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JUNE 2022 Vol. 44 No.6

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L-R: Dr Kehinde Adeniran, deputy coordinator, Hypertension & Diabetes, Lagos State Ministry of Health, Alausa; Dr Rotimi Agbolagorite, director, Disease Control Lagos State Ministry of Health; Dr Abimbola Osinowo, deputy director/Hypertension & Diabetes coordinator, Lagos State Ministry of Health; Mrs Taiwo Oladitan, product manager, New Heights Pharma Ltd; Mrs Kuburat Ayinde, senior health education officer, Lagos State Ministry of Health, during the recent World Hypertension Day free screening, organised by New Heights Pharmaceuticals Ltd, in collaboration with Lagos State Government.

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## Stakeholders charge incoming PCN registrar on continuity - As Ahmed replaces Mohammed

Notable stakeholders in the Nigerian pharmaceutical industry have charged the incoming registrar of the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria (PCN), Pharm. Ibrahim Babashehu Ahmed to build on the achievements of his predecessor, Pharm. (Dr) Elijah Mohammed, saying this will position the Council for greater efficiency. Ahmed was officially

announced as Mohammed's successor on 7 April, 2022, during a special meeting of the members of the PCN Governing Council in Abuja. This is coming as Mohammed completes his second tenure of four years on 7 June 2022. The stakeholders, who included Prince Julius Adelusi-Adeluyi former Minister of Health and president of Nigeria

Academy of Pharmacy (NAPharm); Dr (Mrs) Dere Awosika, chairman of Access Bank PLC; Mr. Fidelis Ayebae, managing director/ chief executive officer, Fidson Healthcare PLC; Pharm. Olumide Akintayo, former president of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN); and Sir Anthony Akhimien, a former president of PCN, spoke at the recent "Book Launch and

continued on page 16

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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/>
5. After payment text, send us evidence. For subscription enquiry, call 08134835525

ISSN 0331-815X

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### PHARM. ADEREMI OLAYINKA OMOTOSHO

A native of Awe in Oyo State, Pharm. Aderemi Olayinka Omotosho was born in Lagos State in 1973 into the family of Asiwaju Theophilus Adebawale Omotosho. He had his early education at Command Secondary School, Ikeja, and the Nigerian Military School Zaria, Kaduna State, respectively. This foundation prepared him for a lifestyle of Spartan discipline.

He later proceeded to Nigeria's premier university, University of Ibadan, Oyo State, where he graduated with honours from the Faculty of Pharmacy. He also had his MBA from Ladoko Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), Ogbomosho, Oyo State.

Omotosho started his professional career at Mopson Pharmaceutical Limited, Lagos. He later joined Bond Chemical Industries Limited in 2000, where his unparalleled dedication to duties ultimately made him to assume the position of managing director in 2005. Under his leadership, the company has grown in all measurement areas as one of the major indigenous pharmaceutical industries in Nigeria.

Omotosho's commitment to excellence in pharmaceutical manufacturing is evident in the arrays of products by Bond Chemical Industries. As an astute businessman, the customer base, scope of operation and assets of the company have been on an upward increase every year. It is worthy of note that under him, the company has shown consistent commitment to a high standard of manufacturing, making it one of the indigenous companies that pioneered the production of quality yet affordable ethical pharmaceutical products that are readily available.

Significantly, the company is the only indigenous pharma company producing Hydroxyurea at a subsidised rate for the management of sickle cell disorder. Also, under him, the company in its quest to meet international standards and attain global best practices in pharma manufacturing has commissioned its newly constructed WHO standard factory.

Omotosho is an active member of PSN, NAIP, PMG-MAN, and NACCIMA, and has attended various local and international conferences, seminars, workshops and exhibitions. His commitment to the development of the pharmacy profession in Nigeria includes the following: Year-round internship and NYSC opportunities for pharmacy students and graduates; supporting faculties of pharmacy in various higher institutions; provision of active pharma ingredients for research activities in universities; sponsoring of various programmes of professional pharmacists associations, such as PSN, ACPN, NAIP, and others; sponsorship of pharmacists to both local and international conferences and exhibitions.

As a philanthropist, Omotosho, founded an NGO that has consistently catered for over 400 widows and numerous orphans on monthly and quarterly bases for the past 24 years in the area of provision of shelter, foods, medical aids, and clothing materials; as well payment of school fees to indigenes of Afijio Local Government, Oyo State.

He is a Fellow of the National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria and a recipient of distinguished awards from numerous organisations in different areas of endeavour.

Omotosho is married to Mrs Tope Omotosho and they are blessed with children.



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## Inspiration

Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. - **Johann Wolfgang von Goethe**

Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined. - **Henry David Thoreau**

Certain things catch your eye, but pursue only those that capture the heart. - **Ancient Indian Proverb**

Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can. - **Arthur Ashe**

"Don't sit down and wait for the opportunities to come. Get up and make them." - **Madam C.J Walker**

"One of the lessons that I grew up with was to always stay true to yourself and never let what somebody else says distract you from your goals." - **Michelle Obama**

"All dreams are within reach. All you have to do is keep moving towards them." - **Viola Davis**

What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals. - **Zig Ziglar**

When you have a dream, you've got to grab it and never let go. - **Carol Burnett**

Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving. - **Albert Einstein**

Inspiration comes from within yourself. One has to be positive. When you're positive, good things happen. - **Deep Roy**

The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today. - **Franklin D. Roosevelt**

We generate fears while we sit. We overcome them by action. - **Dr. Henry Link**

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## God is committed to your work

By Sir Ifeanyi Atueyi

It may appear simplistic to say that God works but it is a fundamental truth. In Genesis, God said that He was pleased with everything He had made and declared them good. In the Garden of Eden, God commanded Adam and Eve to work. He gave man dominion over all other created things and said to them, **“Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth”** (Genesis 1:28). That was the assignment to man. This shows that work is dear to God’s heart.

From Adam’s time till now, man has worked. Man’s work has been demonstrated in science, technology, medicine, agriculture, problem-solving, business, building, textile, publishing, and all aspects of our daily activities. God is interested in our office work, in our home-making and in the work of the ministry.

Jesus gave us a good example of work. Today, we know Jesus more for His ministry work, but we must remember that out of the 33 years He spent on earth, only the last three was in ministry. He spent most of His life on his father’s carpentry business.

Jesus was involved in purchasing, production, inventory management, costing, marketing and sales. He was involved in all aspects carpentry. Today, we use terms like “furniture”, “upholstery” and “cabinet” to describe various aspects of carpentry. Jesus did all that as a carpenter. He said in John 5:17(NKJV), **“My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.”**

Sometimes, the actual work God has prepared for you in advance even before you were born comes early or much later in life. This work may or may not be your present profession, occupation, business, vocation or whatever you do to make a living. It may be a period of equipping or testing you. Luke 16:12 says, **“And if you have not been faithful in what is another man’s, who will give you what is your own?”**

You must pray to discover your divine assignment or God’s purpose for your life. Several people may be in the same business or profession but to one it is a divine assignment while to the other it is not. You can easily know the difference from their attitude to work.

What is your purpose for working? Do you acknowledge God

in your work? Does your work give glory to God? I believe that God takes us through some activities for a purpose. That is why you should take whatever you do seriously. He has a good plan for His children (Jeremiah 29:11).

Moses, whose divine assignment was to deliver and lead the Israelites, worked as a shepherd for the first 80 years of his life.

The disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ were engaged in their different occupations before their call. Andrew, Peter, James and John, the sons of Zebedee were fishermen. Luke was a physician and Matthew was a tax collector for the Roman government.

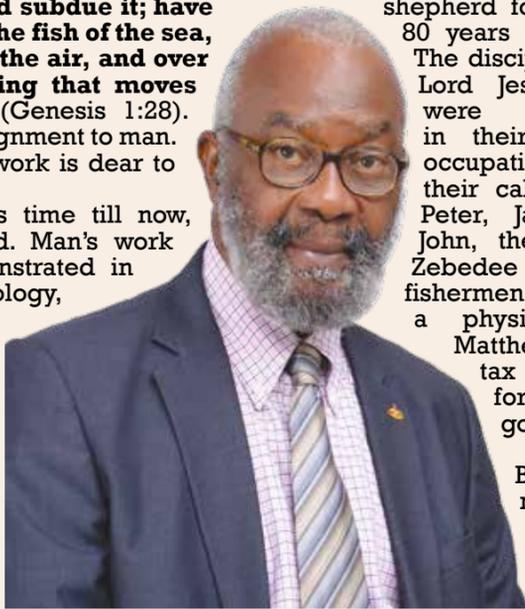
The Bible does not specify what Judas was doing before his call. But from

his dishonest services as treasurer for the disciples, it is likely that he was a businessman. He might have engaged in some dubious businesses. However, he was called for a purpose.

One mistake some people make is not putting their mind into what they do. They work half-heartedly and without zeal. This is common when they work as employees in organisations. I am never tired of quoting Ecclesiastes 9:10 (NKJ) which says, **“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.”**

Reflecting on my past, I started working in 1964 as a medical representative with Pfizer Products Ltd and God took me through different aspects of Pharmacy before I settled down as a pharmaceutical journalist in 1979. I worked as a retail and dispensing pharmacist, production pharmacist, marketing pharmacist and even as a hospital pharmacist, which I did not enjoy. I found myself as the pharmacist-in-charge of a military hospital during the civil war. Even though at that time I did not know which direction I was going in my professional life, God was preparing me for the future.

It is now clear that God was working out His purpose for my life by taking me through that process. Each experience has added a unique value to my life and business.



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## Success in salesmanship is about strategy, not about relatives

By George O. Emetuche

*"Try not to become a person of success, but try to become a person of value." - Albert Einstein*

**B**uild your business around professionalism, value delivery and consistency. I talk a lot to entrepreneurs, sales professionals, startups and businesspeople. When I have the opportunity to interact with this set of people, I tell them that success in business or sales is about being professional, delivering value in your offerings, and being consistent in pursuing your vision, mission and goals. This is my simple formula for success in professional life. It works for everyone in business and career life. When you sell as a salesperson, ensure you go with the formula.

### Sell everywhere within your market

One of the reasons sales professionals fail is because they sell the right products and services in the wrong market. Some salespeople think that going to places they know someone is the only way to sell their products. Sell everywhere within your target market!

Once you are sure of your products and services, the next thing to do is to take it to the right market. The right market is a function of the right buyers and users. The right buyers are people who need your products and can pay for them. The right users are people who know about your products through sales presentation or by marketing activities.

Your duty as a sales professional is to attract customers, retain customers and expand customers. You attract customers by winning new customers. You retain customers by finding smart and productive ways to ensure you keep them when they are attracted. You expand customers by creatively bringing new customers to the fold. This is your first assignment as productive sales professional.

### Relatives and friends may not necessarily buy from you

Do you think that friends and relatives must buy from you always? This may not be so. If it is so, sales won't be tough!

Don't just depend on the assumption that people you know must patronise you. It's another form of entitlement mentality to think this way. Don't get me wrong, please. I want my people to buy from me. It's beautiful when we sell to relatives, *umunna*, schoolmates, neighbours, village people, and so on. But the truth is that 80 percent of your friends and people close to you may not patronise your products or business.

I have done several informal studies to confirm my take on this issue. Ask startups and businesspeople to confirm this position. Going into the reasons relatives and friends are not buying from you is a topic for another day.

Let me say that the Pareto Principle applies here too. In your sales activities as a sales professional, know that 80 percent of your sales will come from 20 percent of productive business relationships you developed overtime and not necessarily from family members, classmates and neighbours.

A Facebook friend, who is an author, once posted on Facebook that if 50 percent of his friends bought his books on social media, he would become a success story. I think I agree with him.

I have since learnt that you must expand your circle if you want to be successful in your business or career. You must develop good products and services and reach

out to people who will need them. You must create value. You must be

outstanding. Attaining excellence is by taking action. This is my belief pattern.

### Make giving value an attitude

I believe that the more value you give as a professional, the more you expand your opportunities to receive value. This is what I teach in negotiation skills. Take value along everywhere you go. People flock around folks who bring VALUE!

I don't believe in doing nothing and waiting for people to patronise my business. We do our best to create value within our target market. We target the right market and sell value to them. This is the way not to notice whether relatives or friends are buying from you or not.

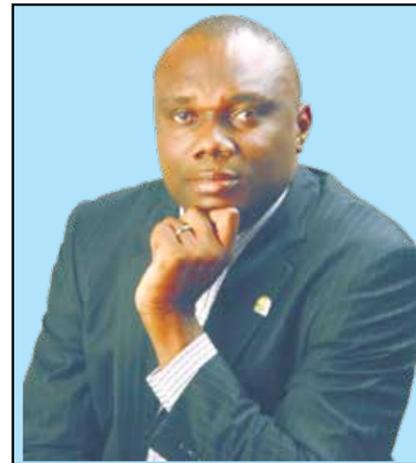
In my book, *The 25 Unbreakable Laws of Sales*, The 17th Law says: "Some Doors Are Walls, Some Walls Are Doors." This may seem deep but let me explain it a little. Some doors

are walls when we believe that our products and services will sell in a place - because we have contacts there; only to be disappointed, for one reason or the other. Some walls could be doors when we succeed in places we know no one.

This is why I tell sales professionals to take their products and services to everywhere within their target market. Show customers and prospects in your market the benefits in your products and services. This is the productive and smart way to sell. It wins all the time.

I have been a sales professional for over 25 years to conclude that success in sales and salesmanship are about strategy. The rule I promote is: SHOW PEOPLE WHY THEY SHOULD BUY YOUR PRODUCT - whether you are selling to your friends or enemies. If you can show them reasons to buy, and the reasons are convincing enough, they will buy and buy again.

Don't depend so much on relatives or friends. Be a hard working and creative professional who discovers the right market for his or her products and services.



George O. Emetuche, CES, is the convener, Nigeria Sales Conference.

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# Inquest

with  
**Patrick Iwelunmor**

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## Realities of pharma manufacturing in Nigeria

Despite having over 115 registered companies, the Nigerian pharmaceutical manufacturing sector has not really lived up to its full potentials. This is largely due to such factors as government's failure to create the enabling environment through friendly policies. Nigeria, with its huge natural and mineral endowments, has virtually struggled in the last 42 years to maintain an enviable economic outlook. Many have wondered why a country which was in the league of the Malaysias and Brazils of this world has witnessed such a stunted growth. The reasons are not far-fetched.

Experts agree that the decline in the prosperity trajectory of the country began with the bastardisation of nationalistic values and the desecration of sound institutions put in place through the labours of our founding fathers, by both military and civilian adventurists and opportunists in government. The scramble for the nation's petrodollars unavoidably led to the abandonment of other critical economic money spinners such as agriculture, from where most countries source their Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients. Is it not shameful that Nigerian pharmaceutical manufacturers

also import packaging paper from India, with the limitless flora in our forests?

The precarious situation of the pharmaceutical manufacturing sector in Nigeria today demonstrates the fact that the impact of the damage done to the country by those adventurists is still being felt. The cost of drug production in Nigeria is one of the most unstable and embarrassing decimals in global economics.

To start with, virtually all pharmaceutical manufacturers in the country import their APIs from India and China. The instability in the nation's exchange rates means that the exporting countries gain more because of the abysmal worth of the Nigerian currency. Heavy and hostile tax regimes also constitute a nauseating fraction of the hydra-headed problem.

It would not be out of place to state here that most pharmaceutical manufacturers in the country are only doing charity or being nationalistic. Profit margins are low amidst strangulating policies from government. High interest rates on loans and scarcity of forex are also some of the reasons our pharmaceutical manufacturers are struggling to survive.

In a research on the implications of national tax policy

on local pharmaceutical production in a southwestern state of Nigeria (Obembe et al., 2022), the investigators arrived at

the following germane conclusion: "Stakeholders' perspective of implications of the tax environment on the pharmaceutical sector of Nigeria revealed the unfriendliness of the government policy to local manufacturers. Although the checklist for availability and prices of essential medicines in Osun state, Nigeria revealed that the pre-selected drugs were available in the facilities, the observed prices further affirmed the relative difficulty that is experienced by local manufacturers to compete with imported brands of the same drugs."

According to medical experts, the Nigerian pharmaceutical market has remained stagnant at \$1.5 billion to \$2.5 billion. This is in spite of its encouraging potential to hold 30 to 40 percent share of the African pharma market, with the right policy interventions. The stagnation is indicative of a systemic error or failure on the part of stakeholders, especially government to create and embrace winning and innovative policies that can revitalise the magnificent yet slumbering sector. It is presently estimated that Nigeria hosts about 60 percent of the pharmaceutical production capacity in Africa. It is projected that the sector will grow between \$60 billion to \$70 billion

dollars after COVID-19.

However, with the launch of the National Drug Policy in 2021, stakeholders are optimistic that Nigeria will benefit immensely from the development. The new policy document reflects the fact that more realistic targets have been set and the Nigerian government is optimistic that this new document will bring measurable improvements in many areas of the nation's pharmaceutical landscape. These include but not limited to local production, patronage of locally-produced drugs, effective drug procurement and the rational use of drugs. The policy also seeks to strengthen the health system and the delivery of medicines, vaccines and other health technologies and supplies.

Irrespective of the many roadblocks working against local drug manufacturing in Nigeria, there is a ray of hope. Last year, Emzor Pharmaceuticals said it had reached an API Manufacturing Technology Transfer and Licensing Agreement with India's Mangalam Drugs & Organics Limited to locally manufacture in Nigeria and distribute Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) for the treatment and prevention of malaria.

However, as laudable as the development looks, it is still not enough. The federal government should declare a state of emergency in the pharmaceutical industry by putting in place measures that will stimulate the rapid localisation of all pharmaceutical APIs within the country.

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## Natural remedies to prevent, control asthma

By Mrs Chima Ejimofor

**A**sthma is an illness characterised by episodes of breathing difficulty and the sensation of suffocation, due to the restricted respiratory tract inside the lungs. It also causes a frequent, violent cough, as the body tries to remove the mucus accumulated in the lungs.

The constriction of the respiratory tract is caused by three main factors:

a) The bronchial muscle next to each tube contracts, causing a stifling or spasm and the inability to breathe deeply and easily.

b) Accumulation of mucus in the bronchial tube.

c) Inflammation of the mucous membrane in the bronchial tube.

Or a combination of the three.

### Symptoms

- \* Tightness in the chest
- \* Cough and periodic bouts of breathing difficulty.

In more serious cases, inhalers and extra oxygen are necessary to assist breathing.

### Causes

- \* Respiratory infections
- \* Allergies
- \* Air pollution

Stress or anxiety producing spasms (involuntary contractions) of the muscles that surround the bronchi and not allowing air to enter the lungs.

### Management

- \* Asthma is a medical emergency and should be referred to the hospital during attack.

- \* Oxygen therapy in the hospital
- \* Bronchodilators
- \* Psychological support
- \* Counselling and education

### Suggested treatment

Maintain a relaxed family and work environment because stress and emotional tension play an important role in asthma.

Try to remain calm and stay in well-ventilated areas. Drink a lot of fluids because this helps to loosen mucus in the lungs.

Put hot water in a container and add a tablespoon of **hot aloe vera lotion, with eucalyptus**. Cover your head and the container with a towel, and breathe in the vapours. This should loosen the phlegm and dilate the bronchi.

In addition, you can make a mixture of the hot aloe vera lotion with eucalyptus aloe vera gel and aloe vera extract activator. Rub it on the chest and back (aloe vera eases inflammation and helps the eucalyptus to penetrate, which is a great bronchodilator).

Later, add a little honey to the mix and drink it several times a day, especially during an asthma attack.

Take **bee propolis** for preventing and eliminating any lung infection, which is common with asthma. Since one of the causes of asthma is allergies and Aloe Vera is very anti-allergenic, you should drink it several times during the day when asthma attacks occur.

**Ginkgo biloba** is an excellent plant with the ability to dilate the bronchioles, causing the alveolus of the lungs to open and allow the passage of oxygen. The Chinese have used this plant for many years to combat asthma, especially asthma due to allergies which is most common.

**Relaxation** is very helpful too. It is important for a person who suffers from asthma to learn to relax, as this will help relieve tension when an asthma attack occurs.

Tension increases the severity of the muscle contractions in the chest making it more difficult to breathe. Practicing yoga is a good way to learn to relax oneself.

**Slow, deep breathing** is very beneficial and should be practised along with relaxation exercises.

**Exercise** is very important, especially **swimming**, as it helps to strengthen the muscles of the rib cage and to oxygenate the lungs of children and young people.

You may be allergic to some food. They need to be eliminated from your diet.

Also, if your difficulties with breathing occur more and more frequently, or you have problems breathing, even with an oxygen inhaler



or bronchodilator, **consult your physician.**

It is recommended that an asthmatic person not take aspirin because they might be allergic to it.

The following are nutritional supplements that can help:

Hot Aloe Vera and eucalyptus lotion or **Aloe Heat Lotion**. Rub chest and back several times with this.

**Aloe Vera Gel or Berry Nectar**. 20-30 ml before each meal. This is an anti-inflammatory, pain inhibitor and natural antibiotic.

**Absorbent C**. 6 tablets daily. 2 tablets with each meal. A powerful antioxidant, antihistamine and strengthens the immune system.

**Bee Propolis or Pollen**. 3 - 6 tablets daily. 2 tablets with each meal. A natural and effective antibiotic. It is helpful for preventing

infections.

**Garlic Thyme** 6 tablets daily. 2 tablets with each meal. It strengthens the immune and respiratory systems.

**SuperGreens. 1 sachet daily**. Contains Vitamins A +E. Powerful antioxidant. Helps resist infections, repairs and maintains body tissue (mucous).

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### References:

~Guide to Natural Remedies for Health and Well-Being by Enrique



Garza Gutierrez BSc, C.Ht.

~Recommendations for Nutritional healing by Ijaoba Adebayo

~Aloe Vera, A Gateway to Health and Healing by Dr. Ojo Falana

~Google

### About the Author:

Mrs. Chima Ejimofor is the Lead Partner of Infinite Health Consult, and is available for the purchase of Forever Living Nutritional Supplements, Health Talks and Wellness Seminars. She is based in Lagos, Nigeria. Telephone/WhatsApp: 07033179632, email: infinitehealthconsult@gmail.com

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# Fiemu Nwariaku: The surgeon with the wonder touch

By Ola Aboderin



**Prof. Fiemu Nwariaku**

On 13 April 2022, Prof. Ohwofiemu Ejiogu Nwariaku was announced as the new chairman of the Department of Surgery at the Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine, University of Utah Health, United States. In this position, which takes effect from 1 July, he will oversee all surgical clinical care, research, training programmes, as well as the entire faculty and staff at the University of Utah Health.

To understand the significance of this appointment, one must consider that the University of Utah Health is the only university healthcare system in the state of Utah, and the department that Nwariaku has been appointed to head provides surgery care to adults and children in one of the largest services areas in the country. His service area includes Utah, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Wyoming, which comprises 10 percent of the landmass of the continental United States.

Moreover, the surgery programme at the University of Utah Health, which Nwariaku will be leading, is a nationally ranked academic surgical programme that, in addition to providing expert clinical care, engages in scientific inquiry across a broad range of areas. These include ground-breaking laboratory research, advanced surgical technology, as well as healthcare system innovations.

The question that immediately springs to mind is, why should a Nigerian-born and Unibadan-trained physician be the one to be entrusted with such a prominent and paramount role in the United

States healthcare system? The answer is obvious. Nwariaku is a highly-skilled surgeon and consummate scientist, who is at the forefront of breakthroughs in treating diseases of the endocrine system. Endocrine system diseases are diseases affecting the pancreas, adrenal, parathyroid, and thyroid glands. His roles include evaluating and treating patients with health concerns, ranging from Cushing's syndrome to complex thyroid cancers.

Nwariaku is indeed among the most experienced endocrine surgeons, with specialised expertise in robotic and minimally invasive surgery. He is recognised worldwide for his work in advancing innovative surgical approaches to successfully remove benign and malignant adrenal tumours.

He is presently a professor of Surgery and executive vice-chairman in the Department of Surgery, at the University of Texas, Southwestern Medical Centre (UTSW). He leads a multidisciplinary team of researchers at UT Southwestern who recently discovered a specific protein that plays a role in medullary thyroid cancer, a rare and often fatal disease. The team is presently working to identify therapies to target the protein and inhibit the growth of medullary thyroid cancer cells.

Nwariaku is also associate dean of UTSW's Office for Global Health, which was established in 2010 to direct and develop training and research initiatives with partners around the world. He is equally known for building

clinical programmes at UTSW, across surgical specialties, hospital systems, and affiliates, including the Texas Heart Resources Dallas.

As an educator, Nwariaku has established many academic programmes locally, nationally, and internationally, including a global health curriculum for medical students and an Endocrine Surgery Fellowship. The accomplished scientist has broad research interests and achievements, spanning from inflammation to cancer to the use of technology to improving surgical outcomes. He has published approximately 100 peer-reviewed journal articles, 15 book chapters, and three books. He has lectured on endocrine surgery and global health topics around the world.

### Genius of endocrine surgery

To better appreciate the ground-breaking efforts of Nwariaku at revolutionising treatment of endocrine diseases, it is important to note that endocrine surgery is one of the most complex forms of surgery. The organs that make up the endocrine system are well-protected within the body, tucked behind other vital organs and surrounded by delicate blood vessels. This naturally makes them hard to reach, and this, paired with changes to hormone functions, makes recovery difficult for patients.

Nwariaku has, however, led his team to develop novel and advanced techniques with which they treat patients with endocrine conditions effectively and safely, while also drastically reducing recovery times.

According to him, "With laparoscopic adrenalectomies, we typically need to make only three or four very small incisions to remove adrenal tumours. It's safe for patients to go home from the hospital a day or two after the surgery."

"Also, this type of minimally invasive endocrine surgery offers the benefit of shorter recovery times – days versus weeks. And within a few months of procedures, scars are small and barely noticeable, compared to the large abdominal scars patients had in the past,"

### Flurry of accolades

With such outstanding medical expertise, commitment to patient care and a track-record of excellent leadership at different levels, it is no surprise that Nwariaku's latest appointment has continued to attract massive attention and accolades.

Michael L. Good, CEO of University of Utah Health, who is also the executive dean of the Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine and senior vice president of Health Sciences, said of the appointment: "Dr Nwariaku excels as a leader, surgeon, educator, and scientist. He is nationally and globally recognised for his work,

and we are pleased to welcome him to University of Utah Health. All his leadership experience will help bring an already exceptional department and faculty to even greater heights of national recognition as we achieve excellence in our missions here at the University of Utah."

Similarly, Dan Lundergan, CEO of University of Utah Health Hospitals & Clinics, enthused: "We are thrilled to welcome Dr Nwariaku to University of Utah Health. Faculty are the lifeblood of medical school and the department of surgery, and Dr. Nwariaku focuses intensely on faculty success and development initiatives. This approach fits so well with who we are in the U of U health system, where our people make us all we are."

### Career path and recognitions

Born 57 years ago, Nwariaku studied Medicine at the University of Ibadan, receiving his medical degree in 1987. He had his internship at Baptist Medical Centre, Ogbomosho, Osun State (1987-1988). He did his residency at Eku Baptist Hospital in Eku, Delta State (1988-1991) where he distinguished himself and impressed the visiting American surgeons. He was consequently accepted for a residency programme in Surgery at UTSW, Dallas, Texas, USA (1991-1998). He has been on the faculty at UTSW since then and risen through the ranks to his present leadership positions.

Nwariaku, who also recently completed the Physician Executive Masters in Business Administration (PEMBA) programme of the University of Tennessee, is the current vice-president, American Association of Endocrine Surgeons. He is a member of the Harold C. Simmons Cancer Centre and a subcommittee reviewer for the National Cancer Institute. He also serves on the advisory board of the *African Journal of Medicine & Medical Sciences* and as an external review panelist for the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. He was also president of the Association of Nigerian Physicians in the Americas (ANPA), from 2010 to 2012; and also a former president, Association for Academic Surgery, United States.

He has been variously recognised for his exceptional exploits. These include the Educational Scholarship Award, by the Society of Critical Care (1995); the Medicine Academic Excellence Award, by the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Centre (1996); the Resident Teaching Award by the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Centre (1998); the Malcolm O. Perry Professorship in Surgery (2007); as well as the Australia and New Zealand Chapter of the American College of Surgeons Traveling Fellowship Award, by the American College of Surgeons (2008).

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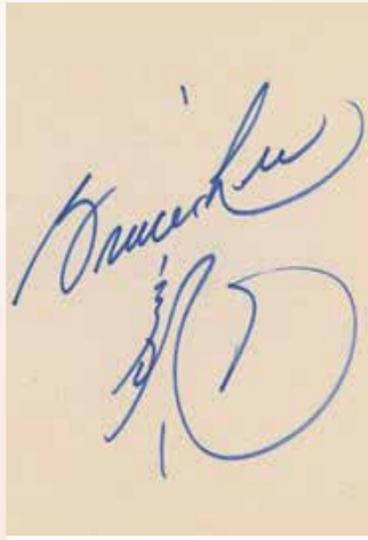
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## Secrets in celebrities' signatures (2)

By Dipo MacJob (Dr Write)



Just as the sound of his name, there is hardly a photo of this man without a bruise on his body. I literally had to dig out the one on display here amidst several from the Internet. He is believed to be the martial arts legend, even decades after his demise, and his legacy continues through the feats of popular names like Jackie Chan.

For those born in the '70s I am very sure that the glamour he radiated and the way he communicated kungfu to the world endeared him to so many across the globe. However, there were markers that typified the Bruce Lee brand, which interestingly, can be explained graphologically. These will be my focus in this edition. What among several things was special about Bruce Lee, which can be explained the "write way"?

As I have often done here, handwriting analysis or graphology is the personality assessment of people from what they have written. Writing is the projection of the mental, physical and emotional energy of an individual. Human beings are the only species that communicate through written symbols, even long after they are gone; and one very unique thing about the handwriting or signature of people is that it is peculiar to them. No matter how much you try to imitate or forge someone's handwriting, there will still be features that will spill the truth somewhere. This is the basis on which handwriting finds relevance in our contemporary world - for example, in deception detection. Another area of relevance is to serve as a tool in personality assessment.

If you have been a regular reader of this column, by now I am sure you will know some basics about the slant of any handwriting sample or signature and the meaning they communicate. For example, if the writing is right slanted, you can tell that the person is expressive, emotional and extroverted. If the writing or signature is fairly or very big in size, it further confirms the showmanship of this individual just like we have in in Bruce Lee's signature. His signature can be categorised as a DE or E+ slant graphologically speaking, which simply speaks to the readiness for expression of the feelings of this fellow.

The style of his signature reveals his flamboyance and his

readiness to play to the gallery. A person with such a signature has a persona he or she wants to put out there in the public. That was who Bruce Lee was.

He was an entertainer who made kungfu appeared like it was a big deal. This we can tell from his signature. Can you remember the characteristic sounds he made anytime he was fighting with an enemy in his movies or displaying kungfu gestures?

The other very notable quality Bruce Lee had was his speed of execution - or should I say the speed with which he displayed his kungfu skills? I gathered that during some movie shoots, the speed with which he punched on set was so fast that some effects could not be captured adequately by the technology in the movie industry at that time. Looking at his signature, one can see a rhythm and what appears to be a cursive pattern. This is an indicator of speed of thought. It shows intelligence and the ability to interpret things very fast. That fully describes Bruce Lee in his day. He was simply fast and furious, if I may add.



In our next edition, we shall examine another celebrity, and you don't want to miss it.

Always remember, "if you must get it right, you must do it the WRITE way"



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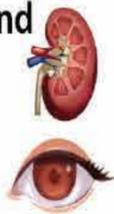
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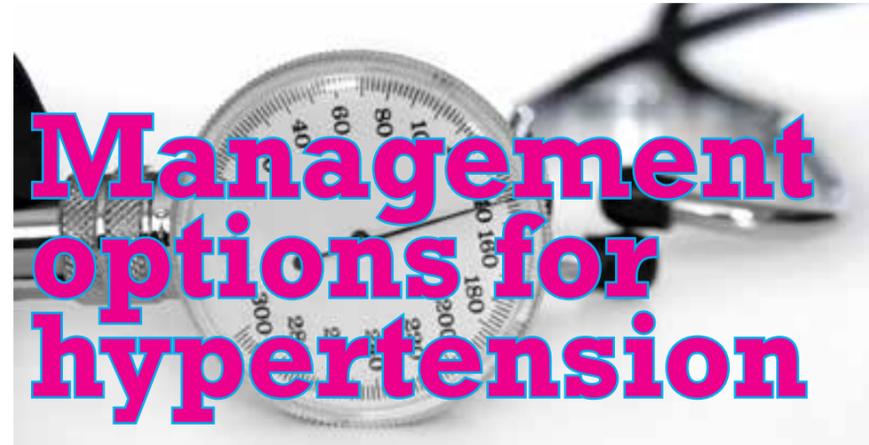
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*The Heart Outcomes Prevention Evaluation Study Investigators. Effects of an angiotensin-converting-enzyme inhibitor, Ramipril, on death from cardiovascular causes, myocardial infarction and stroke in high-risk patients. New Engl J Med 2000;342: 145-153*



**Celebrating 43 Years of Uninterrupted Monthly Publication (1979-2022)**



**H**ypertension, also known as high blood pressure, is a condition in which the blood vessels have a persistently raised pressure. It is a major public health challenge, with increasing prevalence worldwide.

Hypertension is also considered to be the leading cardiovascular risk factor for morbidity and mortality and the largest contributor to the global burden of disease. The disease is wreaking a major havoc on the human race, such that, it has been attributed to be the major cause of premature death worldwide. The World Health Organisation (WHO) calls hypertension a "silent killer" because most people who have it are not aware, yet it kills faster than most other conditions.

Hypertension is an abnormal state of circulatory function, which in the long term, can lead to organ damage and severe morbidity. It is accepted that an individual's blood pressure level are influenced by genetic and non-genetic factors. The important non-genetic factors are diet (e.g. levels of sodium, potassium and fat consumption of food), alcohol consumption, lack of physical exercise, psychosocial,

socio-economic and behavioural.

Medical bodies and practitioners have unanimously defined hypertension as blood pressure above 140/90, and it is considered severe if the pressure is above 180/120. The WHO defines hypertension as a condition in which the force of the blood against the artery walls is too high and this is why the disease is also known as high blood pressure (HBP). Simply put, high blood pressure occurs when blood pressure increases to unhealthy levels. Blood pressure is the force exerted by circulating blood against the walls of the body's arteries, which are the major blood vessels in the body.

President of the Nigerian Cardiac Society, Dr Okechukwu Ogah, in an interview with *Pharmanews*, said hypertension occurs when blood pressure is sustainably elevated above the normal level for an individual's age; for instance, in adults, a BP greater than 140/90mmHg is considered to be high.

The WHO also said an estimated 1.13 billion people worldwide have hypertension, adding that about two-thirds of the people with hypertension are living in low

and middle-income countries. However, the prevalence of hypertension varies across the WHO regions and country income. For instance, in 2015, one in four men and one in five women had hypertension but fewer than one in five people with hypertension have the disease under control.

#### Prevalence in Nigeria

According to WHO, in 2008, approximately 40 percent of adults, aged 25 years and older worldwide had hypertension, with Africa having the highest which stood at 46 percent and the America's lowest with 35 percent prevalence. The estimated prevalence of hypertension in Nigeria in 2008 was 29.5 percent.

Experts have said the prevalence of hypertension in Nigeria now is about 38.1 per cent, which means about 76.2 million out of an average population of 200 million people in Nigeria have hypertension.

The Executive Director, Nigerian Heart Foundation (NHF), Dr Kingsley Kola Akinroye, for instance, told journalists on the occasion of World Hypertension Day held on 17 May, 2021, that almost one in three adults in Nigeria, which is about 33.3 per cent has hypertension; while only one third of this figure, which is about 23 million, are on treatment. This is also as a survey by the Foundation showed that the awareness of hypertension is more in the urban than rural areas and more amongst women than men.

The Executive Director of NHF said, "Since the onset of COVID-19 in Nigeria, we have evidence that more people with heart disease have been affected or died from the pandemic than any other illness. Also, we are aware that

the cost of treatment with anti-hypertensive drugs has gone up since the onset of COVID-19".

Akinroye submitted that the ideal blood pressure is 120/80 mmHg but, in Nigeria, normal blood pressure is 140/90 mmHg, noting that any figure higher than 140 mmHg for systolic blood pressure or 90 mmHg for diastolic blood pressure is regarded as hypertension."

In a statement issued on 16 May 2021 and signed by its President, Prof. Ayodele Omotosho, and Secretary, Kolawole Wahab, the Nigerian Hypertension Society (NHS) lamented the high rate of persons suffering from hypertension in the country. They warned against the consequences of the development on the nation's economy, if left uncontrolled, adding that the disease was still the number one cause of avoidable death worldwide.

A Consultant Physician and Cardiologist, Department of Medicine, University of Ibadan/University College Hospital Ibadan, Dr Okechukwu Ogah, told *Pharmanews* in an interview that hypertension is the commonest cardiovascular risk factor in Nigeria. According to him, about 3 to 4 per 10 adults in Nigeria have high blood pressure. He added that only a third of this are aware, and that a third of those aware are on treatment and of those on treatment, a third are controlled.

In view of the rise in the incidence of hypertension in Nigeria, many groups are coming up with the aim of putting measures in place to reduce the menace of the disease in Nigeria. For instance, Resolve to Save Lives, a not-for-profit organisation partnering with countries, communities and organisations to prevent 100

continued on page 13

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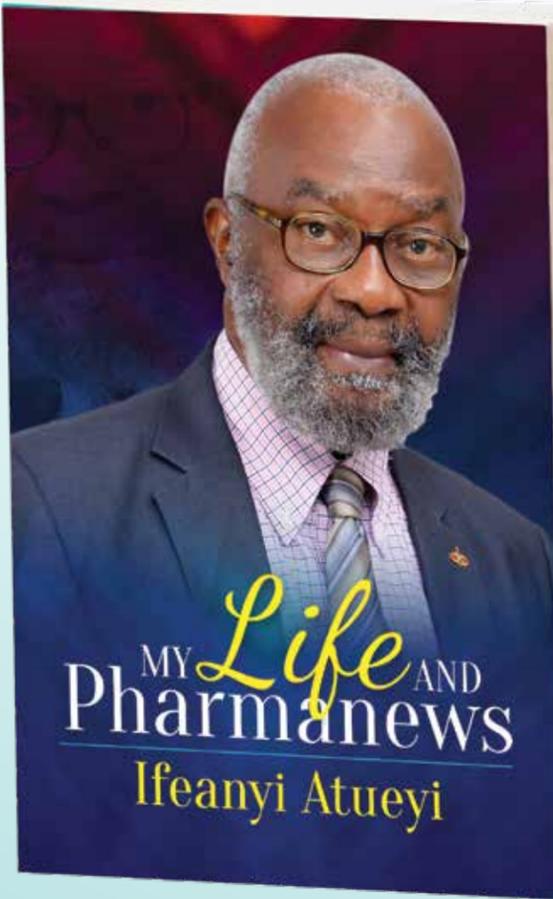
## OLD STUDENTS IN A NEW SCHOOL (3)

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

With the stage set for a full-blown civil war, all Igbos from around the country were advised to return home, as it was obvious that they would be in serious danger should they still be within Nigeria by the time the war would break out. The palpable tension around the country was equally felt within the enclosures of the university. On May 30th, the then Vice Chancellor, Prof. Hezekiah Oluwasanmi, a compassionate man, quickly called a meeting to address the Igbo students. He told us that he could not guarantee our safety, even within the campus. Consequently, he arranged for a bus to convey us back to the east. It was agreed that we should leave Ibadan the next day, 31<sup>st</sup> May.

The arrangement by the VC was not much of a problem for the junior students, but for those of us in final year, especially those of us who were simply taking advantage of the second chance to finally get our degree, this was a major dilemma. Should we risk our lives or should we let the elusive degree slip from our reach again? Well, eventually, we decided that our lives were more precious. So we agreed to go home.

Fortunately, Azuike had a personal car, a red Ford Consul Cosair. So, very early



on that 31st, I, together with Dick Nwoke and a few others joined Azuike in the car, while we loaded our belongings on the bus hired for us which other students occupied. Some other students also joined Eugene Okonkwo and Bona Obiorah

who, like Azuike, had personal cars. Together, we all headed back home, while wondering what the future held for the country and if we would ever have a chance to get the B.Pharm again.

### Divine Interventions

As we journeyed along the way, however, something happened that turned the situation in our favour. It was a twist that could only be explained as God simply demonstrating the supremacy of His will over the permutations of fate and the

needless apprehensions of man.

We got a report that some final year students on the bus had planned to take the risk of returning to Ibadan to take their exams. In fact, we heard that they had been complaining

all through the journey that they were going to be the losers if they returned home because, unlike those of us who already had a diploma, they only had their secondary school certificates to present in Biafra. This, they reasoned, would only put them in a disadvantaged position.

That very report proved to be the jolting brainwave that my friends and I badly needed; for it was then it occurred to us that running back home, just when we were about to take our final exams, was not a wise decision. We reasoned among ourselves that if the other students could take the risk to go back, why couldn't we do same and get this B.Pharm once and for all?

And so it happened that we resolved to return to Ibadan. But some of us needed to retrieve our luggage from the bus. So, we headed to Asaba, where the bus would finally stop. However, when the bus arrived and we tried to retrieve our belongings, the bus conductor resisted, because he considered it foolish and dangerous for us to return to Ibadan at that time. In my desperation, I had to meet a soldier on duty, with a name tag of Okwechime, to explain my situation and he promptly came to my rescue. He slapped the conductor and ordered him to release my luggage immediately.

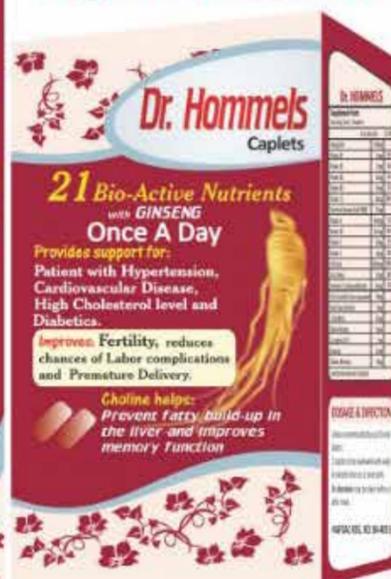
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# Management options for hypertension

continued from page 11

million deaths from cardiovascular disease and make the world safer from epidemics, has since been making frantic efforts to educate people on how to avoid or manage hypertension.

While lamenting surge of the disease in the country, the Nigeria Country Representative of Resolve to Save Lives, Dr Emmanuel Agogo said, "The number of people with high blood pressure is growing in Nigeria and is a major risk factor for heart disease if left unchecked. High blood pressure endangers the physical health and well-being of our citizens. We have a new programme and in this new programme, we are providing critical diagnosis, care, and treatment needed to reduce high blood pressure and save lives."

"If we want to significantly reduce heart disease, strokes, and heart attacks, we must tackle major risk factors, starting with hypertension," says Dr Kufor Osi, Technical Officer, Cardiovascular Health, of Resolve to Save Lives. "Addressing high blood pressure begins where most people get their care, which is at the primary health care level."

The United Nations Organisation (UNO) is not unaware of the prevalence of hypertension globally. In fact, in view of the lethal nature of the disease, it has since 2010 set a global target for non-communicable diseases, to reduce the prevalence of hypertension by 25 percent by 2025. But according to experts, how far and how well the world, especially the African continent and Nigeria in particular will achieve this goal in less than 45 months from the time of this report, remains a tall order.

## Classification of hypertension

The body's systolic pressure (the top number) is the pressure of the blood in the arteries when one's heart contracts or beats. The diastolic pressure (the bottom number) is the pressure of the blood in the arteries between beats, when the heart relaxes.

For the purpose of guidelines, the Nigerian Hypertension Society in 1996 made a combined recommendation to healthcare providers and the recommendation was adopted at the Consensus Meeting sponsored by the Nigerian Heartcare Foundation. The recommendations, according to experts have been passing validation test since.

From the recommendations, the blood pressure in the adult Nigerian from age 15 and above is classified as follows:

**Normal:** when the Systolic (MM Hg) is 140 and Diastolic (mm Hg) is 90, it is considered to be normal.

**Borderline:** when the Systolic (MM Hg) is 140 – 159 and Diastolic (mm Hg) is 90 – 94, it is considered to be Borderline. But anything above this figure will usher in hypertension. According to the findings, hypertension has stages which are:

**Stage 1 (Mild):** when the Systolic (MM Hg) is 170 – 186 and Diastolic (mm Hg) is 95 – 104, it is considered to be stage 1 or mild hypertension.

**Stage 2 (Moderate):** when the Systolic (MM Hg) is 170 – 186 and Diastolic (mm Hg) is 105 – 119, it is considered to be stage 2 or moderate hypertension.

**Stage 3 (Severe):** when the Systolic (MM Hg) is greater than or equal to 190 and the Diastolic (mm Hg) is greater than or equal to 120, it is considered to be severe hypertension. It was in view their findings that the Society defines hypertension in adults (age 15 years and above) as a persistently elevated systolic blood pressure of /or more than 160 mm Hg and/ or



diastolic pressure equal to or more than 95 mm Hg.

## Causes and types of hypertension

It is pertinent to state that

the major cause of hypertension till date is elusive. Dr Ogah noted that the cause of over 90 percent of hypertension cases remains unknown, adding that

kidney disease may be a factor. Nonetheless, researchers have managed to identify two probable types of hypertension and each type has a different cause.

## Primary hypertension:

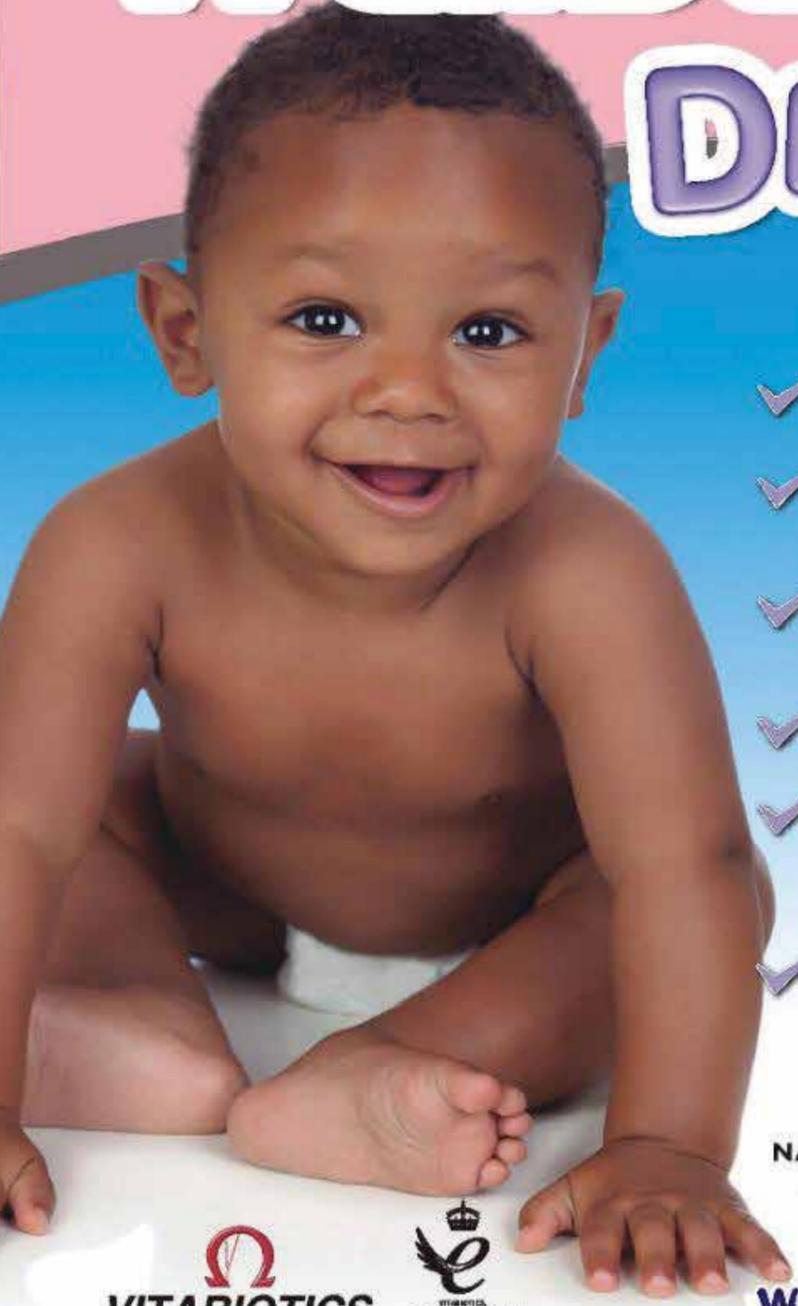
Primary hypertension develops over time with no identifiable cause. This is also known as essential hypertension. Most people have this type of high blood pressure. Researchers are still unclear what mechanisms cause blood pressure to slowly increase. They however think that a combination of factors may play a role.

These factors include: Genes: Some people are genetically predisposed to hypertension. This may be from gene mutations or genetic abnormalities inherited from your parents. Physical changes: If something in your body changes, you may begin to experiencing issues throughout your body. High blood pressure may be one of those issues. For example, it is thought that changes in your kidney function due to aging may upset the body's natural balance of salts and fluid. This change may cause your body's blood pressure to increase.

continued on page 15

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## Management options for hypertension

continued from page 13

**Environment:** Over time, unhealthy lifestyle choices like lack of physical activity and poor diet can take their toll on your body. Lifestyle choices can lead to weight problems. Being overweight or obese can increase your risk for hypertension.

**Secondary hypertension:** Secondary hypertension often occurs quickly and can become more severe than primary hypertension. Several conditions that may cause secondary hypertension include kidney disease, obstructive sleep apnoea, congenital heart defects, problems with your thyroid, side-effects of medications, use of illegal drugs, adrenal gland problems and certain endocrine tumours

### Symptoms of hypertension

Most people with hypertension are unaware of the problem because it may have no warning signs or symptoms. For this reason, it is essential that blood pressure is measured regularly. When symptoms do occur, they can include early morning headaches, nosebleeds, irregular heart rhythms, vision changes, and buzzing in the ears. Severe hypertension can cause fatigue, nausea, vomiting, confusion, anxiety, chest pain, and muscle tremors.

According to the *American Family Physician*, some signs and symptoms that may suggest that a patient's high blood pressure is caused by secondary hypertension include central obesity (excess fat around the stomach), cold or heat sensitivity, daytime sleepiness, flushing (skin turning red and hot), gasping during sleep, headaches, heart murmur, large pad of fat on the back between the shoulders, loss of consciousness, low



potassium levels in your blood, poor kidney function, slow or fast heart rate, snoring, stretch marks, and sweating.

However, the only way to detect hypertension is to have a health professional measure blood pressure. Having blood pressure measured is quick and painless. Although individuals can measure their own blood pressure using automated devices, an evaluation by a health professional is important for assessment of risk and associated conditions.

### Detection, measurement and diagnosis of hypertension

Hypertension control begins with detection and requires continued surveillance. Health care professionals are strongly advised to measure blood pressure at each patient visit. According to the Nigerian Hypertension Society,

hypertension should not be diagnosed on the basis of a single measurement. Initial elevated reading should be confirmed on at least two subsequent visits during one to several weeks (unless SBP is 190 mm Hg or greater and/or DBP is 120 mm Hg or greater) when immediate treatment is mandatory. Blood pressure should be measured in such a manner that values obtained are representative of patients' usual levels. The society recommended the following procedure:

"The patient should be seated with arm bared, supported, and at heart level. He should not have smoked or ingested caffeine within 30 minutes of the measurement. Measurement should begin after at least five minutes of rest. The appropriate cuff size must be used to ensure an accurate measurement. The bladder should nearly or

completely encircle the upper arm. Measurement should be taken with a mercury sphygmomanometer, or a recently calibrated aneroid manometer or electronic device, with the arm at heart base level. Both SBP and DBP as well as pulse rate should be recorded.

"The disappearance of Korotkoff's sound (phase v) should be used for the diastolic reading. Two or more readings separated by an interval of two minutes should be averaged. If the first two readings differ by more than 10 mm Hg, additional readings should be obtained. The blood pressure and pulse rate should also be taken in the standing position with the arm held horizontally at the level of the base of the heart. Patients should be adequately educated on the meaning of their blood pressure reading and advised on the need for periodic re-measurement."

### Complications arising from hypertension

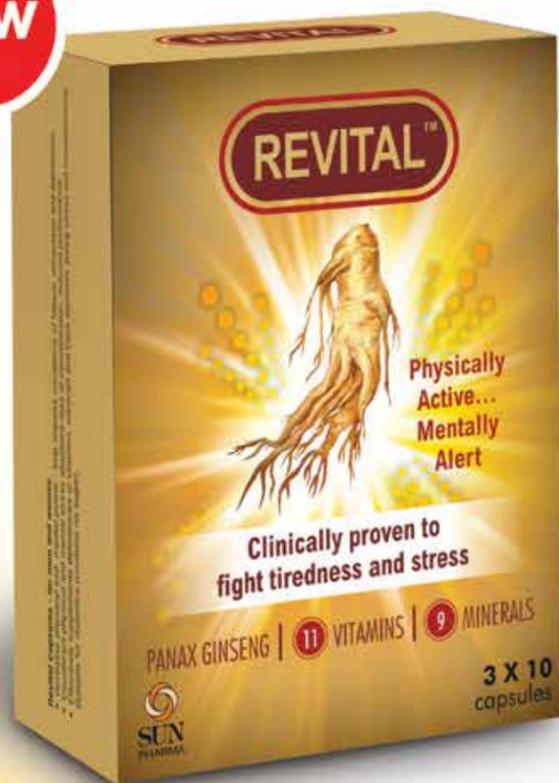
Among other complications, hypertension can cause serious damage to the heart. Excessive pressure can harden arteries, decreasing the flow of blood and oxygen to the heart. This elevated pressure and reduced blood flow can cause chest pain, also called angina, which is a heart attack, that occurs when the blood supply to the heart is blocked and heart muscle cells die from lack of oxygen. The longer the blood flow is blocked, the greater the damage to the heart.

Elevated pressure and reduced blood flow can also cause heart failure, which occurs when the heart cannot pump enough blood and oxygen to other vital body organs. It can also cause irregular heart beat which can lead to a sudden death. Hypertension

continued on page 17

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# Stakeholders charge incoming PCN registrar on continuity

*continued from page 1*

End Of Tenure Ceremony," jointly organised by the technical groups in the pharma industry to celebrate Mohammed.

Speaking with *Pharmanews*, Prince Adelusi-Adeluyi commended Mohammed for a successful tenure, while calling on Ahmed to consolidate this.

He said, "Mohammed has done well. When he came in as registrar of PCN, the pharmaceutical narrative was negative; but he came there, he saw and conquered. He has developed the PCN through the grace of God. You don't get to an important position by wishful thinking. Mohammed has built bridge of goodwill, friendship and understanding at PCN, very cordial and cheerful. He pursued his goal vigorously. I hope and I know that his successor will follow the same good works that Mohammed has done."

Also speaking with *Pharmanews* in a short interview, Dr (Mrs) Awosika, who was the event's mother-of-the-day, pointed out that the position of the registrar is about serving the people by promoting the rules guiding the practice of Pharmacy, stating that Mohammed has done well, and should be emulated by Ahmed.

According to Awosika, "Mohammed has demonstrated capacity to serve the industry. He was straightforward. He doesn't play any ambiguity. He was tactful, very humble and loyal and very political in his thinking; he knows how to play the game.

"Pharmacy practice in Nigeria could be better but if PCN is not there for us, it would have been a big problem; but PCN has been there for us. PCN has been able to guide the industry. We are on the right path. The incoming registrar should just march on with the good works his predecessor has already put in place. You don't get to the top by climbing the first step, you get to the top by climbing through the steps; so we are going up."

In his remarks, Mr Ayebae described Mohammed as a professional to the core, adding that the outgoing registrar is a good servant-leader who has added to the pharmacy profession and to Nigeria as a whole. "We are proud of him", he said.

Ayebae further charged Ahmed to avoid anything that could destabilise the profession.

He said, "I am very definite that Mohammed's regime created stability and established certain rules of engagement within the pharmacy profession. The ethics of the profession have now been elevated to the point where young pharmacists can just pick a book and read to know what they are supposed to do. So, all that Ahmed Babashehu needs to do is to ensure continuity."

Continuing, Ayebae said: "Whether it is tweaking or modernising the curriculum of pharmacists in academia, or any other thing you want to talk about, Mohammed has done well. He has established some sound foundations and footnotes. All Ahmed has to do is to build on what Mohammed has done



**L-R: Chairman, PCN, Professor A. T. Mora; outgoing Registrar, PCN, Pharm. (Dr) N.A.E Mohammed; and the incoming Registrar, Babashehu Ahmed, at the event.**



**Dignitaries posing with the newly launched biography of the outgoing PCN registrar Mohammed at the event.**

and maintain continuity without disrupting the status quo.

"Status quo is good. He should not say, 'Oh as a new leader, let me disrupt and ruffle a few things; that is not necessary for now, because we are already in a country that is full of challenges. So, confusion should not be thrown into the profession, in the name of proving a point. There is no point to prove here for now. Instead, he should be as levelheaded as Mohammed and continue in his stead, and the profession will remember him for his contributions."

The Fidson boss, however, lamented the current state of the pharmaceutical sector, saying the industry is in a precarious state. He said, "The situation that local pharmaceutical companies find themselves now is precarious because when the economy is struggling, one of the things that suffer is the health industry, and that is because health is the last need of human being. Hunger is the first thing human beings want to conquer before every other thing will follow. This is why the industry is currently struggling.

"There is no foreign exchange to import Active Pharmaceutical

Ingredients generally. Those that are importing important drugs also hardly get the forex they require to do so. The industry is suffering and that is why the prices of pharmaceutical products are rising and healthcare is going out of the reach of ordinary man. This of course makes the pharmaceutical companies to suffer. The pharmaceutical industry is not having the best of time now."

Also charging the incoming registrar, Pharm. Akintayo pointed out that, while Mohammed has achieved so much in his tenure, there are some grey areas that Ahmed needs to work on to reposition the PCN.

In his words, "One of the areas Mohammed has been most outstanding in his tenure is the fact that pharmacy jurisprudence has developed very greatly under his stewardship. PCN won more than 20 strategic court cases, especially in the areas of specific appropriation of the laws peculiar to PCN. Mohammed achieved a lot and made a lot of impact in the profession. And that is why it is important that his successor should consolidate those achievements.

I have no doubt that Ahmed has the capacity to excel like his predecessor because they have worked together before.

"There are still many grey areas to work on. For instance, in the area of monitoring and control, we need to still do a lot more. We must sustain what Mohammed has started. We must widen the scope now. We must go after the big culprits that are bringing all sorts of nonsense into the country, all in the name of importing drugs.

"The incoming registrar should work with the best hands. In the area of pharmacy education, he must do more like never before so that we can raise a new and better generation of pharmacists. There are many things that are still need to be done, but I must say that the template is already there for the incoming registrar."

On his part, Sir Akhimien, commended Mohammed for his successful tenure, describing him as a man of integrity who was also committed to his work. He added that he had no doubt that the incoming registrar, just like Mohammed, will also add value to the profession.

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# Management options for hypertension

continued from page 15

can burst or block arteries that supply blood and oxygen to the brain, thereby causing a stroke. In addition, hypertension can cause kidney damage, leading to kidney failure.

## Hypertension is preventable

According to WHO, hypertension is preventable. The organisation noted that the measures to prevent the deadly disease include reduction in salt intake to less than 5g daily, eat fruits and vegetable regularly, avoid saturated fats and trans fat, avoid tobacco, reduce alcohol, be physically active every day.

While speaking on ways to prevent hypertension, Ogah said, "To help manage your blood pressure, you should limit the amount of sodium (salt) that you eat and increase the amount of potassium in your diet. Others include getting regular exercise, getting at a healthy weight, limiting alcohol consumption, not smoking, managing stress, eating more fruit and vegetables, being physically active on a regular basis, limiting the intake of foods high in saturated fats and eliminating/reducing trans fats in diet.

"If you have risk factors for hypertension, you can take steps now to lower your risk for the condition and its complications. Add healthy foods to your diet. Adjust how you think of the average dinner plate. Instead of having meat and three sides, create a dish that uses meat as a condiment. In other words, instead of eating a steak with a side salad, eat a bigger salad and top it with a smaller portion of steak.

"Also, you need to cut sugar. Try to incorporate fewer sugar-sweetened foods, including flavoured yogurts, cereals, and sodas. Packaged foods hide unnecessary sugar, so be sure to read labels. Then you need to set weight loss goals. Instead of an arbitrary goal to 'lose weight', talk with your doctor about a healthy weight for you. Then decide on what physical activity you can start in order to reach that goal. If exercising five nights a week is too hard to work into your schedule, aim for one more night than what you're doing right now. When that fits comfortably into your schedule, add another night."

According to physicians, the best way to prevent complications arising from hypertension is to catch the condition early. They advise that patients have to keep a log of their blood pressure readings and take it to doctor on regular doctor appointments as this can help the doctor to see any possible problems before the condition advances.

## Treatment for hypertension

According to Dr Kimberly Holland, a health expert with a US based health resource centre, Healthline, a number of factors will help a doctor determine the best treatment option for every patient. These factors include which type of hypertension the patient has and the causes that have been identified. For instance, if a doctor diagnoses a patient with primary hypertension, lifestyle changes may help reduce high blood pressure. If lifestyle changes alone are not enough, or not effective, the doctor may prescribe medications.

"If your doctor discovers an underlying issue causing your hypertension, that is, secondary hypertension, treatment will focus on that other condition. For example, if a medicine you've started taking is causing increased blood pressure, your doctor will try



other medicines that don't have this side effect.

"Sometimes, hypertension is persistent despite treatment for the underlying cause. In this case, your doctor may work with you to develop lifestyle changes and prescribe medications to help reduce your blood pressure. Treatment plans for hypertension often evolve. What worked at first may become less useful over time. Your doctor will continue to work with you to refine your treatment," Kimberly said.

## Medications for hypertension

From observation and experience, physicians said hypertension patients go through a trial-and-error phase when it comes to medications; hence a patient may try different medicines until he or she finds one or a combination of medications that work for him or her. Some of the medications used to treat hypertension include:

**Calcium channel blockers:** Calcium channel blockers block some of the calcium from entering the cardiac muscles of your heart. This leads to less forceful heartbeats and a lower blood pressure. These medicines also work in the blood vessels, causing them to relax and further lowering blood pressure.

**Beta-blockers:** These medications make the heart beat slower and with less force. They reduce the amount of blood pumped through your arteries with each beat, which lowers blood pressure. They also block certain hormones in your body that can raise your blood pressure.

**ACE inhibitors:** Angiotensin is a chemical that causes blood vessels and artery walls to tighten and narrow. ACE (angiotensin converting enzyme) inhibitors prevent the body from producing as much of this chemical. This helps blood vessels relax and reduces blood pressure.

**Angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs):** although some medicines like ACE inhibitors aim to stop the creation of angiotensin, ARBs block angiotensin from binding with receptors. Without the chemical, blood vessels will not tighten. That helps relax vessels and lower blood pressure.

**Diuretics:** High sodium levels and excess fluid in your body can increase blood pressure. Diuretics, also called water pills, help your kidneys remove excess sodium from your body. As the sodium leaves, extra fluid in your bloodstream moves into your urine, which helps lower your blood pressure.

**Alpha-2 agonists:** These change the nerve impulses that cause blood vessels to tighten. This helps blood vessels to relax, which reduces blood pressure.

## Hypertension during pregnancy

According to WHO, hypertensive disorders of pregnancy are an important cause

of severe morbidity, long-term disability and death among both pregnant women and their babies, and account for approximately 14 percent of all maternal deaths worldwide. Improving care for women around the time of childbirth is a necessary step towards achievement of the health targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In the year 2020, WHO published a recommendation for all healthcare providers and those directly providing healthcare to pregnant women and their newborns, on how to take care of pregnant women with hypertension. One of the recommendations is that "women with severe hypertension during pregnancy should receive treatment with antihypertensive drugs (strong recommendation, very low certainty evidence)".

"The choice and route of administration of an antihypertensive drug for severe hypertension during pregnancy, in preference to others, should be based primarily on the prescribing clinician's experience with that particular drug, its cost and local availability (conditional recommendation, very low certainty evidence)", WHO also recommended.

Dr Kimberly reiterated that women with high blood pressure are more likely to develop complications but it is also possible that women with hypertension can deliver healthy babies despite having hypertension. It should however be noted that it can be dangerous to both mother and baby if the condition is not monitored closely and managed during the pregnancy.

"Pregnant women with hypertension may experience decreased kidney function. Babies born to mothers with hypertension may have a low birth weight or be born prematurely. Some women may develop hypertension during their pregnancies. Several types of high blood pressure problems can develop. The condition often reverses itself once the baby is born. Developing hypertension during pregnancy may increase your risk for developing hypertension later in life", Kimberly said.

## Preeclampsia and hypertension

The American Pregnancy, a body that cares for pregnant women in America, said preeclampsia happens when a woman who previously had normal blood pressure, suddenly develops high blood pressure and protein in her urine or other problems after 20 weeks of pregnancy.

In some cases, pregnant women with hypertension may develop preeclampsia during their pregnancy. This condition of increased blood pressure can cause kidney and other organ complications. This can also result in problems with liver function, fluid in the lungs, or visual problems. As this condition worsens, risks increase for the mother and

baby. Preeclampsia can lead to eclampsia, which causes seizures.

Complications for the baby include low birth weight, early birth, and stillbirth. Currently, according to the American Pregnancy, there is no sure way to prevent preeclampsia, and the only way to treat the condition is to deliver the baby. Hence patient with this disease during pregnancy should be under a doctor's close watch for complications.

Other conditions associated with hypertension during pregnancy include **gestational hypertension** which is high blood pressure that begins after 20 weeks of pregnancy without problems in the kidneys or other organs. Some women with gestational hypertension may develop preeclampsia. **Chronic hypertension** on the other hand is high blood pressure that was present before pregnancy or that occurs before 20 weeks of pregnancy. High blood pressure that continues more than three months after a pregnancy is also called chronic hypertension. **Chronic hypertension with superimposed preeclampsia** occurs in women diagnosed with chronic high blood pressure before pregnancy, who then develop worsening high blood pressure and protein in the urine or other health complications during pregnancy.

## Medication and prevent of preeclampsia

Physicians have said the best clinical evidence for prevention of preeclampsia is the use of low-dose aspirin but it is important that patient talk with doctors before taking any medications, vitamins or supplements to make sure it is safe. It is also a good idea to be as healthy as possible before getting pregnant. It is also good to visit a health provider about managing any conditions that increase the risk of preeclampsia.

## Age consideration and medication for hypertension

According to the UK National Health Service (NHS), several types of medicine can be used to help control high blood pressure at various age levels. For instance, a patient under 55 years of age will usually be offered an ACE inhibitor or an angiotensin-2 receptor blocker (ARB). A patient aged 55 or older and of African or Caribbean origin will usually be offered a calcium channel blocker.

In older patients, according to the UK NHS, the target blood pressure reading for the over-80s is below 150/90 mmHg when it is measured in the clinic or surgery, and below 145/85 mmHg for home readings. While there are definite benefits from taking medicines to reduce blood pressure in a patient under the age of 80, it is less clear it is useful if the patient is over 80.

"It's now thought that if you reach 80 while you're taking medicine for high blood pressure, it's fine to continue treatment provided it's still helping you and is not causing side effects. If you're diagnosed with high blood pressure and you're aged over 80, your doctor will also consider your other health risk factors when deciding whether to give you treatment for the high blood pressure", the UK NHS said.

**Report compiled by Ranmilowo Ojalumo with additional report from The Guardian, Heart Organisation, The American Pregnancy, World Health League, World Hypertension League, Healthline, Nigerian Hypertension Society, Nigerian Cardiac Society, The NHS UK, The American Family Physician, Mayo Clinic and the Family Doctor.**

# World Hypertension Day: New Heights partners LASG on free screening, counselling

By Peter Ogbonna

As part of its corporate social responsibility of promoting quality healthcare among Nigerians, New Heights Pharmaceuticals limited, a fast growing pharmaceutical company and the official partner of Omron blood pressure check in Nigeria, has collaborated with the Lagos State Government (LASG) to mark this year's World Hypertension Day at an event held at the Lagos State Secretariat, Alausa, Ikeja.

Speaking on the theme of the event, "Measure Your Blood Pressure Accurately, Control It and Live Longer", the Deputy Director, Disease Control at the Lagos State Ministry of Health, Dr Abimbola Osinowo said World Hypertension Day is a day set aside annually by the World Health Organisation to draw attention to the dangers of hypertension, its causes and its silent ravages.

Osinowo, who described hypertension as a silent killer, emphasised that because of the often asymptomatic nature of the condition, a lot of people may not know that they have it until they visit the hospital for some totally different reasons.

He therefore called on Nigerians to imbibe the habit of regular health check-up, so as to know their blood pressure and take adequate precautions to prevent complications of poorly managed hypertensive cases.

"Hypertension is a disease that occurs when the blood pressure is above 140/90 and when this happens, one has to start conducting the test or measurement more regularly. So, the day is to commemorate World Hypertension Day, and we are collaborating with New Heights Pharmaceutical Limited to conduct free screening for blood pressure,



L-R: Mrs Kuburat Ayinde, senior health education officer, Lagos State Ministry of Health; Mrs Taiwo Oladitan, product manager, New Heights Pharma Ltd; Dr Abimbola Osinowo, deputy director/Hypertension & Diabetes coordinator, Lagos State Ministry of Health; and Mr Ebenezer Olayinka, marketing manager, New Heights Pharma Ltd, during the recent World Hypertension Day free screening, organised by New Heights Pharmaceuticals Ltd, in collaboration with Lagos State Government.

blood sugar and BMI (Body Mass Index) for Lagos State Government staff," she said.

While emphasising that regular check for hypertension is necessary to prevent untimely death, Osinowo said, "Once you discover that your body is giving you some signs, please it is advised that you go for a general check-up to ascertain the cause and immediately go for the treatment. Hypertension and diabetes can be managed by regular check-up; use the prescribed drugs, observe a regular body exercise and rest your body

when it is necessary".

She commended New Heights for partnering with the state government and called on other organisations to emulate the company in promoting good health among residents of the state.

Also speaking at the event, the Product Manager of New Heights, Mrs Taiwo Oladitan, said the company was happy to partner with the Lagos State Government to create awareness about hypertension and drive initiatives aiming at stemming the tide of the disease through regular blood pressure check.

Oladitan said, "We are the official business partner of Omron in Nigeria and today we are celebrating World Hypertension Day 2022, in collaboration with the Lagos State Ministry of Health, and we are out to screen the Lagos State staff so that we can create more awareness in them and for them to understand and know the need for home monitoring of hypertension and regular check.

"Just like the theme of this year's World Hypertension Day, 'Measure Your Blood Pressure Accurately, Control It and Live Longer', this year's event is powered by Omron pressure monitors. Today, we are screening everyone with Omron blood pressure monitor and also to educate them on how to operate the blood

pressure monitor in their homes and the need for them to have it and do a regular check-up; as well as how responsible you can be in supporting your healthcare professionals with proper management of hypertension by reducing the incident of stroke and sudden death."

She said Omron blood pressure check has been clinically validated to give accurate check results and expressed the commitment of New Heights Pharmaceuticals to continue to make the product available and affordable.

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Reference:  
1. Zolpidem: An Update of its Pharmacology, Therapeutic Efficacy and Tolerability in the Treatment of Insomnia Kristin J. Holm and Karen L. Goa

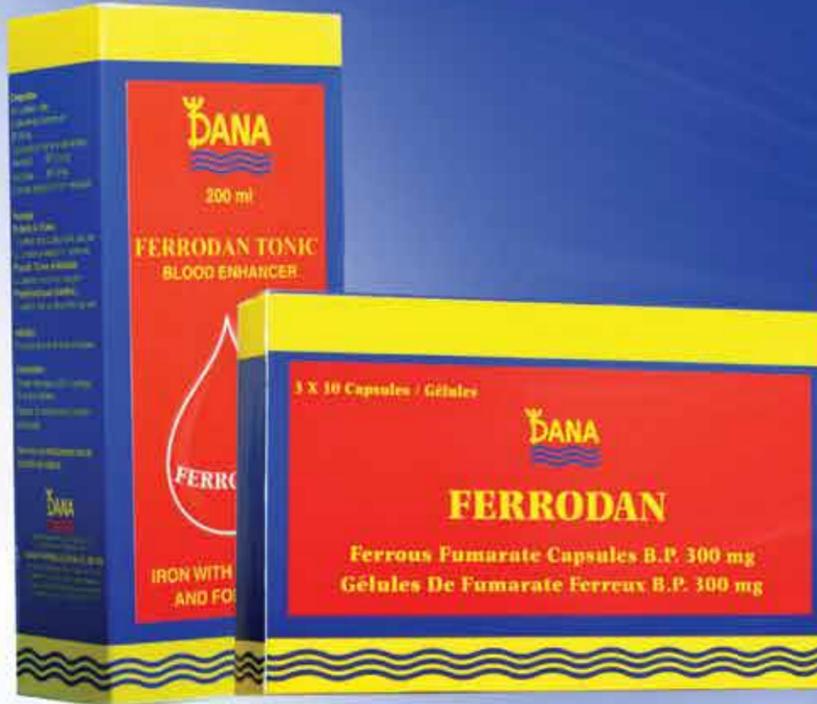
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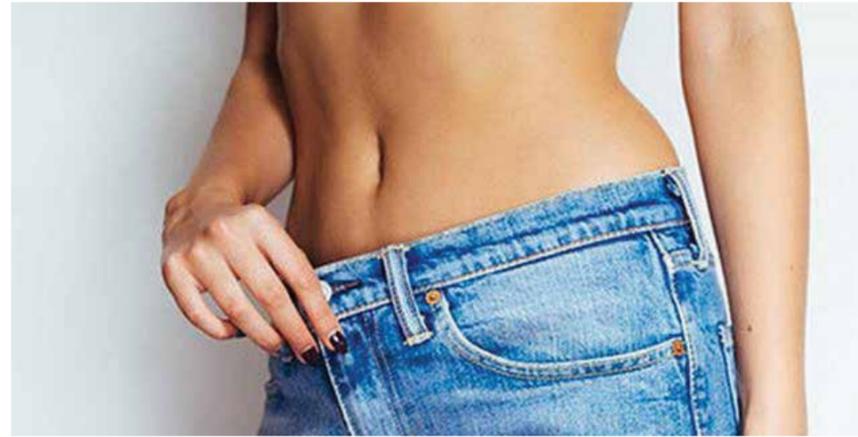
# The world wants a flat tummy - would you give in?

By Firinajoyisopin Oyetunde Oyelude  
(YPG, Oyo State)

There is this craze amongst female Africans about having a “banging body”. Everyone literally drools over any lady with a big backside; but the icing on the cake is if such a woman has an accompanying flat stomach. Many women have done all manner of things to retain a perfect figure; that hourglass shape that the world won't stop talking about.

Prominent among what women use to keep their bellies in shape is wearing a waist trainer. Yes, a waist trainer helps with water weight loss and helps prevent weight gain around the waistline when worn frequently. The stomach is thus continually squeezed, which has its own downsides. It makes breathing difficult, causes heartburn and does not expend the excess belly fat - just causing a whole lot of discomfort to those using it.

Flat tummy teas being the rave of the moment are part of the detox diet programme. Cleanse and Activate tea make up the two kinds of tea in the flat tummy programme and women specifically are instructed to drink them in the morning and evenings. Each tea bag contains herbs and spices that companies claim will “boost energy, speed metabolism, reduce bloating as



well as get the tummy back to a flatten shape”.

In reality, however, the claims about these tea blends have not been tested or proven by any clinical trials. They have not been regulated and some of the herbal ingredients may be dangerous, if used incorrectly.

Liposuction, a minimally invasive procedure, is one of the many medical procedures carried out for aesthetics purposes. Fat is removed, as much as possible, from any part of the skin that it is in excess or stubborn. Most women opt for the fat taken from their stomach to be transferred to their butts. It is not a weight-loss surgery; so there is a high possibility that weight can be gained in the

same area liposuction was done. Liposuction comes with risks, such as swelling, scarring, pain, redness, darkening of the skin bruising etc.

Tummy tuck, on the other hand, has to do with repairing the abdominal wall muscles along the midline and removal of excess skin at the upper border of the lower abdomen. It is sometimes accompanied with breast augmentation. Itching might occur during the skin's healing process and it is just the body's response to external forces. Both the tummy tuck and liposuction surgical procedures help to ensure a flat tummy is achieved. But they come with attendant risks.

**Healthy options**  
Healthy ways of losing belly fat include:

**Exercise:** A consistent back-to-back cardio exercise strengthens the abdominal muscles and keeps it firm.

**Balanced diet:** Removal of junks, foods high in trans-fat, and reduced intake of sugary drinks are important in maintaining a presentable waistline. Fruits and vegetables should be incorporated into diet.

**Alcohol intake reduction:** It is important to gradually reduce drinking of alcohol, especially when the goal is to eliminate stomach fat.

In all, it is important that women maintain a healthy weight, checking their body mass index, time and again. Inasmuch as a flat tummy improves the appearance of a woman, factors such as post-partum; health conditions, such as fibroids; overeating; and genetics could cause a protruded stomach. In the quest for a flat tummy, caution should not be thrown to the wind. Proper investigations should be carried out to ascertain that whatever tummy rescue effort is being used is safe.

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**Celebrating 43 Years of Uninterrupted Monthly Publication (1979-2022)**

# Emergence of infectious diseases: The human-animal nexus

By Patrick Iwelunmor

Strange activities on the face of the earth are tempting both science and nature to unleash microbiological upheavals on the world. One of these dangers is the emergence of strange and novel diseases, just as we have in the COVID-19 virus which before now created unprecedented panic and trepidation across the globe. Aside from the Wuhan conspiracy theories - some of which suggested that the virus had been genetically engineered and released to ravage mankind by reducing the human population - the emergence of COVID-19 showed that infectious diseases do not usually send warning signals before their arrival. They always erupt like bolts out of the blue.



Globalisation has led to more sophistication in human integration across the world. Thus, factors like international trade and travel, exposure to wild mammals, habitat disruption, indiscriminate consumption of bush meat, bestiality and contact with contaminated food are increasingly threatening public health all over the world. One of the most worrisome and one that has become a serious concern in Africa is bestiality – the act of sleeping with animals by humans. This abominable act is being commercialised in many countries and has found acceptance in Africa, largely due to the spiraling rate of poverty. People want to be free from financial bondage and, so, are always willing to make themselves available for all forms of abominations, as long as money is involved.

Recently, the video of a Nigerian woman having sex with a dog went viral and attracted the wrath of many, including the Nigeria Police which vowed to track down and arrest the woman because copulation with animals is punishable under Nigerian laws. While the act was widely condemned, it was revealed that the said woman actually agreed to have sex with the dog because she received the sum of N1.5 million as payment.

Amidst the dust raised by that saga, many young Nigerian women took to the social media space to openly boast that they would do the same thing, if given that amount of money or more, not minding the health implications of such acts. It has also been discovered that some people sleep with other animals, such as horses, donkeys, pigs and even monkeys. Scientists are certain that there will definitely be grave health consequences when such acts take place because the biological make up of humans and animals vary in very enormous proportions. Many known and unknown diseases have emerged

and are being spread as a result of the copulation between human and animals. The following is a list that should send shivers down the spine of every normal human:

### 1. Rabies

Rabies is a viral disease from dogs that has high fatality in humans. It is transmitted from the saliva of dogs, horses and cats. Immediately after the symptoms set in, the human has little chance of survival, if not treated.

### 2. Echinococcosis

This parasitic tapeworm is found in the faeces of dogs, cats and sheep. This disease is asymptomatic and would not manifest until after a few years. These worms would cause cysts to develop in the kidneys, heart, spleens and brains of the affected person. If not treated, it can lead to death.

### 3. Injury

The reproductive organs of these animals are not made to fit into that of a woman or man and have caused a lot of injuries. Some men have had ruptured rectum from sex with pigs and others have experienced head injuries from sex with horses. The reproductive organ of an aroused dog is like a light bulb, which will injure a vagina; not to talk of the size of a horse's reproductive organ. It can cause serious tears and injuries.

### 4. Allergic reaction

Receiving the semen of a dog or horse can trigger allergic reactions because it is a foreign substance that the body tries to expel. Imagine a person with a peanut allergy eating peanuts, and not getting treated immediately. A woman in Ireland who had sex with a dog died from anaphylaxis.

### 5. Leptospirosis

This disease is contracted from the urine of animals like dogs and cats. When it is in the human system, it can lead to meningitis, which could be deadly.

Generally speaking, humans must avoid situations that can trigger the emergence of infectious diseases. As we have experienced with COVID-19, the emergence of another novel microbe in future may spell unimaginable doom for mankind, if it does not check its excesses.

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Spectrum is same as amoxicillin with additional coverage of beta-lactamase producing *B. catarrhalis*, *H. influenzae*, *N. gonorrhoeae*, and *S. aureus* (MSSA). The expanded coverage of this combination makes it a useful alternative when amoxicillin resistance is present and patients cannot tolerate alternative treatment. It is especially useful in: Acute bacterial sinusitis (bacterially diagnosed), Acute otitis media, Acute exacerbations of chronic bronchitis (bacterially diagnosed), Community acquired pneumonia, Cystitis, Pyelonephritis, Skin and soft tissue infections in particular cellulitis, abscesses, wound infections, Acute otitis media with spreading otitis media, Bone and joint infections, In particular osteomyelitis. **CONTRAINDICATIONS:** Amoxicillin is contraindicated in patients with hypersensitivity to any of the penicillins or to any of the excipients. It is also contraindicated in patients with a previous history of severe immediate hypersensitivity reaction (e.g. anaphylaxis) to another beta-lactam agent (e.g. cephalexin, cefepime or meropenem). It is also contraindicated in patients with a previous history of jaundice/hepatic impairment associated with amoxicillin and potassium clavulanate. **WARNINGS:** Caution is advised to adverse effects: Anaphylactic/hypersensitivity reactions. Serious and occasionally severe or fatal hypersensitivity (anaphylactic) reactions have been reported in patients on penicillin therapy, especially with a history of severe hypersensitivity. History of sensitivity to multiple allergens, or previous IgE-mediated reactions (eg. anaphylaxis, angioedema, urticaria). Use with caution in asthmatic patients. Low incidence of cross-allergy with cephalosporins exists. Diarrhea, incidence of diarrhea is higher than with amoxicillin alone. **Hepatic effects:** Although rare, hepatic dysfunction is more common in elderly and/or frail patients and occurs more frequently with prolonged treatment, and may occur after therapy is complete. **Superinfection:** Prolonged use may result in fungal or bacterial superinfection, including *C. difficile* associated diarrhea (CDAD) and pseudomembranous colitis. CDAD has been observed in patients receiving postoperative treatment. **Neutropenia/leucopenia:** Use with caution in patients with hepatic impairment. **Renal impairment:** Use with caution in patients with renal impairment, dosage adjustment recommended. **DOSEAGE:** Usual recommended dose: 20 mg/kg to 40 mg/kg for each kilogram body weight daily given in 2 or 3 divided doses. Children <48kg: For Children from 7 to 12 years, Amoxicillin 200 mg / Potassium Clavulanate 42.5 mg 2 times a day. **Elderly:** No dose adjustment is considered necessary. **Renal impairment:** Dose adjustments are based on the maximum recommended level of amoxicillin. No adjustment in dose is required in patients with creatinine clearance (CrCl) greater than 30 ml/min. **Hepatic impairment:** Use with caution and monitor hepatic function at regular intervals. **METHOD OF ADMINISTRATION:** NOMEXICLAV DT TABLETS are for oral use. Administer at the start of a meal to minimize potential gastrointestinal irritation and optimize absorption of amoxicillin/clavulanate acid. Before taking NOMEXICLAV DT TABLETS, should be given with a full glass of water (as recommended for tablets >400mg). **WARNINGS:** Concomitant use of alcohol and tablets: Alcohol should be avoided during treatment. Alcohol should not be consumed during treatment. **DRUG INTERACTIONS:** Alcohol: May interact with following products. Therapy should be monitored. Folic Acid, Methotrexate, Tetracycline Derivatives, Typhoid Vaccine, Urinary Agents. **SIDE EFFECTS AND SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS:** Amoxicillin/clavulanate potassium is generally well tolerated. The majority of side-effects observed in clinical trials were of a mild and transient nature and less than 3% of patients discontinued therapy because of drug related side effects. The most frequently reported adverse effects were gastro-intestinal: nausea (3%), loose stools and diarrhea (3%), vomiting (1%) and rash (1%). The overall incidence of side effects and in particular diarrhea, increased with the higher recommended dose. Other less frequently reported reactions include: Abdominal discomfort, flatulence, and headache. **Adverse reactions:** Erythema, vasculitis, urticaria, interstitial nephritis, stomatitis, glossitis, black hairy tongue, mucocutaneous candidiasis, eosinophilia, and hemophagocytic syndrome. **Overdosage:** Following overdosage, patients have experienced primarily gastrointestinal symptoms including nausea and abdominal pain, vomiting and diarrhea. Toxic hyperemesis, or symptoms have also been observed in a small number of patients. In the case of overdosage, discontinue amoxicillin/clavulanate potassium, treat symptomatically, and institute supportive measures as required. If the overdosage is very recent and there is no contraindication, an attempt at emesis or other means of removal of drug from the stomach may be performed. A prospective study of 15 patients with a mean age of 65 years who were hospitalized for overdosage of less than 200 mg/kg of amoxicillin are not associated with significant clinical symptoms and do not require gastric emptying. **STORAGE:** Store below 25°C. Protect from light & moisture. **PRESENTATION:** Acetaminophen containing 1 blister of 10 tablets (for Nomexiclav 312.5) and 2 blister of 7 tablets (Nomexiclav 625).

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# Cecilia Ihuoma Igwilo: First female professor of Pharmacy in West Africa

By Temitope Obayendo

The name, Prof. Cecilia Ihuoma Igwilo, rings a loud bell in the West African Pharmacy community, as it is synonymous with great accomplishments from long years of laborious and dedicated service to the profession and humanity. Her feats from various leadership capacities, held from the University of Ife (UNIFE) and the University of Lagos (UNILAG) to the West African Pharmaceutical Federation/West African Postgraduate College of Pharmacists (WAPCP) attest to her extraordinary record as the first female professor of Pharmacy in West Africa.

## Inspiration to study Pharmacy

As a very observant secondary school girl who had been forced to relocate to the village with her parents, due to the uncertainties brought by the Nigerian Civil War then, she discovered the gap in healthcare delivery as people had to travel several miles on foot to access care from a poorly equipped primary healthcare centre or from a patent medicine dealer.

Her ambition continued to bud, as she closely admired a distant relation, who was a pharmacist, from a neighbouring village, who also returned home at the time. According to her, "He had stocked some medicines in his house in the village, and many of the sick relatives that visited him received some medications and fully recovered after a few days."

In fact, there were some critically ill persons that were literally carried to his house and within days, they went about their normal duties. "I would ponder over this man's profession for many hours in the middle of the night and the honour people accorded him. Thus, I desired to be enlisted in his profession", she enthused.

As soon as the war ended, she returned to complete her secondary education at the Owerri Girls Secondary School in 1970 and later sat for the West African School Certificate Examination in 1971, making grade 1 with distinction. (She had previously been awarded Eastern Region of Nigeria Secondary School Scholarship in 1966 for pupils that passed with distinction in the First School Leaving Certificate Examination).

Thereafter, she went for her Lower Six in Higher School in Queen's School, Enugu in 1973, and lo and behold, her dream to study Pharmacy became a reality, as she gained admission to the University of Ife, now Obafemi Awolowo University. She obtained her B.Pharm. Degree with First Class honours in 1977. Soon after, she obtained a master's degree in Pharmaceutics from the same institution. At the University of Ife, she had both the Federal Government Scholarship for undergraduate studies and the University of Ife Scholarship.

Igwilo served in the National Youth Service Corps in Kwara State in 1978/79 and won both the Kwara State Award and the Chairman's Award of National Youth Service Corps in 1979. She thereafter proceeded to Chelsea College, University of London in 1980 with Federal Government Scholarship for postgraduate studies and obtained her Ph.D in Pharmacy in 1983.

## Impactful leadership at UNILAG

Igwilo became acting head of the Department of Pharmaceutics and Pharm. Tech in 1993, a position that afforded her the opportunity to leverage the goodwill of prominent pharmaceutical companies to the benefit of pharmacy students and UNILAG at large. Companies like Emzor, Pfizer, and May & Baker, donated generously to the development of academic research in terms of chemicals, materials and other laboratory equipment that were no longer in use in their facilities.

She rose to the position of the dean of the School of Pharmacy



Prof. Cecilia Ihuoma Igwilo

in 2001, as the first female dean. Not only was she able to help to elevate the status of the school to become a faculty but she also, through her amiable personality, further connected the faculty to the pharmaceutical industry. She was able to secure the assistance of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) under the late Director General, Prof. Dora Akunyili, in equipping the dean's office with modern computers and printers. This facilitated the computerisation of faculty results, which were hitherto manually calculated.

Also, under her watch, the Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) was approved by the Senate of the University of Lagos for the Faculty of Pharmacy. She also served as the chairman of the College of Medicine, Postgraduate Medical Committee, which processes postgraduate matters to the School of Postgraduate Studies, University of Lagos.

## Landmark achievements at UNILAG

Beyond Pharmacy, evidences of Igwilo's assiduousness abound in other programmes of UNILAG. Appointed as director, Academic Planning Unit, in 2006 for a four-year tenure, she worked tirelessly to achieve full accreditation status for almost all the programmes of the university at that time. Due to her uncommon resourcefulness, she was retained for an additional two years, therefore working under three vice-chancellors: the late Prof. Oye Ibidapo-Obe; Prof. Tolu Odugbemi and the late Prof. Adetokunbo Babatunde Sofoluwe.

The Inaugural Lecture titled, "The Journey of Pharmaceutical Formulations in Nigeria, delivered by this Distinguished Professor of Pharmacy in September 2011 was very outstanding". Her static and dynamic slide presentations as well

as video clips revolutionised the standard of inaugural lectures in the University of Lagos. A Professor of Law (Prof. Akin Oyebo) exclaimed after her inaugural lecture that she had raised the bar in the mode of inaugural lecture presentation in the University of Lagos.

The diligent Igwilo was appointed director, Foundation Programmes, by the then vice-chancellor, the late Prof. A.B. Sofoluwe, in 2012; an office she dutifully manned along with her team to generate substantial income for the university. This spurred a change of name from Foundation Programmes to School of Foundation Studies. Again, her commitment brought the university Federal Government's approval for the establishment of Joint Universities Preliminary Examination Board (JUPEB), with several other federal, state and private universities as stakeholders.

More recently, in 2019, she secured the donation of millions of naira worth equipment for the university from May and Baker Plc. They are: ADEPT Double Rotary 4 Station GMP Model Compression machine and a set of Plan B Punches and BB Dies.

## Accelerated promotion to professorship

As noted earlier, Igwilo completed her Ph.D. in Pharmacy from the Chelsea College, University of London, in 1983, and she has since supervised about 15 Ph.D. students, within the Faculty of Pharmacy alone, aside from other collaborative works in other institutions.

Customarily, progression in academia is from Lecturer II to Lecturer I, then Senior Lecturer, to Associate Professor (Reader) and finally to full Professor. However, Igwilo's rise to professorship was outstanding, as she enjoyed double elevation from the post of

senior lecturer to full professor of Pharmaceutics and Pharmaceutical Technology in 1994. This gave her an edge over her senior colleagues in becoming the first female professor of Pharmacy in West Africa.

In 2005, the Federal Government of Nigeria specially recognised her, leading to her conferment with the award of the Officer of the Order of Niger (OON) in 2005. Also, following her numerous contributions in advancing knowledge and distinctive services, the University of Lagos conferred on her the prestigious honour of Distinguished Professor of UNILAG in 2017.

## Presidency of WAPCP

Back in the days when lecturers usually chose prestigious institutions for their sabbatical leave, Distinguished Prof. Igwilo had to sacrifice her only sabbatical leave to assist with the transitional process at the West African Pharmaceutical Federation, which offers no financial benefits as such. Being the executive secretary, ad interim, then, she did all she could to navigate a progress path for the Federation.

Eventually, her efforts yielded positive results, as the Assembly of Health Minister of the West African Health Community approved the West African Postgraduate College of Pharmacists (WAPCP) as one of its colleges on 2 November 1999.

Igwilo further served the organisation in various capacities such as assistant secretary general, secretary general, executive secretary, editor-in-chief, chief examiner, chairman, Faculty of Drug Production and Quality Assurance, as well as second vice-president and first vice-president, with several achievements.

It was no surprise she later became president of WAPCP in May 2021, a post she still holds. She was also elected as the vice-president of ECOWAS Regional Council for Health Professionals Education in July 2021, the very first pharmacist ever to occupy that position. More interestingly is the fact that her leadership has set out to build a four-storey secretariat for the college, in addition to the Fellowship examinations in the areas of specialisation in Pharmacy already conducted in November 2021.

## Admonition to women on leadership

As an outstanding lady pharmacist, married to a Petroleum Engineering Consultant, Dr H. Osita Igwilo, successful leadership for a woman is equivalent to a committed life to God, diligence at work and a peaceful home.

Igwilo, who through divine providence is blessed with four God-fearing children, son-in-law and grandchildren (with two daughters and her son-in-law being consultant medical doctors/ forensic toxicologist, and two sons as engineers), emphasised the place of a peaceful home in a woman's career, saying once this is in place, all other things will naturally fall in line with divine assistance.

She thus charged younger lady pharmacists to emulate the good qualities of excelling women in leadership, and put them to action for them to ascend the role of honour. She stated: "My counsel to women is primarily to be committed and dedicated to God, through the Lord Jesus. They should also work very hard to build their homes, maintaining the bond of peace and unity at home with their husbands, children, in-laws etc. Once the home is stable and peaceful and one has a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus, God adds increase to any little efforts made."

# How playing chess improves brain function

By Ranmilowo Ojalumo

In case you are looking for a sporting activity that is scientifically proven to enhance brain performance, then chess may just be your best bet, as health have stated that playing chess is good for the brain. Playing chess boosts cognitive function, and this explains why about 600million people around the world play the game.

Chess is an acronym for Chariot (rook), Horse (knight), Elephant (bishop) and Soldiers (pawns). It was invented in India around the 8th century. At the beginning, it was known as "chatrang" but the name was changed over the centuries by the Arabs, then the Persians and then ultimately the medieval Europeans, who changed the names and images to resemble the English court.

Chess is one of the oldest and most popular board games. It is a game played between two opponents on opposite sides of a board, containing 64 squares of alternating colours. Each player has 16 pieces: 1 king, 1 queen, 2 rooks, 2 bishops, 2 knights, and 8 pawns. The goal of the game is to checkmate the opponent's king.

While mastery of chess may not be so easy, it is a relatively easy game to learn and play. What matters is to know the basic rules, how the pieces move, how to checkmate,



and a few other special rules. According to Wilhelm Steinitz, the first Chess World Champion, widely considered the father of modern chess, "Chess is one of the most interesting sports because it never repeats itself and it never bores you."

### The brain connection

Chess is immensely beneficial to the brain, as it helps to grow dendrites. Dendrites conduct signals from the neuron cells in the brain to the neuron

they are attached to. Chess World, in a study, found out that learning and playing a game like chess actually stimulates the growth of dendrites, which in turn increases the speed and improves the quality of neural communication throughout the brain.

The Chess World study also says, "Chess exercises both sides of the brain. Our studies have shown that in order to play chess well, a player must develop and utilize his or her brain's left hemisphere, which deals with object recognition, as well as right hemisphere, which deals with pattern recognition. Playing chess will effectively exercise and develop not one but both sides of your brain,"

Studies have also shown that chess helps to prevent Alzheimer's disease. A medical study conducted by the Albert Einstein College of Medicine - a research-intensive medical school located in the Morris Park neighbourhood of the Bronx in New York City - and involving 488 researchers, shows that playing chess stimulates brain function and measurably decreases the risk of dementia, while combating its symptoms. Keeping the brain functioning at a normal rate, especially with a mind-exercising activity like chess, will reduce one's risk for Alzheimer's disease, as well as depression and anxiety.

Also, doctors at the Centre for Cognitive Neuroscience in Bron, France, have found that schizophrenic patients who were directed to play chess on a daily basis showed improvement in their condition, compared to patients who did not play. Schizophrenia is characterised by thoughts or experiences that seem out of touch with reality, disorganised speech or behaviour and decreased participation in daily activities. According to the doctors' findings, the Chess-playing patients exhibited increased attention, planning, and reasoning abilities and interestingly, elected to continue playing chess as part of their

daily routine, even after the study had concluded.

### Intellect and memory development

According to Dr Debra Rose Wilson, an American professor, researcher and holistic healthcare practitioner at Austin Peay State University, the game of chess is loved all over the world because chess involves an intense intellectual challenge, which is very good for the health of mind. Also, the National Library of Medicine, in its 2019 report, titled "Secret of the Masters: Young Chess Players Show Advanced Visual Perspective Taking", submitted that chess helps to develop the ability to see from someone else's perspective.

Another benefit of playing chess is that it improves memory. Rebecca Joy Stanborough, a resource person with Heathline, in a 2020 study, submitted that chess improves memory. Similarly, one of the findings of a research work titled "Auditory memory function in expert chess players", which was made public in October 2015, the National Library of Medicine pointed out that long-term practice of chess can improve cognition performances and behavioural skills. They found out in the study that Chess players were significantly better at recalling lists of words they had heard than people who had never played chess. They conclusively discovered in the study that auditory memory function in expert chess players was significantly better, compared to non-chess players.

One other good thing about chess these days is that it can also be played online. Couples can also play it in their living room; all they need to do is to learn it. "Although one may not really love the game in itself, but its benefits to the brain and ultimately to the health is enough reason to make one to learn the board game and start playing it", neurosurgeon doctor with an Atlanta, USA, hospital, Nick Smith said.

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Celebrating 43 Years of Uninterrupted Monthly Publication (1979-2022)

# Fladinir

(Cefdinir Monohydrate)

A third generation cephalosporin for treatment of infections caused by susceptible strains of the designated microorganisms

## INDICATIONS

- - community acquired pneumonia
- - acute exacerbations of chronic bronchitis
- - acute maxillary sinusitis caused by haemophilus influenza,
- Pharyngitis/tonsillitis
- - otitis media caused by haemophilus influenza
- - uncomplicated skin and skin structure infections caused by staphylococcus aureus.

## PRESENTATIONS

- 300mg x 10 capsules
- 125mg/5ml x 100ml oral suspension



# Mospodox™

(Cefpodoxime Proxetil)

A third generation cephalosporin for treatment of infections caused by susceptible isolates of designated bacteria.

## INDICATIONS:

- **Pharyngitis/Tonsillitis**
- **Skin and Skin structure Infections**
- **Uncomplicated Ano-rectal Infections**
- **Uncomplicated Urinary Tract Infections**
- **Pharyngitis/Tonsillitis**
- **Skin and Skin structure Infections**

## Presentation:

- 200mg x 10 Capsules
- 100mg/5ml x 100ml Oral Suspension
- 50mg/5ml x 100ml Oral Suspension



# Mirafix™

Cefixim Trihydrate

A Third generation cephalosporin for treatment of infections caused by susceptible isolates of designated bacteria

## INDICATIONS

- ◆ - uncomplicated urinary tract infections
- ◆ - otitis media
- ◆ - pharyngitis and tonsillitis
- ◆ - acute exacerbations of chronic bronchitis
- ◆ - uncomplicated gonorrhoea (cervical/urethral)

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## INDICATIONS

- - lower and upper respiratory tract infections
- - Urinary tract infections
- - Skin and skin structure infections
- - Septicaemia
- - Meningitis
- - Gonorrhoea
- - Bone and joint infections

## PRESENTATIONS

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# WeFill rebrands, relaunches in Nigeria

By Adebayo Oladejo



**Mr Greg Emuze**  
Co-founder and chief product officer, WeFill Africa

In furtherance of its commitment to ensuring the availability of quality and affordable healthcare products and services to Nigerians, Wella Fulfillment Service which used to be a product under Wella Health, is set to be relaunched as a new and separate entity, called WeFill Africa.

Disclosing this in a press release made available to the press and signed by the Co-founder and Chief Product Officer, WeFill Africa, Mr Greg Emuze, the relaunching of WeFill as a company on its own is historical as it is a dream come true for the healthcare sector in Africa.

The move he said, will transform prescription

fulfilment by empowering PBMs, driving down costs for insurers and inspiring better health with enrollees by providing a simple, technology-powered experience that integrates in real-time with benefit systems and plan providers.

According to him, to get the much-needed medications across, health service providers and HMOs would typically have to manage lots of spreadsheets and make hundreds of calls to pharmacies and enrollees each month, noting that this approach is inefficient and cannot be scaled up.

"In most cases, PBMs would resort to enrollees picking up their medications at hospitals as a last resort. This is always more expensive and disrupts the enrollee's day, route, or routine".

"Being one of the fastest-growing healthcare services in the country because of its commitment to innovation, technology, and service, WeFill's mission is to change the face and costs of pharmacy benefits in Africa. It delivers data-driven insights and implementable strategies that reduce costs, while improving patient outcomes with a robust platform approach. Constantly evolving, it implements strategies that continuously create more opportunities for partners," he said.

Emuze further noted that, with WeFill, PBMs can say goodbye to the dreaded days, put their spreadsheets away, and spend their time talking to enrollees in more meaningful ways, as it provides unrivalled access to medications in all 36 states of Nigeria and the FCT at any time, leveraging a network of over 1,600 community pharmacies and chains for deliveries or pickups.

Speaking further on its benefits, he explained that beyond a simple vendor relationship, WeFill provides many long-term opportunities to enhance business as a partner, adding that with WeFill, Pharmacy Benefit Managers get the peace of mind they deserve to focus on their enrollees through a more comprehensive patient support programme.

"Whether you have a few hundred enrollees or millions, WeFill automates CDRs and provides pharmacy selection in Telemedicine applications. Use could be either via a portal or an API integration directly with your systems. It has an open API architecture that allows it to integrate systems and vendors seamlessly. Its independence, transparency, and flexibility assure clients that it is committed to acting in their best interests and has the freedom to do so", he said.

He further noted that by partnering, WeFill will help them to reach their customers everywhere in the country speedily and with ease, saying all they have to do is plug into a WeFill integration and experience the magic.

"The platform also reduces the possibility of human error with data inputs and flows that are automated by a system smart enough to let you request a refill in a single click.

"To become a partner, health service providers and health maintenance organisations could simply sign up for an account and immediately gain access to the portal or integrate through API and it takes 24-48 hours to start enjoying 20-minute turnaround times," he said.

While narrating the testimony of one of their partners, Emuze noted that they are very impressed with the work WeFill is doing for them, quoting Mr Oche, head of partnership, Hygeia HMO, as saying that WeFill was a major contributor in helping them close some major deals.

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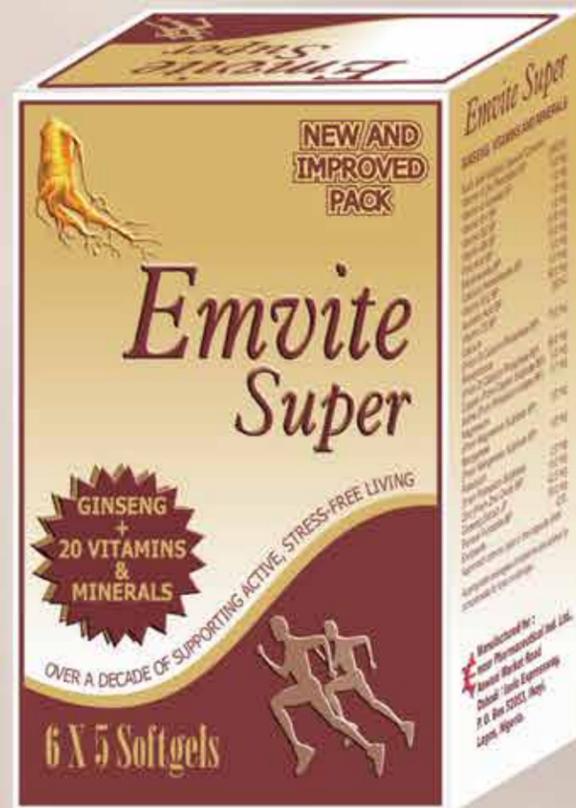


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# 10 highly-needed 21<sup>st</sup> century skills for young health professionals (2)

By Pharm. Sesan Kareem



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

We are in the age of immense opportunities, as well as global competitiveness. Young health professionals have various opportunities to build highly sought-after skills in order to maximise their career options.

In the previous edition, the first five skills that are highly needed by young professionals in the 21<sup>st</sup> century were highlighted. These include data analysis, business analysis, investment analysis, computer coding, and software product management.

Below are additional five highly-needed skills in our world today, which young health professionals can develop:

## 6. Data engineering

Data engineering is different from data science, but the former is what enables the latter to exist. Data engineers build the infrastructure and tools that data scientists rely on to conduct their own work.

In the last seven years, the hiring growth rate of this technology job has increased by nearly 35 percent across a wide variety of industries, including the health sector. In some ways, data engineering is more closely related to software engineering than to other data roles. Growth of data engineering roles has historically outpaced growth for data scientist jobs. In fact, data science interviews grew by 10 percent, compared to data engineering interviews which grew by 40 percent in 2020.

## 7. Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence is

changing the game in health and pharmaceutical sectors across the world. Hiring growth for AI practitioners grew 32 percent between 2019 and 2020. Because of its increasingly widespread adoption, AI specialists earned LinkedIn's number one "emerging jobs" spot in 2020 and is number 15 on their 2021 list of "jobs on the rise."

There is crossover with machine learning, but the key difference is that AI is a broader concept, as it pertains to machines designed to act intelligently like humans; whereas machine learning relies on devices making sense of a specific set of data.

Now that AI has become more mainstream, companies will be looking for people with specific areas of expertise in AI in 2022 and beyond, such as natural language processing (NLP), automated speech recognition (ASR) and automation. Not only that, according to a 2020 UiPath survey, 70 percent of C-level executives want even non-technical employees to have some automation and AI skills.

## 8. Communication skills

Effective communication skills are needed by all healthcare professionals to succeed in their career. However, not all healthcare professionals are naturally good at communication. Therefore, it is essential to build effective communication skills as a young professional.

Having good communication skills is essential to collaborating on teams with your fellow healthcare professionals and colleagues from other disciplines. It is also central to patient-centered care.

On the other hand, poor communication or lack of good communication skills in healthcare can lead to patients misunderstanding directions and failing to follow treatment protocols. It can also lead to workflow breakdowns on the team, resulting in a medical error. A report by the Joint Commission found that poor communication in healthcare during patient transfers contributed to 80 percent of serious medical errors.

## 9. Interpersonal skills

Interpersonal skills are people skills. They are the skills that measure a person's emotional, and not just their academic, intelligence. These skills include the ability to motivate, communicate, solve problems and, probably most valuable of all, empathise.

It may seem obvious, but a clinician who possesses certain interpersonal skills will actually achieve better clinical results. Empathy allows for healthcare professionals to better understand and relate with their patients. Communication skills are critical to learning about patients and delivering the most effective treatments possible. Motivating skills can help clinicians to engage their patients in participating in their healthcare and to take up the most critical part of most treatment plans: the daily maintenance of healthy habits and therapies.

## 10. Marketing skills

Marketing is essential for any business to thrive. Since healthcare systems are fundamentally businesses, they rely on promotion and advertising to attract patients. Therefore, developing effective marketing and sales skills will always be important in the health and pharmaceutical sectors.

Marketing plays an important role in helping healthcare professionals to create, communicate, and provide value to their target market. Indeed, there are positive career paths for young healthcare professionals who possess world-class marketing and sales skills.

**ACTION PLAN:** Identify one of the above skills you can develop that will give you special advantage as a professional. Take action to start the learning process.

**AFFIRMATION:** I am open to learning highly sought-after skills. I am blessed and highly favoured.

Sesan Kareem is the Founder/CEO of HubCare Health, [www.hubcarehealth.com](http://www.hubcarehealth.com) and the Principal Consultant of Sesan Kareem Institute, [www.sesankareem.com.ng](http://www.sesankareem.com.ng)

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# Starting Bond Chemical in a rural setting was tough, but we persevered - Pharm. (Chief) Omotosho

**E**minent pharmacist and octogenarian founder of Bond Chemical Industries Limited, Pharm. (Chief) Adebowale Omotosho, needs little or no introduction within the Nigerian pharmaceutical landscape. He is a trailblazer in local pharmaceutical manufacturing, having ventured into full scale local pharmaceutical manufacturing in 1986, at a time when the coast was largely hazy and untested. Even more interesting is that, unlike many other companies that started in major cities and state capitals, Bond has its birthplace in the agrarian town of Awe, in Oyo State, with its attendant infrastructural challenges.

In this interview with **MOSES DIKE**, Omotosho reveals how he was able to surmount the challenges at that time to build the reputable brand that Bond Chemical Industries has become. He also discusses his upbringing, career choice, and issues affecting local pharmaceutical manufacturing, while also advising young professionals on how to harness the potentials of their training for the benefits of humanity. Excerpts:



**Pharm. (Chief) Adebowale Omotosho**

**Kindly tell us about yourself, your education and early childhood experiences.**

My name is Adebowale Omotosho. I was born in Kano, on 29 July, 1936. I started my elementary school at Kano CMS and later moved to Jos. I left Baptist Day School, Jos, in 1952 to Keffi Government College, and left in 1958, after my School Certificate (WASSCE). I was in the School of Pharmacy, Zaria in 1959 and left for Bradford Technical College, UK, in 1961 to study for my A-Level in science subjects.

I got into the University of Bradford for my pharmacy degree and completed it in 1967. I did my internship at St. James Hospital, Leeds, and was registered as a professional pharmacist by the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain and Wales.

**Looking back at your earlier days as a young person, did you have role models or personalities who helped to influence your choice of career, values and principles in life?**

Looking back at my earlier days as a young person, the personality who helped to influence my choice of career was my distant cousin, named Deacon Oyelowo (now late). I was in Kano on holiday with my

mother, between 1956 and 1957 when I met this cousin of mine who worked at Kano City Hospital as a dispenser. He trained as a chemist and druggist from old Yaba School of Pharmacy. He kept bringing different drug mixtures for my mother. I was highly impressed and wanted to study to be a chemist and druggist.

I believe that led me to Zaria School of Pharmacy for study. After two years, it was not possible anymore and so I had to go overseas to start all over. I got a job from the UAC in London and came back home in October 1968 to work for Kingsway Chemist. I worked at the Marina office and also at Benin Kingsway.

I left for Burroughs Wellcome and then Sandoz Pharmaceutical Company, as national sales manager. I left in 1977 to start my own business, which I called Bond Chemists – a community pharmacy. I later went into wholesaling and representing overseas companies.

**Tell us the story of Bond Chemical Industries Limited which has grown to become one of the foremost local pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria. How did it all start and what is the vision and guiding philosophy behind its phenomenal growth?**

In 1986, I decided to move

into manufacturing and then called the new outfit – Bond Chemical Industries Limited. It was a strong determination, not minding what difficulties were on the way. To be honest, there were many difficulties to contend with, even in a place like Lagos. There were also difficulties in the state capitals; but in the village, there were virtually no noticeable amenities to set up a pharmaceutical manufacturing factory. We had to bring everything virtually from Lagos, including experienced workers. No one wants to stay in a rural area.

Ultimately, even the goods manufactured still had to return to the main market, which is in Lagos. I kept encouraging myself that if I could import drugs from abroad, why couldn't I manufacture in Awe, in Nigeria, for the Nigerian market? It was not easy but I am happy we persevered and now feel quite comfortable and happy to continue in this rural setting.

**What challenges did you face starting an indigenous pharmaceutical manufacturing company at a time when the coast was still very much untested and hazy? What challenges do you still face?**

There were too many challenges. Imagine that there were many challenges for those who started in Lagos and the few who started in the state capitals across the country, and we must be one of the very few who started in a rural setting. It is better imagined than recalled. No infrastructure of any kind, no road, no water or electricity to start with. No workers of other pharmaceutical companies to help. Everything – workers, raw materials, packaging materials – must be brought in from Lagos and the finished products taken back to Lagos, the main market for sale.

It was tough, very tough but we are very happy now and will not move out of the rural setting. We make sure that our quality is as good as anyone else. We have never been found wanting.

**How would you like the government to address the current challenges facing the pharmaceutical industry?**

We have and we shall always have more expenditure than income. The population continues to increase; so things can never be as they were. But good management of our resources, however small, will help us a long way.

Indeed, there is a lot that the

government can offer in health, education etc. After all, poorer nations manage their economy better than us. We should get our priorities right, fight corruption then what we have will be enough.

**As a stakeholder who is passionate about quality healthcare systems, how do you think Nigeria can meet the healthcare needs of its growing population?**

The quality of the healthcare system is a job for every one of us to take a positive part in. It affects all of us; so it is our problem. We should stop buying equipment we cannot maintain. Lack of proper maintenance is one of our major problems. Everything boils down to good management.

**If you were not a pharmacist, what would you be doing as a career? Aside from pharmacy practice, what other things do you have a passion for?**

I had always wanted to be a pharmacist; but, on a second thought, if not a pharmacist, then maybe a farmer. Maybe because I am now in a rural area. I believe farming or going to the farm brings me close to nature and gives me inner peace. The seed that you plant first dies before it germinates. Watching all these, which can be called a miracle, brings you closer to God and gives you the belief that He lives.

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

I thank God for what He has done for me. I have eight children – four males and four females. Out of the males, one is a pharmacist and at the moment he is the group managing director of our industries.

Another male is a medical doctor at John Hopkins Hospital, USA. One of the females also studied Medicine at the University of Ibadan over 10 years ago. The others are in oil and gas, engineering, law, computer and business.

**How do you relax? Tell us about some of the pastime activities you engage in to keep busy and fit in retirement.**

Relaxation comes in various forms. I belong to many clubs and societies, whose activities help me to unwind and relax. I love listening to music and attending live shows. I also relax by watching good programmes on the television or listening to the radio. I equally enjoy and relax by travelling to neighbouring villages and cities.

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

Times are changing. The youths must change with time. Be abreast of all developments. Never stop learning. This is the age of computer technology; don't be left behind. Above all, be honest and dedicated to your work; work very hard and be focused on whatever you do.



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# Tackling malnutrition in Nigerian children and mothers: LSMH and Nestlé's examples

By Temitope Obayendo

**T**iti, a seven-year-old child, had been expected to grow healthily like her mates born in the same Likosi Community of Ogun State, but that was not to be. Rather, she suffered from repeated infections and stunted growth. Worse still, she continued to show signs of mental retardation, making it difficult for her parents to enroll her for formal education. Thus, while Titi's age mates within the community are in their second or third year in elementary school, she is still struggling to put a meaningful sentence together.

Titi's condition had thrown her artisan parents into dejection for the past 6 years, as they assumed that she was a sickle cell carrier. A neighbour, however, advised them to take her to a nearby hospital. When they did, she was diagnosed of marasmus, a form of malnutrition, and started receiving treatment immediately.

Now, Mr and Mrs Joel Kolade, Titi's parents, who have since regretted their error in underfeeding her, due to their low income level, have pledged to improve in the family's feeding habit, as well as to intentionally supplement their food with essential micronutrients.

## Forms of malnutrition

Marasmus is a form of malnutrition that occurs when the intake of nutrients and energy is too low for a person's needs. It is a severe form of protein-energy malnutrition that leads to wasting, or the loss of body fat and muscle. Experts opine that a child with marasmus may not grow as children usually do. It is established that marasmus also affects adults, but it most often affects young children in developing countries.

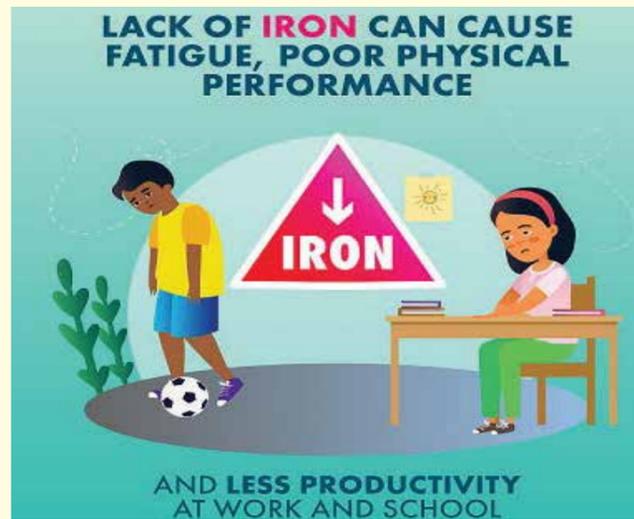
Generally, malnutrition refers to the poor intake of food which may manifest as either excess consumption of food, known as overnutrition; or inadequate nutrition consumption, referred to as undernutrition, like that of Titi. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) malnutrition is a global challenge, with serious and far-reaching developmental, economic, social, and medical impacts on individuals and their families, communities and countries.

A Nutrition Officer with the Lagos State Ministry of Health, Mrs Olubunmi Ibrahim, described malnutrition as a public health disease condition of great concern. "It is a triple burden disease condition with over-nutrition, undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, popularly called "hidden hunger".

Anaemia is another global public health problem associated with nutritional deficiencies that particularly affects young children and pregnant women.

Statistics of malnourished children and women

WHO estimates that 42 per cent of children less than five years of age and 40 per cent of pregnant women worldwide are anaemic. It is so worrisome



that the apex health institution further estimates that one-third of all women of reproductive age are anaemic. It identified causes of anaemia to include iron deficiency, shortage of vitamins B12 and A, as well as infectious diseases.

With the global burden of malnutrition from the WHO 2021 Report indicating about 45 per cent of mortality in under five years children; stunting in 149 million children under 5; wasting (too thin for height) in 45 million; and overweight or obesity in 38.9 million, the situation is alarming. The health condition also accounts for 1.9 billion overweight and 462 million underweight in adults.

## Food fortification and bio-fortification as panacea to malnutrition

In tackling the burden of malnutrition, experts are advocating bio-fortification and food fortification as measures for enabling everyone across the globe to enjoy their right to adequate nutrition. Bio-fortification is a breeding process of specific grains with the aim of enhancing both their mineral density and bioavailability. Food fortification is the practice of adding vitamins and minerals to commonly consumed foods during processing to increase their nutritional value.

Canvassing the need for food fortification, UNICEF Executive Director, Henrietta Fore, at the Second Global Summit on Food Fortification, said: "We estimate that at least one in two of the world's children suffers from hidden hunger - deficiencies in vitamins and other essential nutrients. Large scale fortification and bio-fortification can help us address this issue."

Buttressing same idea, Director of Nutrition at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Andreas Bluethner, called for worldwide solidarity on food fortification: "The worldwide COVID crisis puts millions of people additionally at risk of poverty and malnutrition. We need governments, donors and private sector to partner for resilient nutrition programmes, such as staple foods fortified with essential nutrients. Adequate nutrition is a human right and an outstanding investment in a nation's health, educational opportunities and productivity at marginal cost."

The CEO of HarvestPlus, Arun Baral, in his remarks at the summit, as published on GAIN's website, also emphasised the adoption of food and bio-fortification with a call to action. "Food fortification and crop bio-fortification are complementary interventions that can ensure all people can

get the essential micronutrients they need for good nutrition and health. It is time to rapidly scale them up to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals," he said.

## Food fortification: Lagos State Ministry of Health's model

It comes as no surprise that the Lagos State Ministry of Health (LSMH) has embraced food fortification in addressing the "hidden hunger" burden in the state, through the introduction of micro-nutrient powders (MNPs) as supplement to be added to infants and young children's meals. It is a routine service designed as an intervention to prevent and treat malnutrition in children of six to nine months.

In an exclusive interview with Mrs Olubunmi Ibrahim, the state nutrition officer, she explained the objective of the state in embarking on the project. "MNPs are products designed to address micronutrient deficiencies, including anaemia, by improving the quality of children's diets, to prevent vitamins and minerals deficiencies where access to diverse nutritious foods is limited."

She remarked that while the programme recorded a huge success, as the MNPs were widely accepted by children as reported by their mothers, shortage in supply was a limitation due to the large population of the state.

In a peer reviewed report titled, "Evaluation of MNPs Distribution through Maternal Neonatal and Child Health Weeks in Nigeria: Process Evaluation of Feasibility and Use - A Case Study of Four Local Governments in Benue State", it was found that MNPs coverage was low, but consistency was typically achieved with other services delivered through Maternal, Neonatal And Child Health Week (MNCHW) in Benue.

"Among caregivers who received MNPs, acceptance and use among targeted children was high. While some weaknesses in knowledge and delivery of MNP by health workers were observed, health system strengthening and more extensive social mobilisation would be key to achieving higher coverage with MNPs and other health services provided through MNCHW", the document stated.

While the LSMH's food fortification project is a laudable one that should be sustained, the Nestle's example of tackling micronutrient deficiencies and other forms of malnutrition provides a more in-depth insight for stakeholders in the health and nutrition industries to emulate.

## Food fortification: The Nestle's success story

In an exclusive interview with Nestle's Nutrition Institute Manager for Central West Africa Region, Dr Kanaliyo Yvonne Olaloku, she revealed how the company has leveraged food fortification and intensified awareness creation on the importance of iron, for the benefits of Nigerians and Africans, including those in the low income level.

She said Nestle embarked on the "Live Strong with Iron" campaign in 2021 to sensitise Nigerians about iron deficiency, which is the largest micronutrient deficiency globally, accompanied by low awareness which predisposes people to iron deficiency anaemia.

According to her: "Nestle's 'Live Strong with Iron' campaign is ongoing with the different brand categories. The awareness is embedded in the different brands of products containing iron such as Milo, Golden Morn, etc."

"Over 95 per cent of our products are fortified to provide at least 15 per cent of our daily needs in one serving. Each product is fortified with at least one of the big four nutrient deficiencies: Iron, Vitamin A, iodine, and zinc".

Asked about the affordability of these fortified food products to the poor families who live on less than two dollars a day in Nigeria, she said Nestle's products are also packaged in small size sachets to ensure affordability for everyone, adding that a sachet and contains at least 15 per cent of the required daily allowance of iron to prevent iron deficiency.

While some Nigerians interviewed on the affordability of Nestle's Golden Morn and Milo said they might not be able to purchase the products on a regular basis for their families, Olaloku remarked that the goal of the campaign is not for people to drink Milo twice a day or every single day but "to ensure that people are consuming all round foods rich in iron (Nestle products inclusive)".

She continued: "The main objective of the campaign really is to increase awareness amongst employees, distributors, stakeholders and consumers so that there is a call to action across the communities."

Aside from fortified processed foods, the nutrition expert mentioned other iron-rich natural foods that people can eat, such as dark green leaves, *egusi*, beans, nuts, meats, fish, and chicken. She urged Nigerians to endeavour to eat more of these local foods, stressing that they provide other essential nutrients for the body such as folate, calcium, fibre, and protein.

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# Why illegal distribution of drugs should be capital offence in Nigeria - Ike

**P**harm. (Dr) Iroemeha Christian Ike is the president/CEO of Social Circle Pharmacy in the State of Georgia, USA. While in Nigeria, he was the president/CEO of Richmonds Pharmacy Ltd, Port Harcourt, and currently the president/CEO of Best Outcomes Ventures Ltd, Lagos. An indigene of Isuochi in Umunneochi Local Government Area of Abia State, he bagged his B. Pharm degree from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. He has also obtained other qualifications, including an MSc in Conflict Management from Kennesaw State University, Georgia, and a PharmD from the University of Tennessee. He is also a graduate of the Harvard Business School programme on Global Leadership.

Before venturing into private pharmacy practice, he worked as a clinical pharmacist in various hospitals in the State of Florida and Georgia, where he also practised as pharmacy manager in various pharmacies. He is a member of several professional associations, where he has played various leading roles in Nigeria and United States. These include: Academy of Independent Pharmacies (AIP) in Georgia and Georgia Pharmacy Association (GPhA). He is a Fellow, Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (FPSN), and Fellow, Nigerian Institute of Management (FNIM).

In this exclusive interview with **TEMITOPE OBAYENDO**, Ike examines some critical issues affecting pharmacy practice in Nigeria, with particular emphasis on curbing illegal manufacturing and distribution of medicines and maximising the potentials of the pharmaceutical industry. Excerpts:



**Pharm. (Dr) Iroemeha Christian Ike**

**Having obtained your first degree in Nigeria, how was your experience practising in the country before travelling overseas?**

Pharmacy practice is universal; the concept is the same, but the method and processes vary from country to country depending on certain factors. These include pharmacy practice laws, regulations and the regulators; the various actors in the pharmaceutical industry, including pharmacists and other stakeholders; and how well-informed the beneficiaries of pharmacy practice (patients/consumers) are.

While I was in Nigeria, to the extent I knew, pharmacy practice was very good because what I saw then was all I knew. But with the benefit of hindsight, I can state that there is indeed room for improvement and all actors must be willing and ready to effect these needed changes by constantly updating the pharmacy laws to meet up with the dynamics of the Nigerian society and also meet up with global best practices. There is need to hire more trained regulators and inspectors to be able to carry out regular inspections to make sure that the rules are being followed.

Secondly, there are too many actors in the pharmaceutical industry. Many people that should not have any business getting close to drugs and poisons are opening up shops everywhere, as drug merchants. Pharmacy practice is not a business; it is a responsible profession. There is need for pharmacists, PCN and other stakeholders to come together to weed off all drug merchants and unprofessional businesspeople in the pharmacy industry.

Also, many of the patients are not very knowledgeable, and do not know their rights. There is need for patient/consumer education

and enlightenment, which could empower them to sue for any unprofessional conduct, which will in turn help weed off non-professionals.

**As a clinical pharmacist with years of experience, can you describe what an ideal clinical practice should be for pharmacists?**

Clinical pharmacy practice is patient-oriented, as the pharmacist provides patient care that optimises medication therapy and promotes health, wellness and disease prevention. An ideal clinical setting should have some basic components which include: Prescribing medications (OTC); administering medication, including immunisation; monitoring prescriptions (MTM); managing drug use (DUR) and patient counselling. It should be where each patient receives some or all the services, depending on their circumstance. The goal is to bring about a better patient outcome.

In a typical community pharmacy here in the U.S., for each patient, there is always a drug utilisation review and patient counselling; and from time to time the patient makes appointment to see the clinical pharmacist for medication therapy management (MTM). The patient comes with all the medications they are taking, including OTC; the pharmacist reviews them for appropriateness, therapeutic duplication, drug interactions, over utilisation, etc., At the end of the MTM session, the pharmacist compiles all the medication the patient is taking, counsels the patient on the medications and if need be, recommend some OTC.

The pharmacist also checks the patient immunisation status and if need be administers a vaccine. Then the pharmacist sends a recommendation to the

patient's primary physician on his MTM findings which could include discontinuing some prescriptions, adding new ones, changing the dose or dosage etc. The goal is to bring a better patient outcome and the physicians usually accept most of the recommendations.

**With your knowledge of the Nigerian health sector, do you think Nigeria can attain this standard of practice as is done in the U.S.?**

If appropriate conditions that are obtainable here in the United States are made available in Nigeria, I can say yes, Nigerian pharmacists are capable of and can attain the standard of practice as obtained in the United States. Nigerian pharmacists are well-trained and are aware of their professional obligations to their patients, but the condition in the country makes it difficult for them to fully utilise their knowledge and potential. For instance, MTM and DUR use mostly the computer system; all the patient's medications are profiled in the computer, which makes it easy for the pharmacist to look through them and run DUR and MTM. And the computer system requires constant electricity.

For the Nigerian health sector to attain the standard of practice as is obtained in the U.S. there is need for the government to make a conscious effort to provide the basic amenities like electricity, water, access roads etc.

**Pharmacy practice is fraught with challenges in Nigeria, ranging from illegal drug distribution to sales of substandard medicines etc. What solutions can you proffer to these challenges?**

Pharmacy practice is a profession, and pharmacists are the custodian of the most sensitive product (drug) that can heal or kill a person. Everyone needs these drugs at some point; therefore this illegal distribution of drugs and sales of substandard products should be seen as a national epidemic like COVID, capable of killing everybody in the country. Hence all hands should be on deck to fight the perpetrators. Nigerian leaders, legislators, judges, the law enforcement agents and other relevant stakeholders should be involved in this fight.

NAFDAC is doing a good job but they do not have the manpower to be everywhere. I recommend that pharmacy practice should not be seen as a business; it is a profession, and non-professionals should be weeded out of the practice. I call on our lawmakers to tighten pharmacy laws to make illegal distribution of drugs, manufacturing and sales of substandard medicines a capital offence.

I also call on Nigerian judges to always set up a special tribunal for illegal pharmaceuticals cases, so as to dispense with them

expeditiously.

**What are the lessons the Nigerian government and other stakeholders in the health sector can learn from what obtains in the U.S. pharma market?**

The U.S. drug market is a multi-billion dollar industry that is well regulated; the estimated domestic revenue of the pharma industry in 2020 was about \$425 billion. The pharma market adds a lot of mileage to the American economy through billions of paid taxes and millions of jobs it creates.

Every player in the pharma market here is conscious of the rules and makes a conscious effort to abide by them. Not only that, there are well informed consumers/patients, who are willing to sue for any infraction. There is also a very strict legal system that is willing to award punitive damage. So doing the right thing is an expectation, not an exception!

The distribution system, from the manufacturers to the wholesalers to the distributors and to the retailers, is very seamless. Products are shipped overnight, making it easy for retailers to order what they need, as they need it, without carrying unnecessary heavy inventory; as the ordered products arrive just in time for the consumers.

There are great lessons to be learnt here by the Nigerian government and stakeholders. The pharma market is a goldmine, which the government can effectively harness and reap tremendous benefits from.

If the government invests in the pharma market by providing needed capital and also providing the enabling environment for the industry, the benefits they will reap, in terms of cash (in form of taxes), employment opportunities for Nigerians, and human capital development, will be far more than what they get from oil. Yes, the potential revenue from the Nigerian pharma market is far more than what is obtained from the oil industry today.

The stakeholders should bound together and form different cooperatives and buying groups. They can leverage their numbers and strength to access capital from government and other financial institutions. Also, as a buying group, they can negotiate down the prices of APIs or even finished products, which will increase their profit and also translate to a lower drug cost to the consumer; a win-win.

**How would you advise aspiring young pharmacists who want to practise overseas?**

As I said earlier, pharmacy practice is universal. Young pharmacists in Nigeria who want to practise abroad are capable of practising anywhere in the world. They should be ready to study hard to be able to pass the equivalency exams and also abide by the pharmacy practice laws in the country of their choosing.

In the U.S., there is the Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Equivalency Exam (FPGE), then the North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination (NAPLEX) and the state laws (MPJE) for each of the U.S. states.

In addition to passing these exams, the young pharmacist should have very good work ethics, and be willing to go above and beyond the call of duty. They should thoroughly investigate the country they want to travel to, and also make adequate arrangements for genuine travel documents and residency permits before jumping into any opportunity that shows up.

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## Coming Events

### ALPs 15th National Biennial Conference to hold in Lagos

The Association of Lady Pharmacists (ALPs) has concluded plans to hold its 15th National Biennial Conference from 5 to 11 June, 2022, at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Lagos.

Tagged: "EKO 2022", with the theme, "Pharmaceutical Value Chain For Optimal Utilisation - Where are We?", the conference promises deep exploration of the theme for the maximum education and enlightenment of participants for better productivity.

Some of the dignitaries that will be gracing the occasion are: Prince Julius Adelus-Adeluyi, president, Nigeria Academy of Pharmacy and chairman, Juli Plc; Dr (Mrs) Stella Okoli, GMD, Emzor Group; and Dr (Mrs) Dere Awosika, MFR, chairman, Access bank, among many others.

### NAIP's Annual National Conference holds 14 to 16 June

The Association of Industrial Pharmacists of Nigeria (NAIP) has concluded plans to hold its Annual National Conference in Lagos, from 14 to 16 June, at the Providence Hotel, Ikeja, Lagos. Themed, "The Roles of Industrial Pharmacists in a Depressed Economy: Opportunities, Challenges and Solutions in Providing Essential Drugs", the keynote speaker will be Pharm. (Dr) Ifeanyi Okoye, chairman/CEO, Juhel Pharma Nig. Ltd.

Tagged "Eko 2022", the conference will be featuring three essential sub-themes, which are Professional Collaboration and Coordination as a Panacea to Industrial Growth; Technology Regulation and Data Centricity in Strengthening Local Capacity as Pharma Industries Evolve: NAPA-NAIP Example; and the Role of Pharmacists In Vaccine Interventions.

### 80th FIP Congress holds in Seville, Spain

The International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) is set to hold its 80th Congress of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, in Seville, Spain, from 18 to 22 September, 2022. Themed, "Pharmacy United in the Recovering of Healthcare", the congress will be co-hosted by the General Pharmaceutical Council of Spain.

Being the first physical congress after two years of virtual meetings, orchestrated by the global pandemic of COVID-19, it promises all participants the opportunity of meeting international colleagues and pharmacy experts to review shared experiences of the past few years and search for solutions to advance the well-being of global communities.

### 2022 NAPPSA Scientific Conference holds in Tampa, 22 to 25 September

The Nigerian Association of Pharmacists & Pharmaceutical Scientists in the Americas (NAPPSA) has slated its 2022 Annual Scientific Conference to hold from 22 to 25 September 2022, at the Renaissance Tampa International Plaza Hotel, Tampa, Florida, USA.

The conference targets pharmacists, physicians, pharmaceutical scientists, and others interested in learning about the most current advances in pharmacy practice, pharmacy ownership, pharmaceutical education, drug discovery, development, regulation and safe utilisation of drugs.

In addition to distinctive networking opportunity with colleagues and friends, the conference is designed to provide pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists with timely information and resources to enrich their career and practice. A continuing pharmaceutical education programme with pharmacy credit hours covering different areas of pharmaceutical profession from academia, clinical pharmacy, ambulatory care, community pharmacy, regulatory, industry and consulting. Mentoring sessions and education workshops will also be offered.

## Events in Pictures



Sir Ifeanyi Atueyi, publisher, Pharmanews, presenting a cheque to Jennifer Ukamaka Ekuma, winner, PANSite of the Year Award, 2022.



Pharm. (Mrs) Victoria Ukwu, ALPs national chairman presenting a gift to the GMD Emzor Group, Dr (Mrs) Stella Okoli, during ALPs national executives visit to her office.

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BP: Blood pressure.

1. Cardiovasc J Afr. 2010 Feb; 21(1): 61-62.; 2. Drugs. 2006;66(1):51-83.;  
3. Expert Opinion on Pharmacotherapy 2011;12(17):2719-2735



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CVD: Cardiovascular disease | LDL-C: Low-density lipoprotein cholesterol

1. Clin Med Insights Cardiol. 2012; 6: 17-33.; 2. JAMA 2007 Mar 28;297(12):1344-53.;  
3. Journal of the American College of Cardiology 2017;69(22);  
4. ACC/AHA CLINICAL PRACTICE GUIDELINE; Circulation 2019; 140(11): e596-e646.



## Moving up to extraordinary leadership

### THE JOURNEY OF AGILE ORGANISATION

#### Transformation starts with inspirational leadership

By Prof. 'Lere Baale, FPSN, FPCPharm, FNAPharm

Let us be frank: most "leaders" do not lead at all – they simply tell people what to do. Here is a thought: if we could stop telling and start inspiring. Without inspiration, we can never truly achieve organisational or people transformation. Inspiration is the driving force behind any true transformation. So let us ask, "Why am I inspired to transform the organisation, my business, people, and leadership?" If the answer is, "I do not know", we need to dig deeper.

1. Let us ask ourselves three powerful questions:

2. What will happen if this business, people, and leadership stay stagnant?

3. What will happen if competitors figure it out and transform before our business?

4. What will happen when this business, people, and leadership transform?

By answering those three questions, we can start to ignite the inspiration needed to move forward with our organisation, business, people and leadership transformation. Here is a great tip: if you find yourself struggling with the questions, try doing a little research. Go online and search for other companies, people, or leaders you admire that have transformed. How did they do it? What were their needs? Ask people in your company to answer the same questions.

Without inspiration, we are more likely just to be going through the motions without concrete forward movement. That will never work. The reason? It will just be another programme or corporate initiative. You know, the kind you always hated when you were an employee, and your boss tried to stuff something down the ranks, telling everyone how committed they are. However, of course, you and the rest of the team knew better. So you played along, waiting for it to pass, and within a few days, weeks or months, you all were right back to where you were before – pretending everything was great.

This is why you, as the leader (boss, supervisor), must find true inspiration. Only with your inspiration will you be able to get others inspired too.

#### Finding inspiration

Let us talk about how to find your inspiration. My first suggestion is to do some real soul searching to find your inspiration. There is a reason you are reading this article. What was it? Is your organisation suffering from a high turnover? Have you been losing market share in recent months? Are your employee engagement scores lower than expected? Are you hearing about changes in your industry? Whatever your reason, good for you; at least you are starting to think about the future.

However, the doom and gloom do not have to be the only motivator. Perhaps you are in the other camp, trying to think ahead of your competition. You are already on top of your game; you do not want to lose it. You want to stay on top, and you know transformation is the only way to ensure you do not become complacent.

Determining why you feel the need to transform is the key; INSPIRATION is the engine! Now go and start your inspiration engine!

For centuries, academics and gurus have focused on the topic

of "leadership" – what it is, how to develop personal leadership skills, leadership styles, and the impact of good leadership. However, from business experience, the emphasis has begun to change. Not only do we need to think about how to develop our leaders, but we need to focus on what inspiration truly is and find our inner source of inspiration to enhance leadership capability.

We will always need leaders, but leaders now, more than ever, need to inspire a change weary workforce to deliver more with less. The Oxford dictionary defines inspiration as "the process of being mentally stimulated to do or feel something, especially to do something creative."

We will try to explore this concept, but early on, we will explore why we believe that inspirational leadership is more than a process and why emotion is equally important. Inspirational leaders today must engage more than just the minds of their followers; they need to engage their hearts as well.

Inspiration stimulates followers to reflect internally. When values are aligned, deep emotional drivers are engaged, and the follower is moved and motivated to act and raise their level of performance to achieve higher goals. When two or more people are involved, inspirational leadership takes on a new dimension, and inspiration becomes leadership with impact; it becomes an unseen living flow of ideas and emotions between two or more minds and hearts.

The emotional connection fuels a desire to overcome challenges and achieve new stimulating results, which deliver a sense of achievement. These powerful emotions inspire the givers and receivers to collaborate towards a common goal. This goal may be a small step change or a transformational movement. Inspirational leadership engages people by tapping into their motivation and inspiring flow, creativity, innovation and coordinated action.

We believe that John Quincy Adams (6th US president)'s definition of leadership aligns with our thinking on inspirational leadership: "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a [inspirational] leader."

We will explore the topic of inspirational leadership. Together, we will travel through the landscape of ideas that have inspired the thinking behind leadership development, both past and present. The author has also drawn from his experience as a leader in a global setting and as a consultant in the business of leadership and agile organisational development to enrich the discussion.

It is hoped that we will understand the essence of inspiration, find a definition of inspirational leadership that works for us and understand why it is essential in today's business world. We will look at how inspirational leadership impacts organisational performance and presents a model for us to consider how inspirational leadership leads to organisation maturity.

A deeper understanding of inspirational leadership is presented by reflecting on what we can learn from history plus the more modern field of neuroscience. The importance of being different and bold is explained through a review of world leaders and references

to famous speeches to demonstrate how to engage the hearts of followers.

Finally, we outline six things to think about when designing an inspirational leadership development programme before presenting conclusions on the topic and reviewing what this means for us.

#### Why is inspirational leadership important?

Today's businesses

are constantly grappling with challenging business targets. Leaders are trying to deliver these targets in a competitive world that is continually changing, developing and moving. New disruptive technology introduces a step-change in competitive advantage every day. People are also constantly moving, teams form and reform and companies are on the hunt for talent.

In this context, HR departments and L&D professionals need to evolve with business needs to be helpful. New thinking is required to develop our most talented employees and keep them in our businesses.

• But what is new in the field of leadership development?

• Where should we focus our efforts in the current globalised, digital and complex world?

We will explore these questions and build on known best practices in leadership development. We will also be explaining why "inspiration" and "inspirational leadership" are critical factors for business success.

Inspirational leadership inspires action, significantly raises individual and team performance levels and ignites creativity and audacious innovation. It truly unlocks latent potential by tapping into our inner motivation and values and inspiring people to follow their passion and move towards ambitious goals. In our experience, inspired and motivated people and teams significantly impact organisational performance.

#### Can we all become inspirational leaders?

Everyone can become an inspirational leader; all we need to do is unlock our inspirational potential and find an opportunity to demonstrate our capability. We all have an emotional blueprint and style which will be unique to each person. However, there are skills which we can learn, grow and develop to increase our impact on our followers.

It is essential to understand that becoming an inspirational leader requires focused effort, practice and an ability to conduct self-reflection. Inspiration is personal; our source of inspiration is closely linked to our beliefs, values and identity.

Inspirational leadership is a mindset and a skill. It should be thought of as an action-orientated mindset where one individual can ignite a fire in another person's heart and mind and move a person or team to take action and achieve something more significant than the current status quo far beyond their imagination.

An example would be the person who watches a friend complete a marathon and 10,000 other people and feels a wave of admiration, excitement, and enthusiasm at the sacrifice and hard work the friend has achieved for a moving cause. The observer feels the drive to



sponsor or even go further and sign up to do a marathon the following year. This is inspiration at work. Significant action takes place often without the source of the inspiration even knowing (the marathon runner, in this case).

This fascinating topic is open for exploration and contribution by those interested in understanding more.

Let us start the journey of exploration by looking first at the essence of inspiration itself, where the reader will be introduced to empowerment, trust, accountability, authentic leadership, leadership ethos and teamwork. Inspirational leadership is excellent but has limited use in the workplace if it has little impact on the organisation. With this in mind, we explore what inspirational leadership means for organisation performance and why it is essential.

Topics such as diversity, respect, authenticity and talent will be explored in the context of inspiration and organisational development. We will also be looking at two basic leadership philosophies which support the inspirational leadership mindset – servant leadership and followership.

We will also consider what history can teach us about inspirational leadership and what we can learn from the modern military on how to inspire employees and develop high performing teams. The concept and importance of mission command and leadership styles will then be explored, and a discussion is presented on which style generates the most inspiration.

This will be incomplete without reviewing the link between inspiration and neuroscience. This, combined with a reflection on what we can learn from Churchill about how he inspired a nation to action through empowering speeches, reflection on the importance of emotions, attachment theory and psychological safety, and inspirational leadership development and application in business.

We conclude with a reflection review on the latest thinking about teams. The concept of "teaming" is introduced, and teaming skills are discussed in the context of why our leaders today should have teaming skills in their portfolio of capabilities. These skills are critical to survival in the complex world we operate in today. To demonstrate inspirational leadership in action, we uniquely explore this with a speech that inspired a transformational movement across a nation.

We also cover in our conclusions some ideas on how to develop emotional skills through development centres and encourage reflection on the importance of diversity, courage and the need to deliver inspiration in your unique way.

# Oyo YPG calls for collective action against malaria

## - Partners Emzor to offer free medical care to Eruwa residents

By Adebayo Oladejo

As part of its activities to mark this year's World Malaria Day, the Young Pharmacists Group of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN-YPG), Oyo State Chapter, recently partnered with Emzor Pharmaceutical Plc, to offer free medical and health services to over 200 residents of Eruwa and other adjoining towns Oyo State.

Explaining the motive behind the initiative, which was held at Ankoo Primary Healthcare Centre, Eruwa, the Coordinator, YPG Oyo State, Pharm. Firinajoyisopin Oyelude, noted that the outreach was aimed at supporting the health of the residents, while celebrate the World Malaria Day 2022, which is usually celebrated every 25 April globally.

Oyelude further explained that the gesture was part of the group's social responsibility, adding that



A cross-section of PSN-YPG delegates and Staff of Ankoo Primary Healthcare Centre, at the free healthcare free screening programme.

YPG Oyo, as a responsible body, would continue to embark on such initiative, as a means of contributing its quota to the development of

healthcare in the state, adding that the programme would help the beneficiaries learn more about their health, especially about

malaria.

Speaking on the theme of the event, "Harness Innovation to Reduce the Malaria Disease Burden and Save Lives", the YPG coordinator stressed the need for investments and innovation that bring new vector control approaches, diagnostics, antimalarial medicines and other tools to heighten the pace of progress against malaria.

She said, "We had a free medical screening for all of the people who came here to present themselves to the officials. We registered them, took their vitals, while they went to our personnel for interpretation and consultation. Then, some personnel attended to them and gave them drugs to help manage and/or treat their conditions."

Oyelude further noted that malaria remains a significant public health and development challenge, advising people to desist from consulting quacks or taking drugs that are not prescribed by pharmacists.

She added, "We get pharmaceutical companies, corporate organisations and other individuals such as Emzor Pharmaceutical Plc, who happened to be our major sponsor as they practically partnered with us by donating money, several cartons of drugs and souvenirs to us. We also have others like Bond Chemicals and Industries Limited, May & Baker Pharmaceutical Limited, and Afrab Chem Nigeria Limited, amongst others, as sponsors to support this vision and supplement what we have put down."

Also speaking, the Treasurer of YPG, Oyo State, Pharm. Yemisi Oyetunde, said that the group had come to Eruwa, thinking that only a few people would come out, but they were surprised by the number of people that were on the ground when they arrived and the crowd that came in later, adding that the exercise was a worthy one.

She further explained that the free healthcare outreach featured point of care testing, free consultation and pharmaceutical care, free medications, health awareness, free malaria test, blood pressure check, sugar levels, BMI test, height and weight check, as well as a rapid diagnostic test.

In her remarks, the Matron-in-Charge, Ankoo Primary Healthcare Centre, Dorcas Ojediran, commended the YPG members in the state for organising such a laudable programme for the resident of the town, adding that the gesture would go a long way in ensuring that every resident of the town had access to good healthcare.

While appreciating the pharmacists for the good gesture, one of the beneficiaries, Mrs Oluwakemi Adetoro, said that the free screening exercise and awareness was a big boost to them as residents of the town and would linger in their memory.

Other beneficiaries, an octogenarian, Mr Sunday Olayeri, and Mrs Sarah Adeleke, enjoyed other healthcare providers and organisations in the country to take a cue from what the pharmacists had done and reach out to assist people in enjoying better health, saying this is a way of giving back to the society.

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# Complications of malaria you should know

By Pharm. (Dr) Onyinye Chiekwe

Currently trending social media lingo is "ment or malaria?" and whenever I see or hear it, cerebral malaria easily comes to mind. In essence, the question "ment or malaria?" is posed to someone who asks a seemingly meaningless question or makes an irrelevant comment. So it's like the person is being asked: "Is your comment driven by mental troubles or malaria?" - referencing the myth that malaria can affect the brain.

But, then, is this really a myth? Can malaria affect the brain? Cerebral malaria, a complication of severe malaria, affects the brain. However, the clinical presentation of cerebral malaria is entirely different from what the lingo suggests.

Here is a brief refresher. Malaria is still one of the most prevalent infectious diseases in the world. In fact, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), there were 241 million malaria cases in 2020 and 627,000 deaths. Of this figure, the African region carried a disproportionately high share of the global malaria burden being home to 95 percent of all malaria cases and 96 percent of deaths, with Nigeria contributing the highest burden. Children under five years accounted for 80 percent of all malaria deaths in this region.

Malaria is a life-threatening disease caused by *Plasmodium* parasites, spread by infected female *Anopheles* mosquitoes. The infection clears with appropriate medications. In other cases, however, complications may arise, ranging from renal failure and anaemia to metabolic alteration and cerebral malaria.

## Hypoglycaemia

1. Hypoglycaemia is a critical complication of malaria in three groups of patients:

2. Patients with severe diseases, especially young children
3. Pregnant women, whether on admission or after quinine treatment
4. Other patients treated with quinine as a result of quinine-induced treatment

**Clinical presentation:** In conscious patients, it may present as sweating, breathlessness, dilation of pupils, tachycardia, breathlessness, anxiety, a feeling of coldness, and light-headedness. If these continue without clinical intervention, patients may lose consciousness. Hypoglycaemia may also cause generalised convulsions and posturing.

Hypoglycaemia is frequently overlooked because its symptoms also present in severe malaria itself. Deterioration in consciousness is also a hallmark feature of hypoglycaemia, but it is also a warning presentation of cerebral malaria.

## Cerebral malaria

It is reportedly the most severe neurological complication of *P. falciparum* infection. It may occur less than two weeks after a mosquito bite and develop after two to seven days of suffering from a fever. The WHO defines cerebral malaria as a *clinical syndrome characterised by coma at least one hour after termination of a seizure or correction of hypoglycaemia, with asexual forms of P. falciparum on peripheral blood smears and no other cause to explain the coma.* Cerebral malaria is an important complication of malaria in children.

**Pathogenesis:** Attempts to understand the pathogenesis of cerebral malaria mostly rely on the brain tissues of patients who died from the condition. A histopathological finding is the intense sequestration (or segregation) of infected erythrocytes in cerebral microvessels. An autopsy series of patients who died from cerebral malaria revealed that 94 percent of their brain microvessels contained adherent infected erythrocytes, compared with 13 percent in patients who died from non-cerebral malaria. It is suggested that

cerebral sequestration of infected red blood cells is the aetiology that leads to cerebral malaria.

**Symptoms / clinical presentation:** A hallmark symptom of cerebral malaria is impaired consciousness, with coma being the most severe clinical manifestation. Coma onset can be gradual or sudden. When cerebral malaria develops gradually, patients initially present with drowsiness (this symptom should be considered worrying), confusion, delirium, or agitation.

Other symptoms include: open-eyed but non-seeing; disconjugate gaze, Nystagmus, sustained ocular deviation, usually upward or lateral, abnormal posturing, seizures and electroencephalographic (EEG) abnormalities, fixed jaw closure, and tooth grinding.

## Severe anaemia

Rupture of the red blood cells (haemolytic anaemia) occurs with malaria. However, in the case of severe malaria, dangerously low

RBC count or diminished RBC function ensues. Anaemia may be associated with a secondary bacterial infection. It is a significant complication of malaria in pregnant women.

**Clinical presentation: fatigue, headaches, low blood pressure.**

Acute renal injury  
Sometimes, *P. falciparum* parasites in the RBCs may block tiny vessels in the kidneys; or RBCs may clump due to toxins, interfering with normal kidney function and causing pain.

## Malaria in pregnancy

In a malaria-endemic settings, such as Nigeria, pregnant women are highly susceptible to severe anaemia. Severe malaria is associated with higher mortality in pregnancy than in non-pregnant women.

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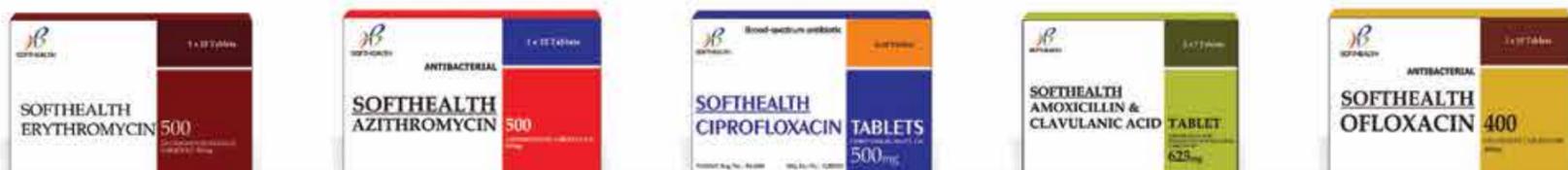
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# Unilorin pharmacy faculty laments adverse effects of ASUU strike

## - As Dean recommends review of pharmacists' remuneration

By Ranmilowo Ojalumo

Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Ilorin, Kwara State, Dr Mohammed Amali, has bemoaned the effects of the ongoing strike action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) on the programmes of the faculty, stating that the strike had stalled most of its planned activities.

Amali told *Pharmanews* that the faculty was still making efforts to recover from the disruptions created by COVID-19, when the ASUU strike started. He appealed to the Federal Government to listen to ASUU and bring the protracted strike to an end.

According to the dean, "The ASUU strike has really affected the programmes of the faculty. Following the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in 2020, when school resumed, the university took a decision to run the semesters concurrently, without going on holidays, to ensure that we bridge the gap that was created during the pandemic.

"We were already moving forward when the ASUU strike came and truncated the aim the university was trying to achieve. The students are now losing valuable time and they will likely lose more time, unless something drastic is done."

Amali also revealed that, as part of effort by the faculty to further equip the students, it had started activities at its Drug information Centre.

The centre, he said, is

domiciled in the Department of Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmacy Practice, adding that the usage of the centre had also been inculcated into the curriculum of the students. Accordingly, the students now have a module which mandates the use of the centre in honing their skills in the areas of drug information and the latest techniques in drug formulation.

The dean stressed the ultimate goal is to mould the students to be at par with modern trends in the pharmaceutical world, adding that the Faculty is planning to subsequently set up some projects to see how the centre can be fully utilised and further upgraded to enable it meet the purpose for which it was established.

Amali also said that despite the external factors affecting the programme of the faculty and the entire university, the faculty will not relent in ensuring that it produces the best brains that will add indelible value to the pharmaceutical space.

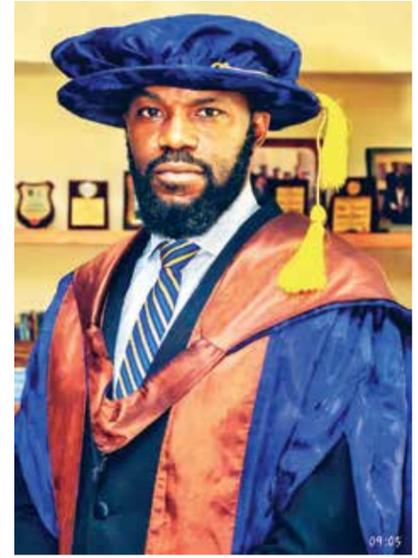
He stated, "Between mid-last year (2021) and now, we have had some activities in the faculty. We conducted the foreign graduate pharmacy orientation programme for the northern zone, which was held in the faculty and it was a huge success. The Nigerian University Commission (NUC) carried out re-accreditation exercise on our B.Pharm programme, which is usually done every five years, and it was also a huge success."

The seasoned academic also used the opportunity to call on stakeholders in the Nigerian pharmaceutical industry to pay more attention to regulation and control, to ensure that the industry is not hijacked or bastardised by unscrupulous and untrained people.

He further lamented the influx of quacks in the industry, saying: "There are many untrained people now encroaching into the pharmacy ecosystem, which is not really good for us. We have patent medicine dealers; we have nurses and other healthcare professionals that are coming into the space where they know little or nothing about and we need to guard that space jealously."

The dean equally harped on the need for stakeholders in the pharmacy profession to work together to develop a policy that will ensure that all the anomalies in the industry are dealt with in a way that the attempt by charlatans to invade the industry will not be sustainable. He specifically called on the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria (PCN), the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and the Ministry of Health to work with other stakeholders in the sector to ensure that the industry is sanitised.

Amali also decried the exodus of Nigerian pharmacists out of the country, saying it is a bad signal for the industry, the health sector and the country at large. As a solution, he recommended an upward review of the remuneration of pharmacists in



Dr Mohammed Amali

the country.

In his words: "There is need to critically look into the rate at which fresh graduates and even the experienced pharmacists are migrating abroad. Yes, we can't stop them and I can't also blame them because the economic situation in the country is not desirable for many aspiring pharmacist.

"But be that as it may, there is need to look into the remuneration of not only those that have stayed for some years in the practice but also for those that are coming in. There is need to encourage them so that they will remain here, because if they keep leaving, we will end up not having the requisite manpower to combat all the challenges confronting the pharmacy profession and the entire health sector, which is not good for the country."



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## Potash and its benefits

By Pharm. Ngozika Okoye

MSc, MPH, FPCPharm

(Nigeria Natural Medicine Development Agency)

Email: ngozikaokoye@yahoo.com



### Potash

Potash is the general name given to various inorganic compounds that contain potassium in water-soluble form. The name derives from pot ash, which refers to plant ashes or wood ash soaked in water in a pot, the primary method of manufacturing the product before the industrial era. It is called kanwa in Hausa, akanwu in Igbo and kaun in Yoruba. Common names sometimes used synonymously are caustic potash or potash lye.

#### Constituents

Potash ores are typically rich in potassium chloride, sodium chloride and other salts and clays. It has a high sodium content and very little potassium.

#### Preparations

Potash is available in form of powder, granules and lumps. It is an ingredient of local delicacies like yam porridge, abacha, ugba and nkwo. It is used in Nigeria as a tenderising agent in local dishes preparation.

#### Pharmacological actions and medicinal uses

Studies reveal that potash has expectorant and antacid properties, thus its use in traditional medicine concoctions to treat cough, constipation and flatulence. Some local villagers combine potash with other local ingredients to form utaba, which is a type of local snuff.

Studies have corroborated the ability of potash to increase production and quality of breast milk in new mothers and its use by Hausa women to prepare the special porridge meal which they often take after childbirth.

In orthodox medicine, potassium, which is found in potash, is used in the treatment of hypokalaemia. Potassium is one of the most important minerals in the body. It helps to regulate fluid balance, muscle contractions and nerve signals. A high-potassium diet may help reduce blood pressure and water retention and protect against stroke.

Potash is used for the relief of tooth ache and as a preservative, due to its antifungal properties. It is

value, taste, colour, texture and disease resistance of food crops. As a supplement in animal feeds,

potash helps to promote healthy growth in animals, as well as increase milk production.

#### Adverse effects

Potash has been associated with loss of appetite, weakness, reduced activity level and weight loss in Wistar rats. High intake could lead to liver problems, as well as severe and irreparable damage to the kidneys. Potash reduces the protein value in diet. Excessive respiratory disease has been a concern for potash miners.

Studies reveal that potash can induce abortion in early pregnancies, due to its ability to increase uterine contractility. It is also said that excessive intake of potash by men predisposes them to low sperm production.

Economic uses and

potentials

Potash has been used in bleaching textiles, making glass, ceramic and soap. It is useful in the pharmaceutical, food, beverages, cosmetics and glass industries.

Potash price is reported to have shot up from \$650 to \$800 per tonne, since the COVID 19 pandemic outbreak. There are speculations by analysts that prices could reach as high as \$900 to \$950 per tonne. Potash costs up to ₦4,500 per bag in the Nigerian market.

There are opportunities in the mining, production, processing, distribution and sale of potash, both locally and globally.

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Okpala, B. (2015). Benefits of Kaun Potash (Akanwu). Available at: Global food book. <https://globalfoodbook.com/benefits-of-kaun-potash-akanwu...>

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# Depression, leading cause of disease-related disability in women, experts say

## - As LWI launches MoAdV to tackle domestic violence

By Adebayo Oladejo

**A** mental health expert, Dr Olajumoke Koyejo, has raised the alarm on rising cases of depression among women, saying it is a silent contributor to disease-related disability.

The expert spoke at the recent inauguration of Mothers Against Domestic Violence (MoAdV), a group founded by the LiveWell Initiative (LWI) to stem the rising spate of domestic violence in the country.

Speaking on the topic, "Towards Emotional Stability in Marriage", Koyejo noted that studies have shown that married women are mostly at the receiving end when it comes to depression, stressing that being married comes with a high risk for common mental disorders in women.

While advising women to be mindful of their marital life, the consultant psychiatrist further noted that while marriage is important in life, women must strive to keep their self-worth, improve their self-worth and understand the limitations of their partners as humans.

Also speaking at the inauguration, Pharm. Bisi Bright, convener of MoAdV and chief executive officer, LWI, said the founding of the group was a reaction to the alarming rise in cases of domestic violence in the country.

Bright, who revealed that the recent passing of the popular gospel artiste, Osinachi, further motivated the launch of the initiative, saying that the next pandemic, after COVID-19, is domestic violence, and must be



Pharm. Bisi Bright

stopped at all cost.

Giving more details about MoAdV, the clinical pharmacist, public health practitioner, social entrepreneur, researcher and lecturer said, "At MoAdV, domestic violence is our business and we must mind it and guard against our women from the muscle-flexing monsters out there.

"The project has been on the table for a while, and it is important because the next pandemic would be domestic violence if care is not taken. LWI was deliberate in starting the trend, so we call on others out there to come and join us in other to prevent the next pandemic."

Presenting her keynote address, Mrs Adeola Azeez, lawyer, social entrepreneur, and co-founder of Women in Business Administration and Politics (WIMBIZ) cited the

World Health Organisation (WHO) which defines domestic violence as a range of sexually, psychologically and physically coercive acts against women by current or former male intimate partners, adding that the United Nations defined it as a pattern of behaviour in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner.

Azeez disclosed that in recent times Nigeria has recorded a surge in cases of domestic violence. Quoting the result of a poll conducted by NOIPoll Limited and Project Alert, she disclosed that 54 per cent of Nigerians have either suffered from some form of domestic violence or know someone who has suffered from it.

She further said that the NOIPoll report also stated that 75 per cent of the victims are women, while men and children were placed at 16 per cent and 9 per cent respectively.

"In another report by the World Health Organisation, it was stated that in some parts of the world, one-half of women have experienced domestic violence," she added.

Azeez, who doubles as the matron of MoAdV, also emphasised that parents have a major responsibility to ensure that they raise children that will not continue the cycle of abuse, adding that the society suffers from the effect of failed parenting, hence, the need to take parenting responsibilities seriously.

She said, "How many more lives do we have to lose before we all fight vehemently against this? Do we sit still and watch our precious

sisters, wives, mothers, aunts, and friends suffer without lending a helping hand? We cannot act like it's none of our business. It is our business and we must mind it."

She continued, "Posterity will remember the LiveWell Initiative for bringing this issue to the fore. It will also remember us for the role we play to put an end to domestic violence in Nigeria. Together, let's join hands with LiveWell Initiative to put an end to domestic violence and make our society a better and safer place for women."

Speaking in the same vein, the duo of Mrs Bimpe Balogun, chairman, Audit Committee of Zenith Bank Plc and financial hygiene expert; and Mrs Bolade Awosan, a therapist and counsellor, noted that the challenge of saying "no" is squarely up to women, adding that violence against women in Nigeria is almost accepted as a fact of life in some cultures that perceive women as the property of their husbands.

According to the duo, wife beaters are monsters that must be stopped at all cost, emphasising the importance of financial hygiene for women, and reiterating the need for every woman to have savings for a rainy day.

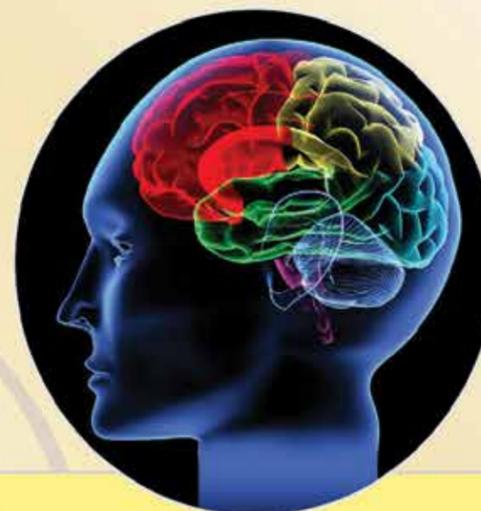
The highpoint of the programme was the appointment of officers for MoAdV. They are Dr Jumoke Koyejo, clinical director; Mrs Tosin Adeosun, operations manager; Mrs Jonathan Adinya, coordinator, North; Mrs Favour Chukwumam, coordinator, South; Mrs Sandra Patrick, physical therapy coach; Pharm. Bisi Bright, convener; and Mrs Adeola Azeez, matron.

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# Ekuma wins Pharmanews 2022 PANSite of the Year award

## - Receives plaque, cheque

By Adebayo Oladejo

It was an emotional and unforgettable moment for Jennifer Ukamaka Ekuma, a 500 Level Pharmacy student of the University of Uyo (UNIUYO), Akwa-Ibom State, as she recently received the Pharmanews PANSite of the Year award, which comes with a plaque and a cheque of N100,000.

Speaking during the presentation, which took place at the corporate head office of Pharmanews Limited, Pharmanews Managing Director, Sir Ifeanyi Atueyi, congratulated Ekuma for emerging winner of the very tough contest. He attributed her triumph to her outstanding contributions to the healthcare space in her school and other pharmacy schools across the country.

Commending her unflinching charisma and resolve, despite competing with those that were considered more popular candidates, Atueyi said Ekuma had distinguished herself among her peers through the several health intervention projects she had organised in her school and others.

Atueyi seized the opportunity to urge other pharmacy students to seek ways of providing valuable services to their schools and to continue advancing public health in their various domains. He added that the prospective winner of the next edition of the award would face a tougher challenge because the stake had been raised by Ekuma, especially in the way she reached out to all the pharmacy schools across the country showcasing her contributions and canvassing votes.

Speaking on how *Pharmanews* commenced the online poll for pharmacy students in 2019, the octogenarian pharmacist disclosed that Yusuf Hassan Wada, a student of Usmanu Danfodiyo University (UDUS), Sokoto was the winner of the maiden edition, adding that Izukanne Emembolu, from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State; and Martin Nwofia, from Odumegwu Ojukwu University, also in Anambra State, were the second and third winners respectively.

Atueyi enthused that, in winning the award, Ekuma had placed her school and faculty more prominently on the map of success, while also making her family, friends and well-wishers proud.

"As a winner today, you have become our ambassador in Pharmanews and as a result, we are expecting you to be of good behaviour and pure character. At Pharmanews, we are known for integrity and we work with integrity. So as a winner today, you become like us and act like us," he said.

The *Pharmanews* publisher further said that the company's relationship with the Pharmaceutical Association of Nigeria Students (PANS) started right from 1979 when the first edition of the journal was published, adding that, since then, the company has never missed any edition and has never failed to send copies to PANS chapters across the country.

In her response, an excited



L-R: Mrs Temitope Obayendo, online editor; Sir Ifeanyi Atueyi, publisher, *Pharmanews*; Jennifer Ukamaka Ekuma, winner, PANSite of the Year Award, 2022, and Mr Patrick Iwelunmor, editor, during the presentation.

Ekuma disclosed that her nomination to be among the contestants was done by a friend from another school, adding that she did not see herself winning the contest at the initial stage, considering the calibre of people she was meant to compete with.

She added however that she soon jettisoned her apprehension and decided to put her best foot forward in winning the contest.

In her words, "As soon as I got nominated, I became motivated and I decided to do everything I could to emerge the winner, using the little popularity I had garnered while carrying out several public health interventions and outreaches.

"I got in touch with friends across pharmacy schools, even as far as the southwest and private schools, to blow my trumpet about what I had done in the past and the need for them to vote for me. So I am highly indebted to all my friends, both in my school and other schools, as well as my faculty, including my family and well-wishers."

Ekuma promised not to betray the confidence reposed in her by her supporters and *Pharmanews*, adding that she was ready to be a good ambassador of the company and propagate its vision wherever she goes.

Receiving the award plaque and a cheque of 100,000 from Sir Atueyi, a visibly overwhelmed Ekuma said it was a big honour, which she never had thought could happen. She thanked the management of *Pharmanews* and her colleagues nationwide for making the feat possible.

She added, "I also want to thank every pharmacy student in the country who has voted for me, especially the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Uyo. This award also means that I have to keep doing what I was doing in the past that gave me the opportunity to be voted, and even do more."

Speaking at the event, *Pharmanews* Editor, Mr Patrick Iwelunmor, charged the award winner to remain focused, committed and dedicated to making impacts, especially by developing more initiatives that can help others in the

society who are not as privileged as her.

Also speaking, the *Pharmanews* Online Editor, Mrs Temitope Obayendo, urged Ekuma to keep maximising her passion and talent, stressing that this is crucial to her success in the journey of life.

Other contestants who participated in the poll and came

first and second-runners up respectively were Akpus Adigizi (UNIJOS) with 28.17 per cent votes and Macdonald C. Ikaroha (UNIZIK) with 27.38 per cent votes.

The first and second runners-up will be contacted in due time by the management of *Pharmanews* for their prizes.

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## Shalina ends financial year, celebrates outstanding staff

By Adebayo Oladejo

It was a moment of excitement and gratitude, as Shalina Healthcare recently marked the end of its 2021/2022 financial year, with an Award and Gala night, tagged "Celebrating Shalina Stars", and held at the Orchid Hotel & Resort Centre, Lekki, Lagos.

The event, which was in sessions, was used by the company to assess the outgone financial year, project into the new year, and celebrate its members of staff, while taking them through leadership training programme sessions.

In her opening speech at the event, the Chief Executive Officer of the company, Shalina Clifford, said the outgone year was a tremendous success for the company, adding that the contributions of the entire staff of the company could not be overemphasised.

Addressing the staff, Clifford said: "We have made a lot of successes in the year, and it is a fact that this can never be achievable without the contributions of all of you. I really appreciate your efforts in ensuring that we have the best of business in the year. Your dedication, commitment and loyalty to the company are invaluable. These have made us go this far."

Also speaking at the event, the Vice President/ Head, West Africa, of the company, Arun Raj, appreciated and also encouraged the staff not to relent in consolidating the success made, saying, the company will always do its best to provide good working conditions and support of every member of staff in every area to bring out the best in them.

"We are a big family here. We are most interested in your



**L-R: Head of Consumer Business, West Africa, Shalina Healthcare, Suresh Karuppiasamy; Winner, Consumer Delegate Awards; Chiuba Nwosu; Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Shalina Healthcare, Shalina Clifford; and Vice President/ Head, West Africa, Shalina Healthcare, Arun Raj, at the end of the financial year Gala Night and Award Ceremony of the company.**

happiness, and this is part of what we are doing by recognising and honouring some of the winners of special awards at conditions," he said.

One of the highlights of the event was the pomp and pageantry of the Award and Gala Night, where outstanding members of staff were recognised and rewarded for their dedication and performance during the last financial year.

In his speech before the awards were given, the Head of Corporate Marketing, Folorunso Alaran highlighted the core values of the company which he said formed the yardsticks for determining winners of some of the awards. According to him, the core values of the company are embedded in the acronym EPPIC, which stands

for Entrepreneurship, Persistence, People, Integrity and Customers Obsession.

In recognition of their outstanding performance in the year under review, a good number of the staff were awarded certificates of honour, which came with cash awards among other benefits, in different categories. The categories for the individual awards included Quarterly Award, Long Service Award, Special Recognition Award, Special Mention Award, Annual Award and Global Award.

In the Annual Award Category, Gloria Okolie and Olutayo Olutade won the Best Consumer Delegates Awards, while Chindima H. Mbakagu and Gabriel Joseph won the Best Pharma Delegates Award.

Ruth Dinwabor and Israel Akinola won Medical Delegates Awards. In the other annual awards categories, David Nwadike and Adekunle Abass Yussuf won the Best Regional Manager (Trade) and Best Regional Manager (Institution) respectively.

Of the over 50 awards won at the event both on individual and team basis, the most prestigious was the Global Award, where the winners would enjoy an all-expenses-paid trip to Dubai, UAE to compete at the international level with other staff of the company from all over the world. In this regard, Chindima H. Mbakagu and Chiuba Nwosu emerged as the winners of the Pharma Delegate and Consumer Delegate Awards respectfully.

Meanwhile, in their earlier individual remarks, some of the members of staff of the company who were elevated in the year praised the company and promised to do more. Francis Ude, regional manager (East), said: "Thank you for the promotion! I am excited and look forward to adding more value to my team in my new position."

Also speaking, Donald Oluwatosin, regional manager (East) said: "I feel privileged to be a staff of Shalina, a workplace that exudes love, radiates passion and encourages human development. Shalina is one of the best workplaces and I look forward to giving my best in the new role."

In his own remarks, Ololade Okanlawon, regional manager, Mass Specialty, Lagos, said: "The work ethics and leadership in Shalina Healthcare have been an inspiring example, I look forward to continued success."

The event ended with merriment and team bonding of Shalina staff from across the federation.

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# Your mind and your health

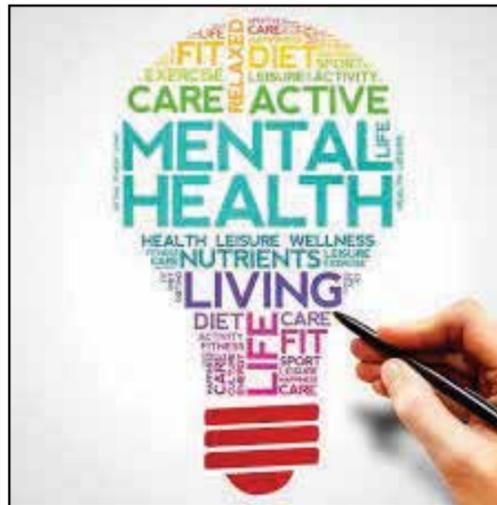
By Segun Lufadeju

Welcome to the “mind and health” series. In this series, we will be considering issues that are related to building a healthy body by building a healthy mind. Yes, you can build a healthy body, free of sickness and disease, by developing a healthy mind. We will be considering factors that aid the acquisition of a healthy mind, and by extension, a healthy body.

The state of your mind, to a large extent, determines the state of your health. In other words, if you have a healthy mind, you will most likely have a healthy body; and on the other hand, if you have an unhealthy mind, you will most likely have an unhealthy body. Indeed, it has been scientifically proven that the state of your mind will either attract sickness and disease to your body, or it will send sickness and disease parking.

A University of Michigan Health publication says, “Your mind and your body are powerful allies.” This means that the way you think affects the way you feel. What you think and how you think affect how you feel; and how you feel in turn affects what you think.

For instance, if you are feeling miserable and down about your situation, it is because you have been thinking thoughts that reflects your present situation. It shows that in your thoughts, you have concluded that your situation is miserable. Once you reach such



a conclusion in your thinking, it automatically affects the way you feel.

Your feelings can lead you deeper into thinking harmful thoughts, or it can lead you to thinking healthy thoughts, depending on how you choose to handle your feelings. Do you know you have power over how you feel? If you change what you constantly think about, you can change how you constantly feel.

If you constantly worry and get stressed out over your job, finances, or other problems, it will affect the way you think and feel, and that can cause the muscles in your body to begin to get tensed up. Once your muscles begin to tense up, you may start experiencing pains in your body, as well as headaches, stomach problems or even high

blood pressure or other serious problems.

Constant worrying and fretting about your situation will negatively affect your emotions, and when your emotions are negatively affected, it could lead to depression, anxiety and fear. Anxiety and fear are sicknesses of the mind, which can lead to sicknesses in your body, if you harbour them. When you allow anxiety and fear in your mind, they can negatively affect how you treat, manage, or cope with symptoms of illness, sickness or disease.

Worry is defined as a state of being anxious and troubled over actual or potential problems. When you become overly anxious and troubled over actual or potential problems, you are in a state of worry, and it becomes your state of mind. When you start worrying over an actual problem or a potential problem, you open your mind to all sorts of negative thoughts, which may lead to attracting more negative circumstances to yourself.

#### Fear it, see it

When you worry and get anxious over a potential problem, your mind begins to interpret a potential problem as a real problem, and when that begins to happen, the symptoms of the real problem may begin to manifest in your body and environment.

When you are anxious and fearful about an anticipated problem, your body will begin to feel as if the real problem has occurred. When you persist in a worried and anxious state of mind, you may eventually attract what you are worried and anxious about to yourself, which may lead to illness, sickness and disease.

Your body does not know the difference between an actual problem and an imagined one; both actual and imagined problems can put you in a state of worry, and once you get to that state where you are worried and anxious, you open your mind to attract the things you are worried and anxious about. That is why the Holy Book admonishes us in Philippians 4:6 that we should not be “anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”

When you allow anxiety and fear in your mind, you expose yourself to the danger of being harassed and molested by the things you are anxious and fearful about. When you are fearful and anxious, it affects the way you can cope and manage symptoms of illness, sickness or disease that comes your way.

Your state of mind can affect your mood to the point that you lose your appetite for food and lose interest in life generally; on the other hand, your state of mind can lift you up to the extent that you have a peaceful disposition about every aspect of your life.

**Curbing harmful emotions**  
Scientists have identified at

*continued on page 55*

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# Lady pharmacists partner NIPRD to standardise herbal medicines production

By Temitope Obayendo



Pharm.(Dr) Afusat Adesina, chairman, Lagos State ALPs (2nd from left); Pharm.(Dr) Monica Eimunjeze, chairman, Conference Planning Committee (3rd from left); Pharm.(Mrs) Victoria Ukwu, ALPs national chairman (4th from left); Chief (Mrs) Yetunde Morohundiya, former ALPs national chairman (4th from right); Pharm (Dr) Modupe Ologunagba, ALPs south-west vice-chairman (2nd from right) and other Conference Planning Committee members at the briefing.

**L**ady pharmacists, under the auspices of Association of Lady Pharmacists (ALPs), have announced a planned collaboration with the Nigerian Institute of Pharmaceutical Research and Development (NIPRD) to standardise the processing of medicinal plants into safe herbal and nutritional supplements for the Nigerian populace.

The association, which has the mandate to cultivate herbal medicinal plants across the country, said the initiative would help the nation in bridging existing gaps

in nutrition, health and women empowerment.

The lady pharmacists made the disclosure, while briefing journalists in Lagos on the forthcoming 15th Biennial National Conference of ALPs, with the theme: "Pharmaceutical Value Chain for Optimal Utilisation- Where Are We". They stated that ALPs, under its "Project 91" mandate, would be planting herbal medicinal plants across the six geopolitical zones of the country to provide herbal products, raw materials, nutritional supplements and body care products.

The association's National Chairman, Pharm. (Mrs) Victoria Ukwu, who noted that a World Health Organisation (WHO) report shows that 80 per cent of the world's population depends on medicinal plants for its primary healthcare needs, said the dream of the association, is to see Nigeria succeed in traditional medicine like China.

She noted that ALPs' campaign for the standardisation of herbal medicine practice is to guarantee the safety of consumers, especially as medicinal plants have shown benefits in treating and managing conditions like sickle cell anaemia.

Speaking on ALPs partnership with NIPRD, Ukwu said the association understands that it cannot singlehandedly execute the project to conclusion, and thus needs the collaboration of governors' wives to secure more landed properties for the project, while also canvassing the assistance of NIPRD for proper processing of the cultivated herbal plants.

According to her: "Our pet project "Project 91", an initiative for the cultivation of economically viable medicinal plants for nutrition, health and economic benefits, has identified plants and allotted them to each geopolitical zone. Thus, we need the involvement of all our governors' wives, who are our patrons in various states, to be part of this laudable initiative of planting herbal gardens across the country. This will serve to empower women and showcase our herbal resources."

The ALPs national chairman also hinted that, so far, four first ladies had aligned with the vision of the group, adding that they would be present at the conference in Lagos to show more solidarity for the project. She also mentioned that since the project involves different stages, ALPs would be working with NIPRD for the processing of the plants for the use of the populace.

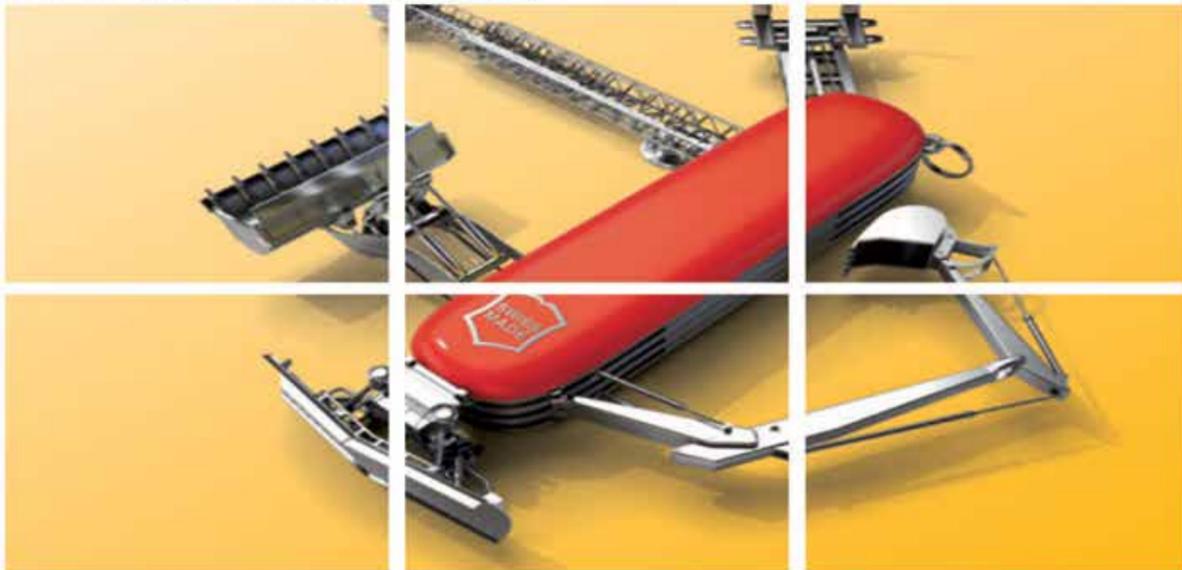
Speaking on the forthcoming conference, the Chairman, Conference Planning Committee, Pharm. (Dr) Monica Eimunjeze, stated that the event would commence with a retreat at the Whispering Palms Resort, Badagry, Lagos, from 5 to 8 June. She added that this would be followed by a quiz competition for female students in public schools in Ikeja area of the state, at the Lagos Country Club, Ikeja GRA, on 8 June, by 2 pm.

Other events scheduled for the conference are: welcome cocktail on 8 June, at the Lagos Country Club; opening ceremony of the conference at Radisson Blu Hotel, Ikeja, on 9 June; and the Biennial General Meeting and closing dinner, on 10 June, at the same venue.

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# Your mind and your health

continued from page 52

least four common states of mind that can promote and encourage the manifestation of sickness and disease in your body. They include anxiety, depression, anger and fear. All of these four states of mind are unhealthy states of the mind.

When you find yourself constantly experiencing these four states of mind, it exposes your body to sickness and disease. It is important that you learn to properly manage your moods, to ensure that you are not giving room to these four states of mind to become your constant reality.

Managing your mood means that you have learnt how to positively respond to situations and circumstances in your environment. Instead of becoming anxious, depressed, angry and fearful over situations, you can choose to commit every situation to God in prayers.

You may not have the strength and ability to deal with and control the situations and the circumstances that are presently around you, but you can choose how you respond to them. When you commit your situations to God in prayers, there is a confidence that rises up in you. You can be confident that a Force greater than the situation you are going through and capable of helping you to overcome the situation has taken charge of your life.

This kind of disposition will boost your confidence and reduce your chances of getting anxious, depressed and fearful. Stop giving unnecessary power to your negative

situations and circumstances. Instead, take a bolder and more creative approach. Turn to God, the source of divine wisdom in prayers and your mind will be at rest and continue to be at peace.

When your mind is truly at peace, your body will be at peace also, and when your mind is at peace, it gives your body great immunity against illness, sickness and disease. The Great Book says, "I will keep in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on me." Isaiah 26: 3

### Diagnosing worry and anxiety

If you find that you are always focusing your thoughts on how bad the problems around you are, rather than thinking about solutions to them, you are in a state of worry. If you allow your thoughts to constantly dwell on the unpleasant things that have happened to you or you find yourself thinking about the unpleasant things that could happen to you, you are a worrier.

As a worrier, you uncontrollably allow unpleasant thoughts, unpleasant images, and unpleasant emotions of past events or anticipated negative consequences of past events to take over your mind. As a worrier, you are putting yourself into a danger zone of illness, sickness and disease.

It has been proven scientifically that your brain produces certain substances that can either improve your health or cause a regress



and expectations. For instance, if you are feeling sick but you have a strong positive attitude and believe that you will get better, your brain is likely to produce chemicals that will boost your healing. On the other hand, a negative attitude and lack of hope that you can recover from your sickness will likely shut down your brain from producing chemicals that could boost your healing.

Negative thoughts and emotions like fear and hopelessness can keep your brain from producing some of the chemicals that can help your body to heal. Though some illnesses and sicknesses are beyond your control, your thoughts and your state of mind are great resources that can aid you in keeping sickness and disease away and get better. The Psalmist says in Psalm 23:4 "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadows of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me." Whatever you are going through, keep your hope alive, and maintain a positive attitude.

*Segun Lufadeju is an author of three books focused on developing a healthy mind and discovering your true Identity. He holds seminars on his most recent book titled 'The New Identity', where he delves into the subject of Identity and how your identity defines your results and outcomes in any sphere of life. He is also the host of Thirty-Five Plus, an outreach programme to people above the age of thirty-five. You can reach Segun Lufadeju or order for his books via: +234-703-2168-649 and E-mail: printstrats@gmail.com.*

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# Pharmacy curriculum must be reviewed to solve 21<sup>st</sup> century problems – PANS-UNILAG President

By Adebayo Oladejo

**I**n this exclusive interview, Abideen Opeyemi Salami, president, Pharmaceutical Association of Nigeria Students (PANS), University of Lagos (UNILAG), Akoka, lends his voice to the persistent call by pharmacy students in the country for a review or total overhauling of the pharmacy curriculum. The 500-Level and Ogun State-born scholar, also speaks on his foray into PANS politics, the achievement as well as the challenges of his administration, and as well as the causes of failure in schools across the country. Excerpts:



**Abideen Opeyemi Salami**

**At what point did you join PANS politics and what inspired this?**

Ever since I came into UNILAG, I have always found myself in one activity or the other for the benefit of PANS. I served as PANS senator in my 200 Level days. I also served as the assistant general secretary of PANS in my 300 Level. And I was the vice president of PANS in my 400 Level. For the purpose of continuity and progress, I decided to take the bold step to help steer UNILAG Pharmacy to greater heights as a body. And as God would have it, here I am today, as the current PANS president.

I've been serving PANS all through my programme, for the betterment of our noble profession. Through all this, I was a member of the PANS Public Health Team, an arm of the association; as well as the faculty football team and other committees.

I strongly believe that to bring about the significant change one wants in an organisation or platform, one needs to be actively involved to effect the change. I had always aspired to facilitate an atmosphere where confidence will be significantly instilled in student-pharmacists. This prompted me to vie for the position, so as to effect the desired change I had always wanted.

**Can you tell us some of your**

**achievements and challenges so far?**

We've been able to record quite a number of achievements since we assumed office. We have had health outreaches to secondary schools in Lagos - which featured health talks, career talks and the inauguration of a health club called The Health Enthusiast (THE).

We also had an outreach to Mushin markets in Lagos, where a series of tests were conducted and health talks were delivered. We have also had the biggest "freshers orientation week". Also, after many years of absence at the National Convention, I led delegates to the last PANS National Pharmacoposium at Igbinedion University, Okada, Edo State.

We still have several planned projects that will be executed before the expiration of this administration. These include Pharmacy Week, Professionals Symposium, the Face of Pharmacy, SDG Outreach, inter-school debate competition and workshops on digital skills.

However, our major challenge has been funding. This has hindered us from executing some projects. Still, we're "cooking" something and we appreciate our benefactors who have supported us till this moment.

Another challenge is striking a balance between academic work and administrative duties. It has

not been easy travelling around, having lengthy meetings and still working to get good grades.

**If you had the honour of changing some things about pharmacy education in Nigeria, what would they be?**

If I had the honour of changing anything in pharmacy education, it would be the pharmacy curriculum. The training and courses should be geared towards proffering answers to 21<sup>st</sup> century problems. Any part which not currently relevant in practice will be removed. I believe this will reduce the extremely bulky nature of pharmacy education and focus more on relevant parts of the practice, thereby grooming young pharmacists with adequate problem-solving skills.

Pharmacy education has come a long way in Nigeria. However, the training is not devoid of challenges. Some of these include inadequate facilities, such as laboratories. For most of the second-generation faculties, the facilities were designed to accommodate few students. However, the number of students is on a steady rise, and there is hardly a corresponding expansion and upgrade of these facilities. Students are thus faced with the challenge of sharing limited training physical resources. This, in my opinion, has a major negative impact on the efficiency of pharmacy training.

Also, there is so much to study but so little time. The training is almost always done in a hurry. I think it's time the faculties of pharmacy should be converted into colleges of pharmacy so that the academic calendar will be autonomously decided by the colleges and made uniform across all colleges of pharmacy in the country. This will help to accommodate the peculiar needs of the pharmacy training.

**There are speculations that highhandedness, anxiety and fear are the factors fuelling mass failures in pharmacy schools. How true are these claim's?**

Let me use the School Of Pharmacy, UNILAG, as a case study. The issue of mass failure is a serious one that any pharmacy student can relate to. Basically, I believe that one major contributing factor to this issue is the mental/psychological state of the student. From my experience, I have come to realise that majority of pharmacy students already have the belief that Pharmacy is very difficult and that examination success is always not guaranteed, no matter how hard you prepare.

With this mindset, students eventually spend a long time studying, with very little confidence required to write well in an exam. Students end up getting tense before and during examinations, which is always counterproductive.

I also believe that some lecturers contribute to this problem. Some of them try to make students see that failure is inevitable, and that the slightest error can earn one a carryover. If lecturers can

help students to see that Pharmacy is not as difficult as they presume and that with adequate hard work, success is certain, students will get the adequate psychological boost needed to come out with flying colours in any examination.

Although there may be other contributing factors, I believe that if the psychological state of the students is well catered for, by helping them overcome emotional and psychological trauma, the issue of mass failure will be drastically reduced.

**What can you say about Pharmanews, especially as the news medium celebrated its 43rd anniversary recently?**

*Pharmanews* has set the pace as Nigeria's leading health journal. *Pharmanews* has served as the link connecting the different arms of the profession, without leaving any behind. The journal also helps young pharmacy students in PANS chapters across the country to see what promises and potentials lie ahead in the profession and to be explored.

Kudos must also be given to the educational role that *Pharmanews* has played in keeping pharmacy students, health professionals and the general public in the know concerning relevant health issues.

**What are the advantages and disadvantages of studying Pharmacy in a school like UNILAG, especially in a densely populated city like Lagos?**

The University of Lagos is the "university of first choice," and the nation's pride. And, as we speak, it's still the same. The academic standard is top-notch, with a relatable and global staff. Lagos makes things happen. Lagos is glam; if you are not in Lagos, you are not in Nigeria. We can conclude that this is the social panegyrics of the ever bubbling and bustling city.

Also, having many pharmaceutical companies and the health sector in Lagos makes UNILAG to be more prominent than other universities in Nigeria and it exposes us to job opportunities. UNILAG is an institution that demonstrates equilibrium between academic and social life (Eko for show). You can be a bookworm if you want, or a party rider as a pharmacy student. But I know that, in UNILAG, you can study and catch fun at the same time.

**Regarding the strikes by universities lecturers to protest at various times, are there measures that can be taken to solve this challenge without strike actions?**

This is a question that can be best answered by the lecturers. When students have agitations they want to iron out with the school authorities, we have different measures they have put in place. Some end up being effective and some are not. But one thing that unifies all is that while taking those measures, all we want is to ensure that those that can give us what we want know that we mean business.

This is the same thing that we see when lecturers engage in strike actions. This is why I would still say that the best persons to say if there are other measures to take without strike actions are lecturers themselves.



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# Ehanire, Sanwo-Olu, Akpa, others canvass research, other measures to achieve medicine security

continued from back page

with the theme, "Medicine Security in the West Africa Region: Matters Arising".

In his presentation, the Minister of Health, Dr Osagie Emmanuel Ehanire explained that medicine security refers to measures put in place to ensure that quality, safe and efficacious medicines are produced by facilities that meet the right standards and that the integrity of such medicines is not compromised during distribution along the supply chain from the manufacturers down to the consumers. He added that medicine security will ensure that every clinic, health worker and patient has a reliable and equitable access to the medicines and supplies they need to achieve good health.

Ehanire, who was represented by the Director, Food and Drug Services Department, Federal Ministry of Health, Mrs Bunmi Aribeara, pointed out that the emergence of COVID-19 in December 2019 and the subsequent declaration of a pandemic in March 2020 exposed the reliance of most African countries on importation of their medicines. He stated that over 70 percent of the prescribed medications in Nigeria are produced from APIs primarily sourced from firms in China and India.

"More than ever before, it is time to reverse the country's overdependence on imported medicines. Importation makes the country prone to fake and counterfeit drugs, chaotic drug supply and distribution of drugs, with the resultant effects of increased morbidity, treatment failures, drug resistance and death," the minister pointed out.

The minister specifically pointed out that absence of quality research in Nigeria and other West African countries was behind the region's overdependence on importation of essential medicines. He therefore harped on the need to concentrate more effort on research so as to attain drug security.

According to him, "The lack of basic research and development as well as insufficient capacity in pharmaceutical analysis and bio-analytical techniques in the academia and the industry is responsible for Nigeria's huge dependence on importation. The pandemic has demonstrated that unless our nation is able to determine how to manufacture and distribute its own medicines, we cannot achieve medicine security."

Restating the commitment of the Federal Government towards ensuring medicine security in country, Ehanire said: "Let me therefore use this medium to charge the WAPCP to live up to expectations and include in its curriculum courses geared towards ensuring the equipping of pharmacists to fill the gap in local production of active pharmaceutical ingredients. We must all collectively change this narrative by making Nigeria self-sufficient in the production of finished Pharmaceuticals and APIs."

Also speaking at the event, the Governor of Lagos State, Mr Babajide Sanwo-Olu, who was represented by the Chairman, Lagos State Health Commission, Dr Atinuke Onayiga, emphasise the criticality of drug security in the nation, stressing that more efforts should be committed to drug research and development.

The governor said, "One vital thing that is still not enough, if not lacking, in our society is quality research and development. We seem to be running away from research as if it belongs to the



**L-R (front row): President of Nigeria Academy of Pharmacy, Prince Julius Adelusi-Adeluyi; representative of Governor of Lagos State, Mr Babajide Sanwo-Olu, Dr Atinuke Onayiga; representative of Minister of Health, Dr Osagie Emmanuel Ehanire, Mrs Bunmi Aribeara; President WAPCP, Distinguished Professor Cecilia Igwilo with WAPCP fellows and guest at the conference in Lagos, recently.**

white men, whereas, it belongs to all of us. Let us go into research. All the professionals in the health sector need to work together so that we can have a robust health sector. Funding is important and Lagos State is ever ready to provide funding to those who are willing to go into research."

Chairman of the Nigerian Chapter of WAPCP, Pharm. (Dr) Margaret Obono, had earlier stated that the college chose the theme in consideration of what countries in the region went through at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, when all countries that were exporting drugs closed their borders and did not sell drugs to countries in the region for some months. A development, she said, made Nigeria and other countries in Africa to experience scarcity of essential medicines.

In her remarks, President of the college, Distinguished Professor Cecilia Igwilo, lamented that the West African region was becoming a dumping ground for all manner of pharmaceutical products, adding that drug importation had sorrowfully gifted the region with problems of substandard and falsified medicines.

Igwilo noted that the huge dependence on importation which had negatively impacted local drug production was responsible for the lack of basic development, including insufficient capacity in pharmaceutical analysis and bio-analytical techniques, in academia and the industry at large.

She added that excessive importation was also responsible for the inadequate training in Current Good Manufacturing Practices (CGMPs) and non-existence of active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) or excipients manufacturing facilities in the region. She maintained that a lasting solution was urgently needed to tackle the challenge.

In the same vein, President of the Nigeria Academy of Pharmacy (NAPharm.), who is also a former Minister of Health, Prince Julius Adelusi-Adeluyi, stated that the West African region can indeed achieve medicine security if all stakeholders in the health sector support one another and work together.

Adelusi-Adeluyi who was the event's father-of-the-day, said: "I want to urge the WAPCP to improve quantitatively and qualitatively across the entire West African region. There are 16 countries in West Africa. I have moved around and found out that we are the same;

we can help one another, if we form a team, supporting one another."

The Chairman of the occasion, Dr (Mrs) Dere Awosika, who is the current Chairman of Access Bank PLC, wondered why Nigeria should fret over medicine insecurity if a country such as the U.S. that is bigger than Nigeria can achieve medicine security.

She said the West African region can achieve medicine security once there is cooperation. She therefore called on all stakeholders in the West African pharmaceutical sector to work together, saying one person cannot score a goal but a team can score goals.

The President, Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, Professor Cyril Usifoh, in his welcome address warned that the West African region has made itself very vulnerable by its reliance on importation of pharmaceutical and medical devices. "Posterity will hold us accountable if we do not at this time come up with a practical solution", Usifoh said.

Presenting the keynote address, Pharm. (Dr) Okey Akpa said the argument for medicine security hinges on the need for countries or regions to have reasonable control and access to medicines at all times, stressing that medicine security is critical to the survival of any country or region.

Akpa, who is the managing director of SKG Pharma Limited, as well as president of West African Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (WAPMA), pointed out that medicine security is aimed at achieving self-sufficiency in critical supplies of essential medicines.

He said supply of medicines to West Africa is largely dependent on importation, noting that, on the average, only 30 percent of medicines supply in West Africa is from local production, while 70 percent of the supply is imported.

"An import dependency level of 70 percent in the West African region is a real danger to the population of the region. This calls for action, and urgent action for that matter, not just rhetoric," Akpa said.

The SKG Pharma boss explained that there are three options for achieving medicine security which are importation, donation and local production, stressing that local production, is the most attractive and most reliable of the options. He however added that local production is the most challenging in providing medicines that are effective, safe, affordable and of good quality.

"The question often asked is

can Africa make its medicines? My answer is yes, Africa and West Africa for that matter, can and has demonstrated that it can make its medicines - at least, the essential ones - to the level that will guarantee security of her population with adequate cover of essential medicine, if the right things are done", he said.

Akpa also pointed out the need for purposeful research to attain medicine security, saying one of the biggest challenges hindering local medicine production and consequently medicine security in the West African region is dearth of research.

In his words: "There is Research and Development

(R&D) gap. The industry cannot grow without R&D to back it up. In this regard, such agencies as the Nigerian Institute for Pharmaceutical Research and Development (NIPRD) and the Centre for Plant Medicine Research Ghana must be adequately supported. Only two R&D institutions are grossly inadequate for the region. More pharmaceutical and vaccine R&D institutions need to be established to focus on different aspects of drug medicines and vaccines research and development. The various faculties of pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences in the universities also need to be supported to contribute to Research and Development."

Akpa further said that, aside from research and development, other challenges facing local drug production include government policies, access to market, regulatory challenges, poor return on investment, limited availability or lack of skilled manpower, medicine distribution channel challenges, overdependence on imports for production inputs, weak healthcare system, poor infrastructure, lack of finance, high cost of finance, and lack of government incentives.

He emphasised the need to grow the number of pharmaceutical manufacturers in the region and also grow the industry in overall capacity, scope of production, quality standards and capacity to meet growing demands, in terms of therapeutic areas. He also harped on the need for political will and commitment from the government within the region.

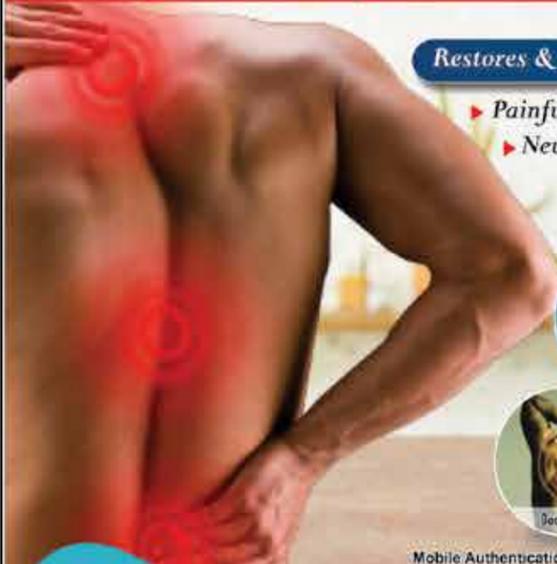
Citing India, Brazil China, Malaysia Indonesia, and Bangladesh as examples, Akpa stated that their current status of medicine sufficiency is driven by political will.

"Medicine security drives health security; health security drives economic security, economic security drives national security. In this sense, medicines must be treated as one of the key components of the regions (and countries) security architecture", he said.

The WAPCP also used the occasion to induct 126 Fellows into its fold, following their success in the 2021 part two Fellowship exam of the college. The new inducted fellows cut across all the specialised areas in the five faculties of the college, namely Clinical Pharmacy, Community Pharmacy, Drug Production & Quality Assurance, Public Health Pharmacy and Social & Administrative Pharmacy.

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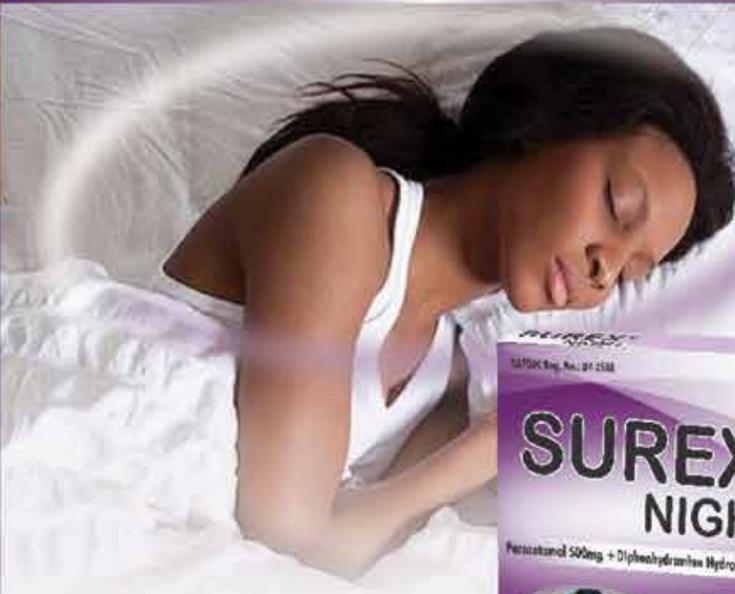
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# NIMR, others lament weak regulation of food handlers, task NAFDAC on enforcement

*continued from back page*

in enforcement of food and drinks regulations in the country, said government and NAFDAC have the obligation to scale up enforcement of relevant laws across the country, in order to protect citizens from disease outbreaks emanating from unregulated food outlets across the country.

Salako, who spoke shortly after the official flag-off of a screening exercise for food handlers and consumers in selected local government areas in Lagos State, said it had been projected that infectious diseases may wreak more havoc on the populace, if regulators do not swing into action immediately to drastically reduce the burden.

“And since it is known that some infectious diseases are food-borne, the need to screen food vendors has become a necessity,” he said.

While acknowledging that it would be a daunting challenge for NAFDAC to track all food vendors across the country, the NIMR boss stated that if the agency is equipped with all the facilities needed for enforcement of food regulations, the task would be much easier.

According to him: “I imagine that the state government and NAFDAC have the duty to enforce these regulations to the letter, because NAFDAC is about food administration. I am not sure how easy that has been for NAFDAC, because they don't know everyone who sells on the road and they don't know everyone who hawks foods around and it is difficult to track.

“Since government owes the public the duty of enforcing the law and regulating these practices, it is up to governments at all levels to implement food laws, while mandating food handlers to organise regular screening and awareness creation among themselves at their meetings. That will help them a great deal.”

Narrating his experience with unregulated food and drinks within Lagos State, Dr Toyosi Raheem, principal investigator of the project, noted how he was told about some sharp practices in the food and drink industry, while attempting to purchase some bottles of wine. He averred that the prevalence of this incidence in the state and across the country calls for screening of those operating in the sector.

“There was a time we wanted to buy wine, but we were told that there were many unregulated outlets where those drinks were prepared, and the consequences may not be immediate, as they may have long lasting consequences on consumers. So the oversight supervision of those restaurants and eateries and various places where they sell foods must be scaled up, especially at the local government level.

His words: “It's a tripartite responsibility. The Federal Government is responsible, by way of funding research institutes, to conduct investigation on such areas for policy formulation, and implementation. NAFDAC, as a government agency, is to regulate food products by ensuring that those producing them are



**L-R: Deputy Director General, NIMR, Professor Olaoluwa Pheabian Akinwale; Director General, NIMR, Professor Babatunde Salako; and Chief Medical Officer, Deloitte & Touche, Nigeria, Dr Mobolaji Obadeyi, at the event.**

adhering to necessary guidelines.

“Then the local government is also responsible. That is why we have medical officers of health and environmental units. It is their responsibilities to see that quality foods and drinks are produced for public consumption.”

Dr (Mrs) Mobolaji Obadeyi, medical officer, Deloitte & Touche Nigeria, also joined in calling regulators to upscale enforcement of food regulations, notwithstanding the limitations in tracking food producers, some of who operate from unknown places.

Obadeyi, who is also a member of the Governing Board, Lagos State Primary Healthcare Board, admitted the existence of regulations and implementation

framework, which, however, suffer from weak compliance and enforcement. She thus charged NAFDAC and others to resume effective regulation of food handlers in the country for the safety and health of all citizens.

She said: “The regulations are there, the framework is also available, but compliance and monitoring are weak. Our food handlers are everywhere; people are making *chinchin* and cakes inside their homes; so it is difficult to access everybody in the food chain. But it is not impossible, if regulators are mindful of it.”

Professor Salako further disclosed that the research and health advocacy is a constituency project, sponsored by the

Speaker of the Federal House of Representatives, National Assembly, Hon. Femi Gbajabamila, stating that such public health measures are needed at regular intervals in the state and nation as a whole, in order to curb the spread of infectious diseases in the country.

“Morbidity is a general problem in the country, as many patients are finding it difficult to purchase drugs which are not free. Although some states claim to give free healthcare to some categories of citizens, but a wide gap still exists. Therefore, any effort aimed at reducing morbidity and mortality should be embraced and given total support”, he asserted.

## PHARMANEWS AWARDS

YEAR	AWARD	WINNER
2015	Ifeanyi Atueyi Essay & Debating Competition	- Faculty of Pharmacy, UNIBEN.
2016	Ifeanyi Atueyi Essay & Debating Competition	- Faculty of Pharmacy, UNIBEN.
2017	Ifeanyi Atueyi Essay & Debating Competition	- Faculty of Pharmacy, OAU, Ile-Ife.
2018	Ifeanyi Atueyi Essay & Debating Competition	- Faculty of Pharmacy, UNIBADAN.
2018	Young Pharmacist Award	- <b>Pharm. Isa Muhammad</b>
2019	Ifeanyi Atueyi Essay & Debating Competition	- Faculty of Pharmacy, UNIBADAN.
2019	PANSITE Award	- <b>Yusuf Wada</b> (Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Usman Danfodio University, Sokoto)
2019	Young Pharmacist Award	- <b>Pharm. Frank Eze</b>
2020	PANSITE Award	- <b>Izukanne Emembolu</b> (Faculty of Pharmacy, UNIZIK, Awka)
2020	Outstanding Pharmacist Award	- <b>Pharm. (Mrs) Olubukola George</b>
2020	Young Pharmacist Award	- <b>Pharm. Daniel Uchekukwu Eze</b>
2021	PANSITE Award	- <b>Martin Chukwunonso Nwofia</b> (Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Anambra State)
2021	Pharmanews Interschool Debate Competition	- Faculty of Pharmacy, UNIBEN.
2022	PANSITE Award	- <b>Jennifer Ukamaka Ekuma</b> (University of Uyo, UNIUYO)

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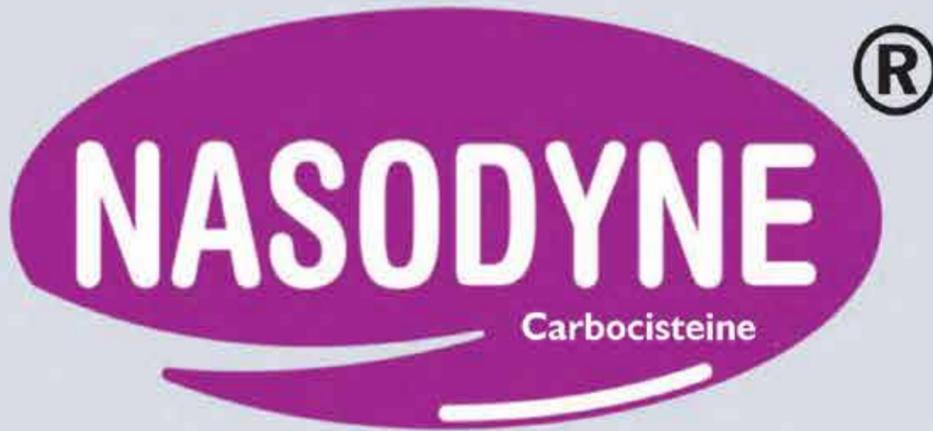
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# NIMR, others lament weak regulation of food handlers, task NAFDAC on enforcement

By Temitope Obayendo

Scientists from the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research (NIMR) and allied institutions in Lagos State have decried gaps in the implementation of food and drinks production guidelines in the country, stressing that there is a high risk of a disease outbreak, except regulators like the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), as well as state and local governments health officers, intensify enforcement.

The experts argued that since majority of city dwellers, especially Lagos State residents, cannot do without patronising eateries and canteens at least once daily, it is essential for all food vendors to be medically screened and certified free of infectious diseases, before being allowed to operate across the country.

Speaking with *Pharmanews* in an interview, the Director General, NIMR, Professor Babatunde Salako, who acknowledged the loopholes

continued on page 60



L-R: Mr Hemant Sharma, senior vice president, West Africa (Microlabs Limited) and head of operation, Micronova Pharmaceuticals Industry Limited; Prof. Babatope Kolawole, professor of medicine and consultant physician/endocrinologist (OAUTH); Prof. Amam Mbakwem, professor of Medicine, College of Medicine, UNILAG, and a consultant cardiologist, LUTH; Prof. Olufemi Fasanmade, consultant endocrinologist, LUTH, and professor of medicine, College of Medicine, UNILAG, and Mr Manjul Tripathi, the strategist business unit head, Micronova, at the launch of Dapzin in Lagos.

# Ehanire, Sanwo-Olu, Akpa, others canvass research, other measures to achieve medicine security

- As WAPCP inducts 126 Fellows

By Ranmilowo Ojalumo

With the continued heavy dependence of Nigeria on importation for its drug needs, experts and other stakeholders in the health sector have identified commitment to research as a way out of the quagmire, stressing that such a commitment will not only salvage the country from the risks of

excessive importation but will ensure medicine security in the entire West African region.

This was one of the submissions made at the 34th Annual General Meeting and Scientific Symposium of the West African Postgraduate College of Pharmacists (WAPCP) held in Lagos from 16 to 18 May,

continued on page 58

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