, at the Annual General Meeting of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), Nigerian pharmacists voted overwhelmingly to adopt pharmaceutical care practice in Nigeria. Our AHAPN Document on Standardised Pharmaceutical care practice was ratified by the AGM as the new benchmark for pharmaceutical care practice in Nigeria.

Consultancy Pharmacy cadre approval. This was a burning issue before my team and I came on board; but at the fullness of time, God intervened and used several authorities to actualise the circular for which we are most grateful to God. We appreciate the contributions of the PSN, the West African Postgraduate College of Pharmacists (WAPCP) and others. Today, some centres have begun implementation of the Consultancy Pharmacy Circular.

Welfare of members has been our top priority since inception. We have made progress in the area of integration of all hospital and administrative pharmacists under

one umbrella. Since the beginning of our tenure, several more states have joined the national body and more are still coming on board.

Registration of AHAPN as a trade union. Efforts are ongoing in this direction and we believe we shall have good news before the expiration of our tenure.

Specialisation of our members in core specialties. Again, this is work in progress. Some of our members have begun to specialise in sub-specialties, such that today, we can boast of renal care pharmacists, nutrition support pharmacists, paediatric care pharmacists and so on.

Proactive representation of pharmacists in government activities. We have made progress in this area. Pharmacists are now being recognised at government functions, both at the level of the National Assembly and the executive arm. For this feat, we are

most grateful to the President of PSN, Mazi Sam Oluabunwa, MON, OFR, FPSN, and the executive committee for their intervention efforts.

Corporate rebranding through massive public promotion activities in collaboration with the media. Again, this is one area we have made good progress. We have succeeded in improving the visibility of pharmacists in Nigeria, such that today, pharmacists are becoming a household name in Nigeria.

At the peak of the Corona pandemic, we had an understanding with Channels TV which resulted in hospital and administrative pharmacists being featured on the station almost on daily basis to contribute to discussions on the control of the dreaded COVID-19 pandemic.

Besides we have been engaged in massive public

health promotion activities. As an association, we have just finished marking the 2021 World Malaria Day, which is currently in the news. We made efforts to celebrate the World Health Organisation (WHO) days as part of efforts to improve the visibility of pharmacists in the country and God has been helping us greatly.

Vibrant Secretariat for AHAPN. Yes we have been able to secure a secretariat for AHAPN thanks to the PSN, while we are making plans for a bigger secretariat at the seat of power.

In all, I want to believe that we have made progress, and we are believing God to help us to finish well.

Definitely every great initiative has a limitation. What were the challenges encountered so far in your position as the national chairman of AHAPN?

Of course challenges are always there but they are meant to be overcome. Initially we had challenges with getting

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Why pharmacists should be involved in vaccination programmes - Amibor

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pharmaceutical care to be accepted in our institutions. In several hospitals, pharmacists were denied access to patients' bedside, pharmacy students were not allowed into hospitals for their hands-on clinical experience, and in some hospitals too, pharmacists were not being appointed into hospital-based committees. But all that is changing gradually. Now we have pharmacists being appointed into hospital committees. Currently, only few slots are allocated to training of pharmacy interns in hospitals, but we have been championing central placement for interns since the beginning of our tenure.

Coming nearer home, some of our members would not just pay their capitation to the national body, no matter what you preach. We have been recording an average of 30 per cent compliance with payment of obligations to the association. This is a serious limitation to us because, for one, our welfare projects are being affected; we had contemplated a comprehensive insurance package for all our members but we are limited by lack of funds and so on.

Additionally, the number of pharmacists in the hospitals currently falls far below the number recommended by WHO, which is one pharmacist to a population of 2,000. Currently what do we have? About one pharmacist to a population of 50,000.

The situation is worse in state government-owned hospitals, many of which operate without pharmacists, thereby depriving the people of the benefits of pharmaceutical care and leaving them at the mercy of non-pharmacists. This is why we are grateful to the Executive Governor of Delta State, His Excellency, Senator (Dr) Ifeanyi Okowa, for employing a good number of hospital pharmacists into the state civil service. AHAPN hereby challenges other state governments to emulate the good example of Dr Okowa.

Of a truth, pharmacists have suffered a lot from government neglect. Our members virtually train themselves in their various postgraduate endeavours to acquire additional knowledge and skills which, they need to empower them to provide quality pharmaceutical care services to our patients. Meanwhile, the same government has singled out medical doctors for sponsorship of residency training, while leaving out other professionals, including pharmacists.

Government has increased the salaries of medical doctors severally, while stagnating pharmacists on the same salary since 2014. Additionally, the federal government is owing pharmacists and some other category of healthcare workers April and May 2018 salaries, despite all entreaties to pay the money. You may agree with me that this is very frustrating.

Moreover, some of our members have been stagnated on CONHESS 14, on the ground that

there is no vacancy, despite existing extant circulars withdrawing all forms of career stagnation for federal civil servants.

Recently we are hearing talks of some chief medical doctors contemplating privatising pharmacy departments in their hospitals, under the guise of Public Private Partnership (PPP). The same hospital managements that ran the Drug Revolving Scheme underground are contemplating privatising pharmacy departments. I can assure you that we are going to resist that vehemently as an association. We have come up with a proposal on how to make medicines continuously available to hospitals and we are submitting a copy shortly to the Honourable Minister of Health.

Coming Event

Pharmap 2021 holds 28-29 June in Berlin

This year's pharmaceutical manufacturing and packaging congress, tagged "Pharmap 2021", has been scheduled to hold in Berlin, Germany, and virtually on BGS online platform, from Monday, 28 June to Tuesday 29 June.

The congress is a business-to-business networking event, with over 250 pharmaceutical professionals drawn from the whole value chain of industry, pharmaceutical companies, government bodies, clinics, service providers, start-ups and other experts in pharmaceutical manufacturing and packaging.

The BGS Group, organisers of this year's congress, believe

it will serve as a useful platform for experts from the whole value chain to share experience, present their case studies and network.

Participants at the congress will include top level managements from pharma companies, clinicians, research directors, data analytics, manufacturing directors, and IT leaders from manufacturing and packaging pharma technology.

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The leadership spirit

By Prof. 'Lere Baale

"An army of sheep led by a lion will always defeat an army of lions led by a sheep. To exercise leadership, you must believe that you are inherently a leader"

- Dr Myles Munroe

Today's world is filled with followers, supervisors, and managers but very few leaders. Leadership really comes down to two things: who you are and how you think. It is about discovering your identity as a born leader and then understanding the way true leaders think so that you can fulfil your inherent calling. If you don't first establish your leadership nature, it will be very difficult to have the mindset of leadership.

Nations and, indeed, organisations don't just fail because of wars, illiteracy, corruption or the likes, but because of lack of disciplined leadership.

True leadership is first concerned with who you are, as opposed to what you do. Leadership action flows naturally from a personal leadership revelation. To exercise leadership, you must believe that you are inherently a leader. Again, to purpose as leaders do, you must think like a leader.

To think like a leader, you must receive the thoughts of leadership. To receive the thoughts of leadership, you must have a personal encounter with your true self; a discovery of your nature, ability, and essence as a human being. Just as a product cannot know its true purpose or worth except in its relationship with its manufacturer, so it is with you and me.

Leadership spirit vs spirit of leadership

Let's make a distinction between the leadership spirit and the spirit of leadership. The leadership spirit is the inherent leadership capacity and potential that is the essential nature of human beings. The spirit of leadership is the mindset or attitude that accompanies a true leadership spirit and allows the dormant leadership potential to be fully manifested and maximised. We will address the spirit of leadership in the near future. Clearly understanding this difference is critical to discovering and living out our leadership capacity.

Who is a true leader?

Leadership is the capacity to influence others through inspiration, motivated by a passion, generated by a vision, produced by a conviction, and ignited by a purpose.

Peter F. Drucker, one of our generation's foremost thinkers and authorities on the subject of leadership and management, stated, "There may be 'born leaders', but there are surely far too few to depend on them. Leadership must be learned and can be learned... 'leadership personality,' 'leadership style,' and 'leadership traits' do not exist."

Leadership is more than influence

A popular definition of leadership is that "leadership is influence." In spite of the fact the leadership does involve the component of influence, I believe that this is an incomplete description because it does not distinguish what kind of influence or the source or cause of that influence.

True leadership is marked by others' wilful submission of their authority to yours. There are many people, past and present, who have influenced others, using threats and violence, but we don't call that true leadership. We call it manipulation, oppression, or dictatorship. Nero,

Hitler, and Idi Amin were all influential. They exerted their wills over people, but they were not leaders in the true sense.

Working definition of leadership

True leadership fundamentally requires the responsibility of taking followers into the exciting unknown and creating a new reality for them. Over 30 years of dedicated study of the subject of leadership revealed that leadership has not been given a comprehensive definition that incorporates the principal ingredients and components that I believe births and sustains true leadership and can be applied by anyone who desires to discover and release the hidden leader within.

Attitude creates your world and designs your destiny

What is attitude? We will discuss this topic in detail in the near future, but for now let us simply define attitude as "the mindset or mental conditioning that determines our interpretation of and response to our environment." It's our way of thinking.

It is also important to understand that attitude is a natural product of the integration of our self-worth, self-concepts, self-esteem, and sense of value or significance. In essence, your attitude is the manifestation of who you think you are. Leaders think differently about themselves, and this distinguishes them from followers.

We live our attitudes and our attitudes create our lives. The difference between the attitudes of a lion and a sheep determines their place in the scheme of the animal kingdom. We live our lives based on who we think we are. Thus, according to the illustration on the animal kingdom, if you believe in your heart that you are a sheep, then you will stay in the confines that others have placed you in or that you have made for yourself. If you think that you are a lion, then you will venture beyond manmade limitations and embark on the life of leadership that you were born to live. You will develop into someone who inspires and influences others within your inherent domain.

No amount of training in leadership skills, courses in management methods, power titles, promotions, or associations can substitute for the right attitude. I am convinced that all the money in the world may make you rich, but it can never make you a leader. Your leadership development is determined by your perceptions of who you are and why you exist; in other words, your sense of significance to life.

The hidden leader in you

An army of sheep led by a lion will always defeat an army of lions led by a sheep. This concept is fully illustrated by the story of "the lions and the sheep" that is popular in the continent of the cradle of humanity, Africa. The story encapsulates what we understand as the missing link in the leadership development process.

According to the story, a little cub was carried home to be raised among sheep by a farmer. After several years of relating with and behaving like a sheep, the growing cub was taken to the bush and it heard the roaring of a lion. After several attempts, the cub started to growl first like a sheep but eventually

learnt how to roar like a lion and moved into the jungle to be with other lions. That movement represents the moment of discovery for the cub, raised among sheep but turned to be a lion in the forest.

A decision affecting the future

Just as the young lion's genuine growl revealed its inherent strength, you can release the inherent leadership strength within you if you come to understand your true self. Just as the young lion knew that it had to make a decision about its future, you have a choice to make about your own future.

Just as the young lion looked back at the farm where the sheep were and then looked toward the forest where the lion was heading, you have to evaluate your past and your potential and step toward one or the other. Just as the young lion knew that, to become its true self, it would have to give up the safe, secure, predictable, and simple life of the farm and enter the frightening, wild, untamed, unpredictable, dangerous life of the jungle, you will have to leave the safe confines of being a follower if you are going to become a leader.

It is remarkable that the young lion turned its back on the farm, crossed the river, and walked into the forest, leaving behind its old life as a sheep and embarking on the life it was born to live. As one who has had to cross that river myself, my desire is to be a catalyst, like the beast, roaring an invitation into your life and heart and hopefully helping you to enter the adventure of discovering and releasing the leadership spirit within you.

Discover the leader you were meant to be

Trapped inside you is an undiscovered leader of great value to your generation! Are leaders born, made, developed, created, cultivated, or are they products of circumstances? Is leadership reserved only for an elite few, a specific gender, people of a particular social stratum, or those of advanced intelligence? Is leadership the prerogative of a rare breed; is it a by-product of the superior DNA of a super-race? Or can anyone from anywhere at any time emerge as a leader?

History has produced a legacy of distinguished and outstanding leaders who have impacted the world and furthered the development of humanity. They were both men and women, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, trained and untrained. They came from every race, colour, language, and culture of the world. Many of them had no ambition to become great or renowned. In fact, most of the individuals who have greatly affected humanity have been simple people who were thrust into circumstances that demanded the hidden qualities of their characters, or they were driven by personal, passionate goals.

Leaders are ordinary people who accept or are placed under extraordinary circumstances that bring forth their latent potential, producing a character that inspires the confidence and trust of others. Our world today is in desperate need of such individuals.

In his renowned play, *Julius Caesar*, William Shakespeare wrote, "There is a tide in the affairs of men." With these words, he was expressing his observation that the waves of history have an influence on our lives. It's as if we as individuals and nations are caught up in a tide of providential events. There have been



eras in the history of the world in which multiple tide-like influences have impacted our civilization and cultures at nearly the same time. These historical incidents are known as "crossroads of history." One would suggest that we are now at a confluence of historic tides.

The 20th century saw perhaps more distressing developments than any previous century, including devastating wars, monstrous new weapons, countless natural disasters, and fatal diseases. It was also possibly the most unpredictable, politically interesting and revolutionary of any century in history.

In the last several decades, a relatively short span of time, the world has experienced many remarkable changes in the realms of science, technology, medicine, and space exploration, as well as hundreds of other so-called advancements. We must agree that our generation lives in a swirling tide of events, dreams, promises, threats, and changing ideas about the present and future. The conditions of our world press the present generation to ask anew, "Why am I here? What is the purpose of life? Why are life and reality the way they are?"

The leaders of our time are bewildered when they are called upon to explain why our world is the way it is or to suggest a direction for the future. Many people in positions of public trust confess that they are just trying to keep the lid on, and others have abandoned even that hope.

Added to this bleak environment is the painful reality that over the past few decades, there has been no dramatic change in leadership for a better future. In the political, civic, economic, social, and spiritual realms, recent events indicate that previous generations have produced weak leaders who fade in the presence of true leadership and leave our present generation in this same leadership vacuum.

The disgrace and fall of renowned leaders, the exposure of corruption and unethical activities among political and business leaders, and the covert conspiracies of government betraying their own people serve as evidence that this lack of quality leadership is affecting almost every sphere of our lives. We urgently need competent leaders.

Where do we look for such leaders? While we often think of leaders as "out there," we need to look within ourselves. Each one of us is a leader who can affect the people and institutions in our own sphere of influence. When we begin with ourselves, we will naturally have an effect on the lives of others in the bigger society.

Lere Baale is a Director of Business School Netherlands www.bsn-mba.net and a Certified Strategy Consultant at Howes Consulting Group www.howesgroup.com

Gov. Abdulrazaq, Ohuabunwa, others task new Kwara PSN leadership on excellence

continued from back page

Eminent Nigerians and pharmacists, including Kwara State Governor, Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq; Pharm. (Mazi) Sam Ohuabunwa, president, Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN); Pharm. Olumide Akintayo, former president, PSN; and Pharm. NAE Mohammed, registrar, PCN, have tasked the new leadership of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), Kwara State Chapter, to keep the flag of the Society flying, by living up to its expectations.

The governor, while speaking at the inauguration ceremony of Pharm. Adejuwon Otelaja-led PSN executives, as the 10th executive committee of the Kwara State Chapter of PSN, noted that the role of pharmacists in the society is very crucial, being the closest to the grassroots.

He further commended pharmacists for their commitment, consistency and support towards delivering quality healthcare to Kwara indigenes, irrespective of their location in the state.

According to the governor, who was represented by his deputy, Mr Kayode Alabi, his administration will continue to provide an enabling environment for businesses to thrive, while pharmacists' role in the area of healthcare cannot be overemphasised.

Also speaking at the occasion, Mazi Ohuabunwa urged the newly elected executives to dutifully uphold the honour bestowed on them by the Society, adding that assuming leadership position is a call to serve.

The number one pharmacist in the country, who was represented by the Deputy President (North), Pharm. Munir Elelu, further charged the new crop of leaders to strive for distinction in professional ethics, practice and morality, stressing that it is time to hit the ground running.

Pharm. Akintayo, who also doubled as the chairman of the occasion, called the attention of the new chairman to the need to always look inward into the profession to harness potentials of the practitioners for maximum benefit to the society.

In his farewell speech, the immediate past chairman, PSN, Kwara State, Pharm. Bakau Alli, said he felt fulfilled for bequeathing a well-rounded chairman and a dependable crop of new executive members to the Society.

On his part, the newly inaugurated chairman, Pharm. Otelaja, promised to take the PSN-Kwara State to greater heights and ensure that pharmacists in the state are accorded respect, as well as given good attention by the government and other stakeholders in the private sector.

He said: "It is a new dawn for the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria in Kwara State. I will work with my predecessor and other stakeholders in the industry to move the Society forward. I therefore solicit for your support and commitment to achieve our objectives."

Speaking further, the elated new chairman said one of the core projects of his administration is the Rural Pharmacy Development Initiative which aims to address the current shortage of pharmacies in the rural areas by providing incentives and support to encourage more pharmacists to move into the rural areas.

He added that he has already instituted an Educational Grant Scheme to support pharmacists in their quest for academic and professional development.

During the inauguration ceremony, legal luminary, Mallam Yusuf Olaolu Ali and Managing Director, Tuyil Pharmaceutical



The new PSN Chairman, Kwara State Chapter, Pharm. Juwon Otelaja, being decorated by the former President, PSN, Pharm. Olumide Akintayo, while others look in admiration.

Company, Olusin of Ijaraisin, Oba Ajibola Ademola Julius, were decorated as new patrons of the Society, while Governor

Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq was decorated as grand patron.

The immediate past executives of the PSN were also recognised

for their contributions towards the development of the state chapter.

Earlier, the Chief Executive Officer, Business School Netherlands, Prof. Lere Baale, delivered the keynote address at the first edition of Kwara Pharmacademy with the theme "Optimising Opportunities in the Pharmaceutical Landscape in Nigeria Post-COVID".

The event also witnessed the launching of a N100 million endowment fund for capital projects in the state chapter.

Dignitaries that graced the occasion included: Kwara State Deputy Governor, Mr Kayode Alabi; State Head of Service, Mrs Susan Modupe Oluwole; Executive Secretary of Kwara State Health Insurance Agency, Dr Olubunmi Jetawo-Winter; Registrar, PCN, Pharm. N A E Mohammed, represented by Pharm. Emmanuel Bayode; Wife of Rhema Chapel Senior Pastor, Pastor (Mrs) Adegboye; Coordinator, Board of Fellows, Prof. Philips Olurinola; National Chairman, ACPN, Dr Samuel Adekola; Chief Medical Director, UIH, Prof. A.D. Yusuf; PSN chairmen from Lagos, Ondo, Ekiti, Osun states and other stakeholders in the health sector.

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Pharmacists task govt on environmental restructuring, vector control to end malaria

continued from back page

World Malaria Day, stressing the need for governments to treat malaria matter with all urgency in order for Nigeria, which is malaria-endemic, to recover from the socio-economic loss attributable to the condition.

Malaria has been identified as being responsible for an annual reduction of 1.3 per cent of Africa's economic growth, while malaria-related absenteeism and production losses cost Nigeria close to an estimated 1 billion dollar loss annually.

Speaking on the occasion, the President, Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN) Pharm. (Mazi) Sam Oluwabunwa, urged governments to be intentional with town planning and discourage unauthorised constructions that disrupt waterways, while ensuring that drainages are covered to discourage mosquito breathing sites.

Oluwabunwa, in a statement made available to *Pharmanews*, also charged the National Orientation Agency (NOA) to rise to its obligation of health education and promotion, by embarking on continuous campaign against unhealthy practices in the community,

which he said had enhanced the prevalence of malaria in the county.

"For instance, throwing empty food cans indiscriminately, overgrown bushes and blocked drainages around living homes, should be highly discouraged," he said.

The PSN helmsman further tasked the NOA on the promotion of programmes on malaria prevention, such as the distribution and use of Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets, intermittent prophylaxis for pregnant women and evidence-based health education on the mode of malaria transmission, adding that indoor residual spraying with effective insecticide should be facilitated by the government through pharmacists.

He said: "Early and accurate diagnosis is essential for rapid and effective disease management and surveillance. Misdiagnosis allows disease progression from uncomplicated to severe. An estimated 65 per cent of Nigeria's population live in poverty.

"Although there is the national policy on Artemisinin-based Combined Therapy (ACT), which costs about N1,200, as the first-line treatment of uncomplicated malaria, current data indicates that over 70 per

cent of children treated for malaria in Nigeria received chloroquine or sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine (SP) at an average cost of N200.

"Government and corporate organisations should partner and provide free malaria rapid test kit and ACTs/SPs at community pharmacies for treatment of pregnant women and under-fives.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has made it clear that there is little or no progress in solving healthcare problems without significant investment in R&D. Government should consider our universities and research institutes as "cantonments" and find them as such, to use our rich flora and fauna to create solutions for our healthcare needs, including malaria.

"The importance of T3 "Test, Treat and Track" strategy for malaria case management by pharmacists still remains crucial in eradicating malaria in Nigeria."

Corroborating the PSN's position, the National Chairman, Association of Hospital and Administrative Pharmacists of Nigeria (AHAPN) Dr Kingsley Chiedu Amibor, says vector control remains the primary way to prevent and reduce malaria transmission.

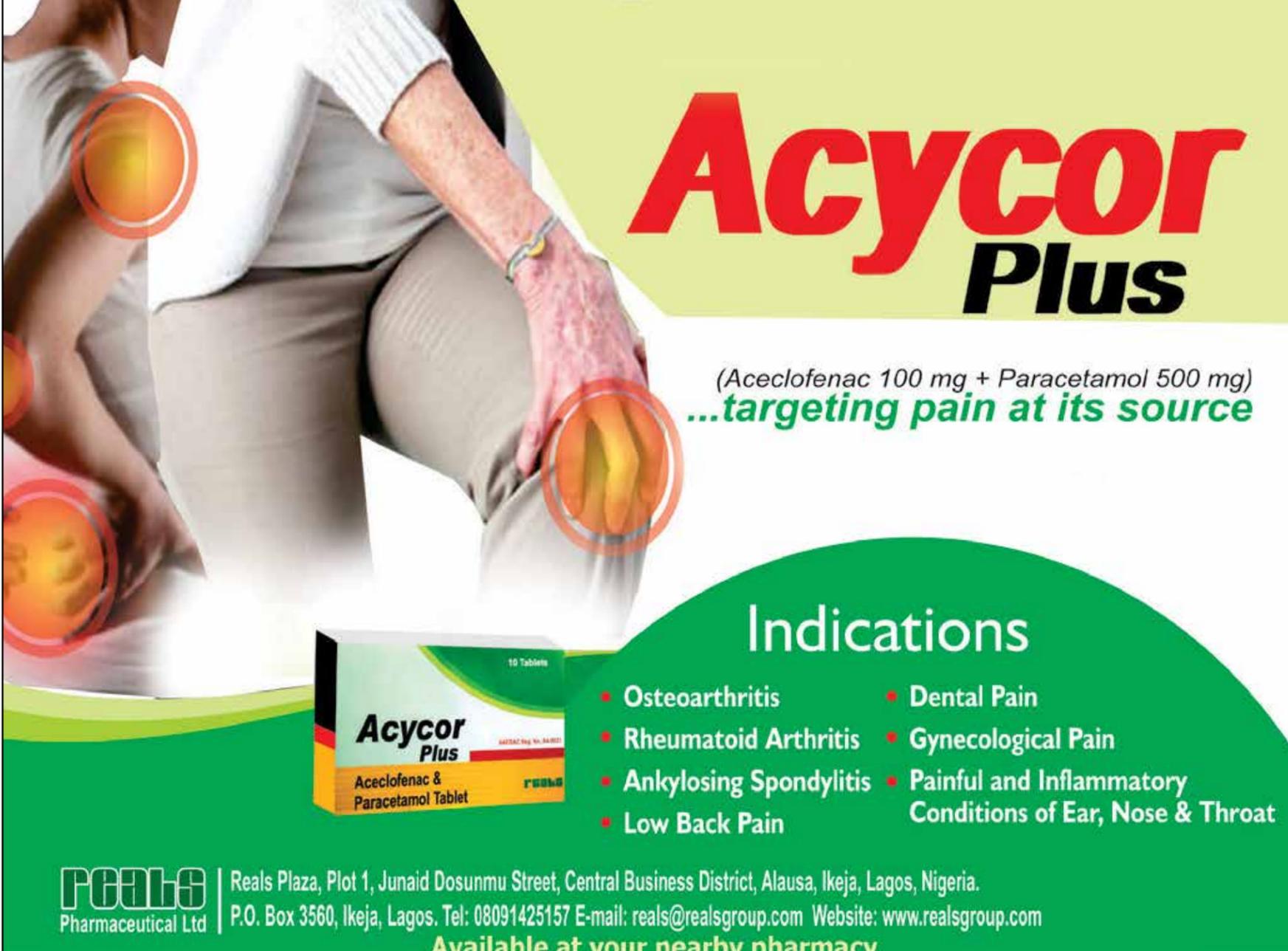
"Two forms of vector control, namely insecticide treated mosquito nets and indoor residual spraying, are effective in a wide range of circumstances," he said.

Amibor listed benefits of sleeping under an insecticide treated net to include reduction of contact between mosquitoes and humans by providing both a physical barrier and an insecticidal effect, adding that high usage of such nets within a community can confer population-wide protection resulting from killing of mosquitoes on a large scale.

"For instance, in 2019, an estimated 46 per cent of all people at risk of malaria in Africa were protected by an insecticide treated net, compared to 2 per cent in year 2000," Amibor noted.

The AHAPN chairman, who spoke at the World Malaria Day 2021 programme, organised by the association, asserted that Nigeria needs an aggressive new approach to jump-start progress against malaria, as the country has been identified as one of the 11 counties that carry a high burden of the disease.

He advocated a "high burden to high impact response" model, which will feature "A call upon government to demonstrate the political will to reduce the toll of malaria; need for strategic information to drive impact, better guidance, policies and strategies; and a coordinated national malaria response".



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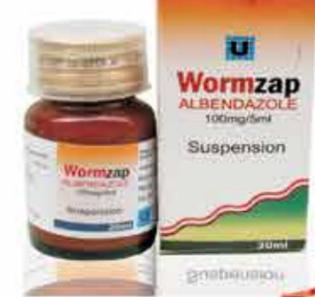


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Congrats, Atueyi, the man who speaks for truth - Prof. Mora

I first got to know Pharm. Ifeanyi Atueyi at close quarters in 1987, when he was the national secretary of the PSN. During the Annual National Conference of the PSN, which took place at the then Shukura Hotel, Sokoto, in November 1987, he virtually saved the conference from becoming a failure. I was in attendance at the conference. The issue, if I can recall had to do with the conferment of Fellowship, which unfortunately had always been a hard nut to crack by every leadership of the PSN.

When I had the honour and privilege of serving as the registrar of the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria (PCN) from 2003 to 2012, we became closer. Immediately upon my appointment, I started the lecture series in honour of the late Dr Fred B. Adenika on the death anniversary of the latter, who had served as the chairman of the Governing Council of the PCN from December, 1999 to December, 2002, and who had died on 20 February, 2003 in faraway USA.

I was a member of the PCN Governing Council as one of the eight representatives of the PSN when the late Dr Adenika was chairman of the PCN. Pharm. Atueyi delivered the first lecture on 20 February, 2004 at the head office and registry of the PCN in Idu, Abuja. He followed up with management training as capacity building programme for senior and management staff of the PCN.

The series of lectures and management trainings that followed in honour of the late chairman of the PCN became one of the highly celebrated events in the calendar of activities of the PCN for the eight years that I served as the registrar. It was during the 2008 edition of the lecture, which had as the chairperson, Dr (Mrs) Stella Okoli, MON, the General Managing Director of Emzor Pharmaceutical Ltd, Lagos, that she threw a challenge to the PCN that a book on the late former chairman of the PCN should be written. Prof. 'Fola Tayo was the keynote speaker for that year. That was how Pharm. Atueyi and myself started a series of meetings and telephone calls and planning for the collation of materials for the publication of the book.

It was while lodging at Sheraton Hotel in downtown Atlanta, USA, during the 2008 Annual Scientific Conference and Exposition by the Nigerian Association of Pharmacists and Pharmaceutical Scientists in the Americas (NAPPSA) which both of us attended, that we had enough time to further articulate the draft of the book at length.

On 20 February, 2009, the book: "EXCELLENCE IN PHARMACY PRACTICE IN NIGERIA - THE FRED ADENIKA LEGACY" was presented to the public and launched at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Victoria Island, Lagos. Prof. Udeala of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) and the first pharmacist to be appointed vice-chancellor in any Nigerian university, was the book reviewer. Ifeanyi Atueyi and I had earlier both travelled together in the same car to Akure, the capital of Ondo State, the home state of the late Dr Adenika to invite the then Governor of the State, the late Dr Olusegun Agagu, to serve as the special guest of honour during the public presentation of the book.

In all these encounters with Pharm. Atueyi, I came face-to-face with a highly cerebral person whose passion for the pharmacy profession was immeasurable. I learnt a lot from him. Despite our age difference, he took me as equal, or at best a brother, with just a couple of years younger.

It was during the many interactions with Pharm. Atueyi that his (our) beloved mum died and the burial ceremony scheduled for his native Okija in Anambra State. I quickly jumped on the aircraft to Owerri in Imo State and by road to Okija to give Mama a final goodbye. I felt I must be there to support and comfort him, for the guidance and mentoring that he unknowingly imparted to me.

That was my first trip to Okija and to this day, I remain pleased with myself that I undertook what to me looked like an ordinary attendance at a friend's mum's burial. My attendance, as I got to

know, meant a lot to Pharm. and Mrs Atueyi. He must have informed many persons at the slightest chance that I attended the burial ceremony of the late Mama Atueyi (may her gentle soul rest in perfect peace, amen) in Okija.

I later discovered that Pharm. Atueyi and Dr Leo Egbujiobi, one-time president of NAPPSA, are indeed related. There has been tremendous amount of respect between myself and Dr Leo and the realisation of the fact that he is indeed related to Pharm. Atueyi, further drew the three of us closer.

During the public presentation and launch of the 2nd edition of my book, "THE LIZARD SHAPE MODEL OF DRUG DISTRIBUTION IN NIGERIA", in Ikeja, Lagos in February 2018, Pharm. Atueyi was in attendance and virtually turned himself into the master of ceremony to ensure the success of the event. The words of encouragement and support to me which he stated profusely during the event will forever be indelible in my mind and I remain grateful.

This article will be incomplete if I fail to link the heading to the person. Anyone familiar with Pharm. Atueyi, will not, but immediately notice the goodness in him, the humility, the charisma, but above all, as a person who always says the truth. Any discussion with him and the truth is not emphasised, he will quickly wash his hands away and will state so unequivocally that he'll have nothing to do with it. That is the quintessential Pharm. Atueyi.

It has been an honour, a rare privilege, being in communication with this gem of a pharmacist and may the good Lord continue to grant Pharm. Atueyi long life in excellent health, added wisdom and economic prosperity. Amen.

Finally, may the ink of "PHARMANEWS" never dry. Amen.

Congratulations, Sir.

Prof. Ahmed Tijjani Mora, FPSN, FPCPharm, mni.
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Pharmacists task govt on environmental restructuring, vector control to end malaria

By Temitope Obayendo

For Nigeria to achieve the World Health Organisation (WHO)'s global target of reducing malaria morbidity and mortality by 90 per cent in 2030, pharmacists say it is imperative for government at all levels to embark on environmental reengineering and usage of vector control mechanisms.

While highlighting some African countries that have progressed in the elimination of malaria, such as Algeria, which is certified malaria-free, as well as Ghana, Namibia and South Africa, which reduced malaria incidence and deaths by 40 per cent in 2020, compared to 2015, the experts pointed out that Nigeria continues to lag behind in attaining any of these milestones.

The drug specialists made their submissions during the commemoration of this year's



Pharm. (Sir) Ifeanyi Atueyi, publisher, *Pharmanews*, and wife, Lady Joan Atueyi, with longest-serving staff of Pharmanews Limited.

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Gov. Abdulrazaq, Ohuabunwa, others task new Kwara PSN leadership on excellence

- Hail pharmacists' commitment to healthcare sector

By Adebayo Oladejo

Eminent Nigerians and pharmacists, including Kwara State Governor, Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq; Pharm. (Mazi) Sam Ohuabunwa, president, Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN); Pharm. Olumide Akintayo, former president, PSN; and Pharm. NAE Mohammed, registrar, PCN,

have tasked the new leadership of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), Kwara State Chapter, to keep the flag of the Society flying, by living up to its expectations.

The governor, while speaking at the inauguration ceremony of

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