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Leverage innovation, collaboration to advance health sector, Makinde, Adeyeye task pharmacists

The Governor of Oyo State, Engr Seyi Makinde, and the Director General, National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) Prof. Moji Adeyeye, have reiterated the importance of continuous innovation and collaboration in the healthcare sector, stressing that the evolving healthcare landscape demands

By Adebayo Oladejo

continued on page 8



L-R:- Justice Adebukola Olajide of the Federal High Court, Ibadan, Oyo State, representative of the Chief Judge of Oyo State, Justice Iyabo Yerima; Barr Abdul-Raheem Adebayo Lawal, deputy governor, Oyo State; Prof Cyril Usifoh, president, Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, PSN; and Pharm. Wale Oladigbolu, national chairman, Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria, ACPN, at the opening ceremony of the Oluyole 2024 ACPN Conference, in Ibadan, Oyo State.

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Treating stakeholders with respect, secret to my success at NIMR - Salako page 33

Michael Adikwu: Nigeria's unparalleled achiever in pharmacy scholarship page 16

People skills for sales leaders: 11 items for emotional intelligence development page 40

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1. Subscription rate for 12 editions is N20,000 including delivery within Nigeria.
 2. Single copy costs =N=2,000.00.
 3. Payment to be made directly to **Zenith Bank Plc. A/c No: 1010701673**
 4. After payment text, send us your full contact address.
- For subscription enquiry, call 08134835525

ISSN 0331-815X

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Maryland, Lagos
P.O. Box 2213, Ikeja
Tel: 08057235128, 08055212962.

E-mail: pharmanews@yahoo.com,
info@pharmanewsonline.com
Website: www.pharmanewsonline.com

PHARM. CHARLES OYENIYI

Pharm. Charles Olumide Oyeniya is the current vice-chairman of the Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN), Lagos State Branch. A native of Odo-Otin Local Government Area of Osun State, he was born in Lagos, on 19 October 1975, to Mr and Mrs Simeon Oyetuji Oyeniya.



Oyeniya attended Estate Primary School, Lagos, from 1980 to 1986, followed by Ogba Grammar School, from 1986 to 1992. He then gained admission to study Science Laboratory Technology at Yaba College of Technology, Lagos. Upon completing his Ordinary National Diploma programme, he proceeded to Pfizer Nigeria Limited, for his one-year industrial training. It was at Pfizer that his interest in Pharmacy was kindled.

In 1996, he was admitted to the University of Lagos (UNILAG) to study Pharmacy. He obtained his B. Pharm in 2004, after undergoing an intensive and exciting training at the prestigious institution.

Oyeniya completed his internship at EKO Hospital, where he also did his mandatory one-year youth service programme. He was retained as a fully-licensed pharmacist and soon ascended the leadership ladder of the organisation.

After years of meritorious service at EKO Hotel, Oyeniya resigned his appointment in 2010 to pursue his passion as a community pharmacist. He established Drug Consult Pharmacy, where he serves as chief executive officer and superintendent pharmacist to date.

Oyeniya is an active member of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN) and the ACPN, where he has served in various capacities at both zonal and state levels. He began his leadership role as the assistant zonal coordinator of the Surulere Zone of ACPN. Upon moving to Shomolu, he became the assistant zonal coordinator of the YESBA Zone. He then moved to the state level, serving as assistant secretary, later secretary, and currently vice-chairman. He has also served on various committees of the ACPN and PSN at different times.

Oyeniya is happily married to Dr (Mrs) Kehinde Oyeniya, and their marriage is blessed with children.

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I attribute my success to this: I never gave or took any excuse. – **Florence Nightingale**

Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. – **Steve Jobs**

You can never cross the ocean until you have the courage to lose sight of the shore. – **Christopher Columbus**

I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. – **Maya Angelou**

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

The best revenge is massive success. – **Frank Sinatra**

If you hear a voice within you say "you cannot paint," then by all means paint and that voice will be silenced. – **Vincent Van Gogh**

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**

When one door of happiness closes, another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us. – **Helen Keller**

When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be. – **Lao Tzu**

The person who says it cannot be done should not interrupt the person who is doing it. – **Chinese Proverb**

Dream big and dare to fail. – **Norman Vaughan**

You may be disappointed if you fail, but you are doomed if you don't try. – **Beverly Sills**

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Celebrating 45 Years of Uninterrupted Monthly Publication (1979-2024)

In an era where healthcare challenges are becoming increasingly complex, the role of pharmacists in Nigeria has never been more crucial. The 2024 International Scientific Conference of the Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN), held 22-27 July in Ibadan was a landmark event that underscored the urgent need for innovation and collaboration in pharmacy practice. As healthcare providers, pharmacists are uniquely positioned to lead transformative changes that enhance patient care and improve health outcomes.

Pharmacy practice in Nigeria is undergoing a significant transformation, driven by technological advancements and changing patient needs. The conference's theme, "Advancing Community Pharmacy Practice through Innovation and Collaboration," aptly captured this shift. In today's digital age, technology is revolutionising how pharmacists operate. Digital tools such as electronic health records (EHRs), telepharmacy, and mobile health applications are making healthcare more accessible and efficient. These innovations enable pharmacists to provide more personalised and comprehensive care, reaching patients in remote areas and ensuring continuity of care.

Keynote speaker, Pharm. Remi Adeseun, global director at Salient Advisory, emphasised the critical role of technological advancements in reshaping the healthcare landscape. He highlighted how digital health innovations are driving community-based care, making it more patient-centred and effective. The adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) in pharmacy practice, for instance, allows for more precise medication management and adherence monitoring, ensuring that patients

Advancing pharmacy practice through innovation and collaboration

receive the right treatments at the right time.

In addition to technological innovation, the conference also highlighted the importance of policy support in advancing pharmacy practice. A recent policy change by the Nigerian government, eliminating tariffs, excise duties, and VAT on imported pharmaceutical inputs, is a significant step toward making medications more affordable and accessible. This policy not only reduces the cost burden on patients but also empowers pharmacists to provide better care by making high-quality medications more readily available.

Collaboration is another cornerstone of advancing pharmacy practice. The conference underscored the importance of building strong partnerships among pharmacists, other healthcare professionals, and policymakers. Such collaborations are essential for a holistic approach to healthcare, where pharmacists work closely with doctors, nurses,

and other healthcare providers to manage chronic diseases, provide preventive care, and address public health challenges. This collaborative approach is particularly crucial in managing chronic conditions like diabetes and hypertension, where pharmacists can play a key role in patient education and medication management.

Public health initiatives also form a critical aspect of pharmacy practice. Community pharmacists, due to their accessibility and trust within communities, are ideally positioned to lead initiatives such as vaccination drives, health screenings, and health education campaigns. These initiatives not only promote wellness but also help in early detection and management of diseases, thereby improving public health outcomes.

Despite these positive developments, there is no denying that challenges remain. The conference acknowledged

issues such as inadequate funding, regulatory barriers, and infrastructural deficits that continue to hinder the full potential of pharmacy practice. However, the shared resolve among pharmacists to overcome these challenges was evident. The discussions at the conference were filled with optimism and a clear vision for the future, driven by the commitment to leverage innovation and collaboration.

In all, "Oluyole 2024" was more than a reflection on the state of community pharmacy; it was a clarion call to action. It highlighted that embracing innovation and fostering collaboration are not just responses to current challenges but proactive strategies for shaping the future. As the healthcare landscape continues to evolve, pharmacists in Nigeria must position themselves to play a leading role in delivering integrated, efficient, and patient-centred care.

Looking ahead, the momentum generated at the ACPN conference offers a hopeful vision for the future. By embracing innovation and collaboration, Nigerian pharmacists are not only adapting to the changing healthcare environment but also setting the stage for a more dynamic and responsive healthcare system. This transformation holds the promise of a future where pharmacy practice stands at the forefront of healthcare innovation, improving health outcomes for all Nigerians.

Essentially, the advancement of pharmacy practice through innovation and collaboration is not just a concept but a movement. It is about redefining the role of pharmacists, integrating cutting-edge technologies, and fostering partnerships that enhance patient care. It is our belief that the future of pharmacy practice in Nigeria is bright, and the journey towards a more innovative and collaborative practice has only just begun.

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Be a peacemaker

By Sir Ifeanyi Atueyi

One evening, in March 2023, I was walking back to my house when I sighted two cars ahead, with a man and a woman standing face-to-face in a heated confrontation. When I got closer, I realised that the argument was about the hitting and denting of the man's car. I listened keenly to both of them and concluded that the lady was at fault as she had hit the man's car from behind. Then God asked me to intervene and resolve their problem.

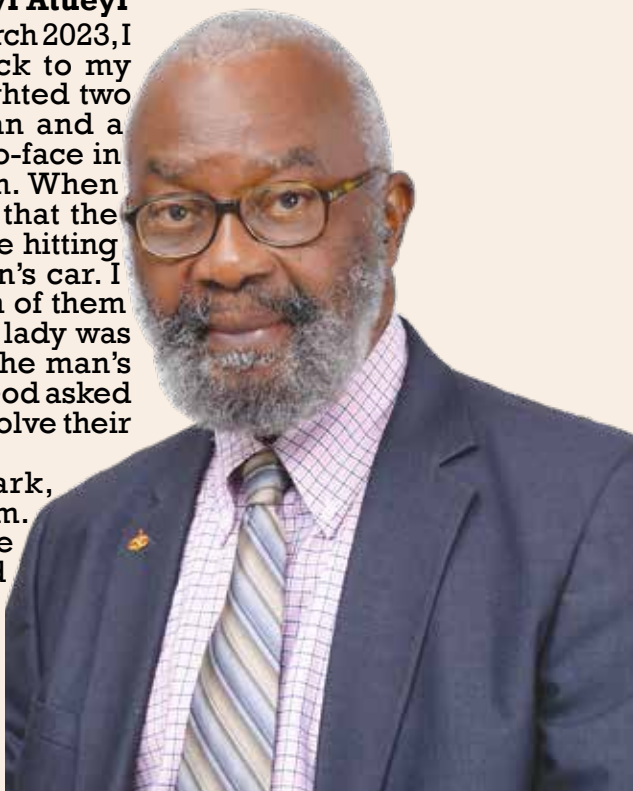
It was getting dark, maybe around 6.45pm. I told the lady that she was at fault and should actually apologise to the man. I then turned to the man and asked him to let the lady go, as I would fully bear the responsibility for repairing his car to his satisfaction. The lady was dumbfounded but the man said that the car belonged to his master and he was just his driver. Then I assured him that I would speak to his master but the lady was free to go.

With hesitation and doubt, the lady entered her car. She appeared not to be sure of what I said I would do. I asked the driver about the owner of the car and he mentioned the name of a prominent pastor of a big church in Anthony Village. He immediately called the pastor and started reporting the incident to him. As he did, I beckoned to him to follow me to my office. They discussed for a long time in Yoruba and, of course, I did not understand them.

Eventually, his master asked him to hand over the phone to me. We exchanged greetings and I introduced myself to him. After that, he asked, "Why did you ask the lady to go and why did you offer to bear the cost of the repairs? Do you know her?" I replied that I had never met either the lady or the driver before, but the Spirit of God had directed me to resolve their problem, maintain peace and set them free. Moreover, the incident had happened in front of my premises and I did not want any fracas around me.

He asked, "Do you mean that you will repair the car for me?" "Yes, I will repair it to your satisfaction to maintain peace." I answered. Still surprised, the man repeated his previous question, "Do you know this lady?" I replied again that I had never met her and could not recognise her if I saw her again.

The pastor kept quiet for a while and then said, "I will repair my car myself; let the driver bring it." I thanked him very well for relieving me of that financial burden and asked for his name



and phone number. I then handed over the phone to the driver after chatting with his master. He said goodnight to me and stepped out of my office.

That incident ended peacefully that evening. Since then, I have never met the lady or the driver and would not even recognise them, if I see them. Same goes for the pastor. I spoke with him only that night and we have never talked again or met each other. But that experience will be remembered for a long time by each of us involved.

This reminds me of the sacrifice our Lord Jesus Christ made for us. I Peter 2:24 says, "**He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness...**" Jesus died on the cross for our sins and not His own because He was sinless. I was ready to suffer a heavy financial loss because of an accident that did not concern me.

Thank God that the pastor decided to bear the cost of the repairs of the car himself. I believe that, just as God had asked me to bear the cost, He had also asked the pastor to take off the burden from me. To me, it was like when God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son, Isaac. God just tested his faith. I was ready to spend a good amount of money on that car, but God had only put me to that test, so I could broker peace between the lady and the driver. Nobody knows how their arguments might have ended that night. But my intervention brought peace.

In Matthew 5:9, Jesus said, "**Blessed are the peacemakers, because they will be called sons of God.**" Peacemakers reconcile people to God and to one another. Today, peacemakers are needed all over the world.



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DISEASE OF THE MONTH 2024

MONTH	DISEASE
September	- Erectile Dysfunction/Infertility
October	- Eye Infections
November	- Diabetes
December	- HIV/AIDS & STDs

Celebrating 45 Years of Uninterrupted Monthly Publication (1979-2024)

In personal branding, reputation is a product

By George O. Emetuche, CES

"Reputation is a transactional currency." - Mazi Sam I. Oluabunwa

In branding, just as in selling, people buy you before the product. The salesman who is selling the product is a complete product who must be outstanding at all times. Do your best to maintain a great reputation. A good name is priceless. You can't talk about building a good personal brand without talking about reputation. Reputation opens doors.

Your brand is as good as you

In Aristotle's Three Elements of Persuasion - Ethos, Pathos, and Logos - the beginning point is Ethos, which expresses the importance of character, integrity, and ethics. Persuasion, in any context, should stand on the strong foundation of a great reputation of the person behind the persuasion.

Persuasion should have an element of Ethos, which means, ethics and character; Pathos, which means emotional appeal and empathy; and Logos, which means logic and facts. Aristotle's elements of persuasion can be applied in leadership and management, sales and marketing, and several aspects of life.

Bringing the elements of persuasion to our discussion, we will therefore conclude that your brand is as good as You. The way you are is the way your brand will be perceived. A lion will always give birth to a lion. Something must be wrong when a lion gives birth to a goat! What you are must be consistent with your brand. You and your brand are one. Therefore, before building a brand, build a reputation!

The higher your reputation, the higher your worth

There are brands people identify with over the years because they have proved that they can be trusted. This status continues to give them enviable brand equity.

In personal branding, reputation determines your worth. The higher your reputation, the higher your worth. As a salesman, as a professional, focus on building a great reputation. When you build a desirable reputation, other things will follow naturally. People cluster around men and women they can trust. Your success begins with the name you have built for yourself.

I have several authorities I can call mentors because they are people of great character. Their reputation quotient is high and I go to them to seek counsel when I want to make important decisions. These individuals have continued to be relevant in their industries because of the level of reputation they have built overtime. People like to identify with them anywhere their names are mentioned. Some of them have led their professional associations nationwide. Some of them have contributed immensely in the society by way of social investment, mentorship, and advocacy.

Keep your promise

There's no better reputation than when people know that you keep your promise. Repeat customers is about promise kept and promise kept is about reputation. Don't say what you can't do. It is better you don't promise and later deliver, than to promise and don't keep to your promises.

Failed promises kill brands! Keep doing your best to get better. Improve in knowledge. Be innovative and keep discovering new ways to delight your target audience. Personal branding is something you continue to get better at.

Your lifestyle matters

In personal branding, everything you do counts. The

individual building a personal brand must be careful about his private and public life. He must be seen to be the same person in private and in public life. This is a way onlookers appraise the reputation of the personal brand.

Choices and actions can make or mar a personal brand. We have seen this happen in many cases. Many individuals have gone down because of their private lives that affected their personal brands.

How do you want to be seen? What word do you want people to use when they see or hear about you? As you work on your personal brand, be mindful of the brand you want to be known as. Work on Yourself to be the person You admire.

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Literature, pharmacy, and fantasy

a magical apothecary where wizards and witches procure potions that can heal wounds, induce love, or grant invisibility. These fantastical elements not only captivate readers' imaginations but also highlight the enduring human fascination with the transformative power of substances.

In reality, pharmacists collaborate with healthcare providers to optimise drug therapy, manage medication regimens, and educate patients about the benefits and risks of treatment options. They play essential roles in healthcare settings, ensuring that medications are prescribed appropriately, dispensed accurately, and used safely to achieve therapeutic outcomes.

Fantasy literature, meanwhile, transports readers to realms of wonder and impossibility, where magic, mythical creatures, and supernatural forces abound. It offers an escape from reality, while simultaneously exploring universal themes of heroism, destiny, and the battle between good and evil. Through fantastical worlds and imaginative storytelling, fantasy literature challenges conventional boundaries of what is possible, inviting readers to envision alternate realities and contemplate existential questions.

In the context of pharmacy, fantasy literature serves as a metaphorical exploration of the limits of scientific knowledge and the mysteries of healing. Stories featuring alchemists seeking the elixir of immortality or healers harnessing the power of mystical herbs evoke themes of transformation and transcendence, echoing humanity's enduring quest for health and longevity.

Furthermore, fantasy narratives often parallel real-world medical discoveries and innovations, inspiring scientific inquiry and technological advancements. The speculative fiction of authors like Ursula K. Le Guin and Philip K. Dick explores futuristic societies where medical breakthroughs have profound implications for human evolution and social order, prompting readers to reflect on the ethical implications of scientific progress.

The interplay between literature, pharmacy, and fantasy extends beyond thematic exploration to encompass educational enrichment and professional development. Healthcare professionals, including pharmacists, engage with literature to enhance their empathy, communication skills, and understanding of patient experiences. Reading narratives that depict illness, recovery, and the human impact of medical interventions fosters compassion and cultural competence among practitioners, enabling them to provide holistic care to diverse populations.

Moreover, pharmacy education benefits from the integration of literature and fantasy as teaching tools to illustrate complex medical concepts, ethical dilemmas, and the evolution of pharmacotherapy. Educators use literary works such as Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein" to discuss the ethical implications of scientific experimentation and the responsibilities of healthcare providers in promoting patient welfare. Similarly, fantasy literature stimulates critical thinking and imagination among students, encouraging them to envision innovative approaches to healthcare delivery and therapeutic interventions.

Literature, pharmacy, and fantasy may seem like disparate realms at first glance—one delves into the depths of human imagination and emotion, another into the scientific study and application of medicines, and the third into realms of magic, myth, and the impossible. Yet, these three domains are intricately connected through their exploration of the human experience, the pursuit of knowledge, and the quest for healing. This essay delves into how literature, pharmacy, and fantasy intersect, complement, and enrich one another, offering profound insights into the human condition, the boundaries of scientific understanding, and the power of imagination.

Literature, as the art of storytelling and expression through written words, has always been a mirror reflecting the human experience. It encompasses a vast array of genres and styles, from epic poetry to contemporary novels, each offering unique perspectives on life, society, and the complexities of existence. At its core, literature serves to illuminate truths about ourselves and the world around us, engaging readers on intellectual, emotional, and spiritual levels.

In the context of pharmacy and fantasy, literature serves as a conduit for exploring the impact of medicine and healing on individuals and societies. Medical narratives, such as the works of Arthur Conan

Doyle featuring Sherlock Holmes, often incorporate elements of pharmacology and forensic science to solve mysteries and save lives. These narratives not only entertain but also educate readers about the role of drugs in treating illness and promoting health.

Moreover, literature frequently delves into the ethical dimensions of healthcare, depicting characters who grapple with moral dilemmas, such as the use of experimental treatments or the consequences of pharmaceutical greed. For instance, Aldous Huxley's dystopian novel, "Brave New World", critiques a society controlled by pharmacology, raising profound questions about the ethical boundaries of scientific advancement and the impact of drugs on individual freedom.

Pharmacy, on the other hand, is grounded in the rigorous study of drugs, their effects on the human body, and the practice of dispensing medications to promote health and well-being. Pharmacists are healthcare professionals who bridge the gap between medical science and patient care, applying their knowledge to ensure the safe and effective use of medications.

In the realm of fantasy literature, pharmacology often takes on magical dimensions, with potions, elixirs, and mystical remedies playing pivotal roles in the narrative. J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" series, for example, features

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B Vitamins: B6, B12, and folic acid are essential for brain health. They aid in the production of neurotransmitters and support cognitive functions and emotional regulation. Leafy greens, legumes, and whole grains are good sources.

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Benefits of proper nutrition for the brain

Enhanced cognitive function: Nutrients like omega-3s and antioxidants improve memory, learning, and overall cognitive performance.

Mood regulation: Balanced nutrition supports the production of neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine, which regulate mood and prevent depression and anxiety.

Reduced risk of neurodegenerative diseases: A diet rich in antioxidants and anti-inflammatory foods can reduce the risk of diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.

Improved concentration and mental clarity: Proper nutrition ensures a steady supply of energy to the brain, enhancing focus and reducing mental fatigue.

Practical tips for a brain-healthy diet

Incorporate fatty fish: Aim to eat fatty fish like salmon, mackerel, or sardines at least twice a week.

Eat a rainbow of fruits and vegetables: Ensure a diverse intake of antioxidants by consuming a variety of colourful fruits and vegetables daily.

Choose whole grains: Opt for whole grains over refined grains to maintain stable blood sugar levels.

Stay hydrated: Dehydration can impair cognitive function, so drink plenty of water throughout the day.

Limit processed foods: Minimise intake of foods high in sugar, unhealthy fats, and additives, which can negatively impact brain health.

Proper nutrition is fundamental for maintaining brain health throughout life, supporting everything from daily cognitive functions to long-term mental well-being. By prioritizing a balanced and nutrient-rich diet, you can significantly enhance brain health and overall quality of life.

Foods harmful to brain health
Certain foods can negatively impact brain health, especially when consumed in excess or regularly. Here are some foods considered harmful to the brain:

Sugary drinks
Soft drinks, energy drinks, and fruit juices: High in sugar, these can lead to obesity, diabetes, and metabolic syndrome, increasing the risk of brain-related diseases. Excessive sugar intake can also impair memory and learning abilities.

Refined carbohydrates

By Mrs Chima Ejimofor

White bread, pastries, and processed snacks: These foods have a high glycemic index and can cause spikes in blood sugar levels, potentially leading to cognitive impairment and an increased risk of dementia.

Trans fats

Margarine, frosting, and fried foods: Trans fats can cause inflammation and oxidative stress, damaging brain cells and increasing the risk of Alzheimer's disease and cognitive decline.

Highly processed foods

Fast food, ready meals, and packaged snacks: Often high in sugar, unhealthy fats, and salt, these foods can negatively affect brain health. They may cause inflammation and disrupt the brain's reward system, leading to overeating and weight gain.

Aspartame

Diet sodas and sugar-free products: This artificial sweetener can have neurotoxic effects, potentially leading to headaches, mood swings, and impaired learning.

Alcohol

Excessive alcohol consumption: Chronic alcohol abuse can lead to brain shrinkage, disrupted neurotransmitter function, and an increased risk of dementia. Even moderate alcohol consumption can impair cognitive function and memory over time.

Foods high in saturated fats

Red meat, butter, and cheese: High levels of saturated fats can negatively impact cognitive function by increasing cholesterol levels and promoting inflammation.

Foods containing high levels of mercury

Certain fish (e.g., shark, swordfish, king mackerel): Mercury is a neurotoxin that can accumulate in the brain and impair cognitive function and development, particularly in children and pregnant women.

Excess salt

Processed and fast foods: High salt intake can lead to hypertension, restricting blood flow to the brain and increasing the risk of cognitive decline and stroke.

Nitrates and nitrites

Processed meats (e.g., sausages, hot dogs, bacon): These chemicals can lead to the formation of harmful compounds in the body,



potentially contributing to oxidative stress and inflammation in the brain.

By being mindful of your diet and avoiding these harmful foods, you can support your brain health and reduce the risk of cognitive decline and other brain-related issues.

Mrs Chima Ejimofor is the lead partner of Infinite Health Consult and is available for the purchase of FLP high-quality nutritional supplements, health talks, and wellness seminars. She is based in Lagos, Nigeria. Telephone/WhatsApp: 07033179632, Email: infinitehealthconsult@gmail.com



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Leverage innovation, collaboration to advance health sector, Makinde, Adeyeye task pharmacists

continued from front page

that pharmacists continuously adapt and innovate to meet new challenges and opportunities.

The dignitaries gave the charge at the opening ceremony of the recent 43rd Annual International Scientific Conference of the Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN), held at the International Conference Centre, University of Ibadan, Oyo State, with the theme, "Advancing Community Pharmacy Practice through Innovation and Collaboration".

Speaking at the event, Makinde, who was the guest of honour, said he acknowledged the pivotal role of community pharmacists as the first point of contact for healthcare needs, highlighting their essential contributions to public health and patient care.

The governor, who was represented by his deputy, Barrister Abdul-Raheem Adebayo Lawal, said collaboration among healthcare personnel would help in addressing challenges and exploring new opportunities that will lead to a healthier nation.

While praising the ACPN for its steadfast commitment to enhancing community pharmacy practice in Nigeria, Makinde emphasised the state's dedication to advancing the pharmaceutical profession and improving healthcare delivery.

The governor equally underscored the state's proactive approach in integrating community pharmacists into public health initiatives, such as the Director of Public Health TB/HIV Integration Coordination Meetings. He also announced plans to recruit additional healthcare professionals, including pharmacists, to enhance service delivery and address workforce shortages.

Outlining the Oyo State government's efforts in creating a supportive environment for community pharmacists through initiatives like the Community Pharmacy Expansion Scheme (CPES), Makinde said the state's alignment with the Omitutun 2.0 health agenda and the universal health coverage goals, is aimed at ensuring affordable access to drugs and medical supplies for all citizens.

He highlighted significant advancements in healthcare infrastructure in the state, including the imminent Oyo State Drug Management Agency, aimed at improving pharmaceutical procurement and distribution.

Earlier in her address, Prof. Adeyeye, who was the chairperson of the occasion, acknowledged the



L-R: Dr Oluwaseyemi Adewumi Ajetunmobi, commissioner for health, Oyo State; Pharm. Wale Oladigbolu, national chairman, ACPN; Barr Abdul-Raheem Adebayo Lawal, deputy governor, Oyo State, and Prof. Cyril Usifoh, president, PSN, at the opening ceremony of the Oluyole 2024 ACPN Conference, in Ibadan, Oyo State.

performance of pharmaceutical manufacturing companies in the country, adding that she was excited to see many manufacturers display their approved NAFDAC-certified products with confidence.

"I want to recognise them, especially because sometimes we don't value what we produce in Nigeria," she said.

While corroborating the pivotal role of community pharmacists as crucial healthcare professionals, Adeyeye said the conference was a key opportunity to exchange knowledge, chart the course for the future of community pharmacy practice worldwide.

She tasked the ACPN on the need to build a robust collaboration between the nation's regulatory agencies and community pharmacists, saying this will further enhance safeguarding of public health, through availability of safe and effective medications and promotion of regulatory compliance.

In his keynote address, Pharm. Remi Adeseun, Global Director at Salient Advisory, a digital health consulting firm, affirmed that technological advancement and other sociodemographic changes are driving community-based care.

He listed the five trends impacting healthcare delivery globally in 2024 to include focus on holistic, patient-centred care;

technological transformation; focus on cost and affordability; shortfalls in health workforce; as well as equity in health.

Earlier, in his welcome address, the National Chairman, ACPN, Pharm. Wale Oladigbolu, disclosed that his 33 months at the helm of affairs of ACPN, so

far, have been a rare privilege for him to contribute to the pharmacy profession and the wellbeing of Nigerians.

Highlights of the opening ceremony included presentation of prizes to the winners of the National Anti-Drug Abuse Students' Competition.

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Obesity and type 2 diabetes: dual burden or mere coincidence?

By Pharm. (Dr) Onyinye Chiekwe, PharmD, MPH, ABMP
pharmbree25@gmail.com

How much fat is too much fat, especially when it poses a risk for diabetes? Is there a real relationship between obesity and type 2 diabetes, or is this a myth?

Diabetes is a disease marked by high blood glucose, due to defects in insulin production or action, or both. There are type 1 and type 2 diabetes, but type 2 diabetes accounts for about 90 per cent of all diagnosed cases. It typically starts as insulin resistance, where the cells don't use insulin well. As it progresses and the demand for insulin rises, the pancreas loses its ability to produce insulin.

Obesity is a complex, chronic disease that is characterised by an excessive accumulation of adipose tissue to the point that it affects both physical and psychosocial health. It is considered a health crisis globally. The Body Mass Index (BMI) is the most common tool for defining obesity. It measures average body weight against average body height. Generally, a BMI of 35 is associated with obesity.

Obesity has been found to be associated with type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and fatty liver diseases.

Exploring "diabesity": Obesity-dependent diabetes

Excess body weight and obesity are significant risk factors for type 2 diabetes. The mechanisms linking both are complex and involve several physiological processes.

The accumulation of an excessive amount of body fat triggers a myriad of metabolic abnormalities and diseases, including insulin resistance, atherogenic dyslipidemia (high plasma triglyceride and low plasma HDL-cholesterol concentrations), nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, β cell dysfunction, prediabetes, and type 2 diabetes. In general, a progressive increase in BMI is associated with a progressive increase in the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Excess body fat, particularly visceral fat stored around the abdomen, leads to insulin resistance. Insulin resistance is when the cells become less responsive to insulin, the hormone responsible for regulating blood sugar levels. As a result, glucose builds up in the bloodstream, leading to high blood sugar and, eventually, type 2 diabetes.

The degree of insulin resistance and the incidence of type 2 diabetes is highest in a person with an "apple" shape (abdominal subcutaneous and intra-abdominal fat). These persons carry the majority of their excess body weight around their abdomen. In contrast, the "pear" shaped person carries most of their weight in the hips and thighs (gluteofemoral fat), which is less likely associated with insulin resistance.

The lifetime risk of diabetes in men above 18 years increases

from 7 per cent to 70 per cent, when BMI increases from less than 18.5 kg/m to more than 35 kg/m. Same with females, with an increase from 12 per cent to 74% with the same BMI values.

Research has shown that obese individuals are up to 80 times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than those with a healthy weight. The excess fat tissue in obese individuals secretes various substances, including inflammatory cytokines and free fatty acids, which can interfere with insulin signalling pathways. This creates a vicious cycle where rising insulin resistance leads to elevated blood sugar levels, which promotes further weight gain and inflammation.

Therefore, treating obesity is crucial in the prevention and

management of type 2 diabetes; weight loss results in a significant reduction in the incidence of diabetes in at-risk populations.

Conclusion

The relationship between diabetes and obesity is not a myth; both are deeply linked, giving rise to the term "diabesity". This dual condition poses significant challenges and presents opportunities for healthcare providers to make a profound impact. In next month's edition, we will explore the role of healthcare providers in turning the tides on diabesity.

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Proven treatments for heartburn and GERD

Heartburn, Acid reflux and GERD: Learn the difference

Heartburn is an irritation of the oesophagus, caused by stomach acid. This leads to a burning discomfort in the upper belly or below the breastbone. Heartburn is also known as pyrosis, cardialgia or acid indigestion.

Dr Manuela Stoicescu, in *Medical Semiology Guide of the Digestive System*, (2020), defines heartburn as a feeling of burning in the epigastric area with retrosternal irradiation because of gastroesophageal reflux from the stomach into the oesophagus, in the condition in which the inferior oesophageal sphincter is relaxed and permits this reflux. According to the United Kingdom National Health Service, heartburn is a burning feeling in the chest caused by stomach acid travelling up towards the throat and this process is known as acid reflux.

The Medical Director, Charis-Med Hospital, Lagos, Dr Olayide A. Jinadu described heartburn as a misnomer, because it has nothing to do with the heart. According to him, the disease is described as heartburn because of the location where the pain is perceived by the sufferer. It occurs when the amount of gastric juice that refluxes (flows

back) into the oesophagus exceeds the normal limit.

Jinadu explained that heartburn is characterised by pain and burning sensation close to where the heart is located and oftentimes associated with a regurgitated salty-sour taste in the mouth and throat, described as salt water brash. He added that it is a common condition, which can happen to anyone, though some people are more prone to heartburn than others.

Symptoms of heartburn

Common symptoms of heartburn include burning, sharp pain in the middle of your chest, behind the breastbone, or in the neck; rising burning and pain in the throat; acid reflux, a sour, acidic taste, or that of the food you've eaten; sharp pain in the back of the mouth; hoarseness, chronic and persistent cough; an uncomfortable lump in the throat; difficulty swallowing (dysphagia) or pain when you swallow; nausea and/or vomiting.

The most frequent of these symptoms is the feeling of warmth, heat, or burning in the chest and throat, which is due to the stomach acid flowing back up into the

oesophagus. It is advised that if a person experiences acid reflux symptoms often, they should consult a doctor, who may refer them to a gastroenterologist, a specialist in gut medicine, for further investigation.

Causes of heartburn

According to physicians, the common causes of heartburn include drinking of alcohol, smoking, obesity, poor posture (slouching), certain medications (calcium channel blockers, theophylline, nitrates, antihistamines), certain foods (fatty and fried foods, chocolate, garlic and onions, caffeinated drinks, acidic foods such as citrus fruits and tomatoes, spicy foods, mint), eating large meals, eating too quickly, eating before bedtime, hiatal hernia, pregnancy, diabetes, increase in stomach acid (from stress, Zollinger-Ellison syndrome, stomach tumours), weight gain, among others.

In addition, some food that may cause or aggravate heartburn include fried and fatty foods, chocolate, garlic and onions, caffeinated beverages, acidic foods such as citrus fruits and tomatoes, spicy foods, mint among others. Any individual may have a particular food that brings on the problem, although it may not be the same food that bothers other sufferers. A few patients with severe heartburn experience the regurgitation of food and acid into the mouth and throat. Sometimes, they are aware of this only as a bitter taste in the mouth on awakening in the morning. On other occasions, it is very apparent, producing irritation with coughing and choking.

Night-time regurgitation while asleep can occur and occasionally permits acid or food to get into the windpipe. This can cause hoarseness

and cough that, on occasion, is the only complaint related to the reflux. In some individuals, this provokes wheezing and shortness of breath resembling asthmatic attacks. Acid coming up into the mouth at night may be the cause of erosion of the teeth. These complications may occur without the occurrence of heartburn.

According to Lauren Castiello, a board certified adult-gerontology primary care nurse practitioner in Boston, USA, it is common for people to experience occasional heartburn, and it is rarely a significant cause for concern. But when it becomes a constant occurrence, it can indicate other underlying health issues.

Heartburn can affect people differently. Heartburn symptoms begin shortly after eating and can last anywhere from a few minutes to a couple of hours, or even longer. Physicians unanimously said how long you experience heartburn symptoms depend on the underlying cause. It also depends on what you do at the first sign of symptoms. For example, sometimes heartburn symptoms last until your body digests the triggering food. Other times, it goes away if you stand up, instead of lying down after eating".

Doctors have also said if one takes antacids or prescription medications as part of a treatment plan, one may experience a shorter duration or fewer heartburn symptoms.

Diagnosis for heartburn

To determine if heartburn is a symptom of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), doctor may ask you to go through certain procedures. These include:

Endoscopy: A small camera on a flexible tube that is put down the throat

continued on page 13

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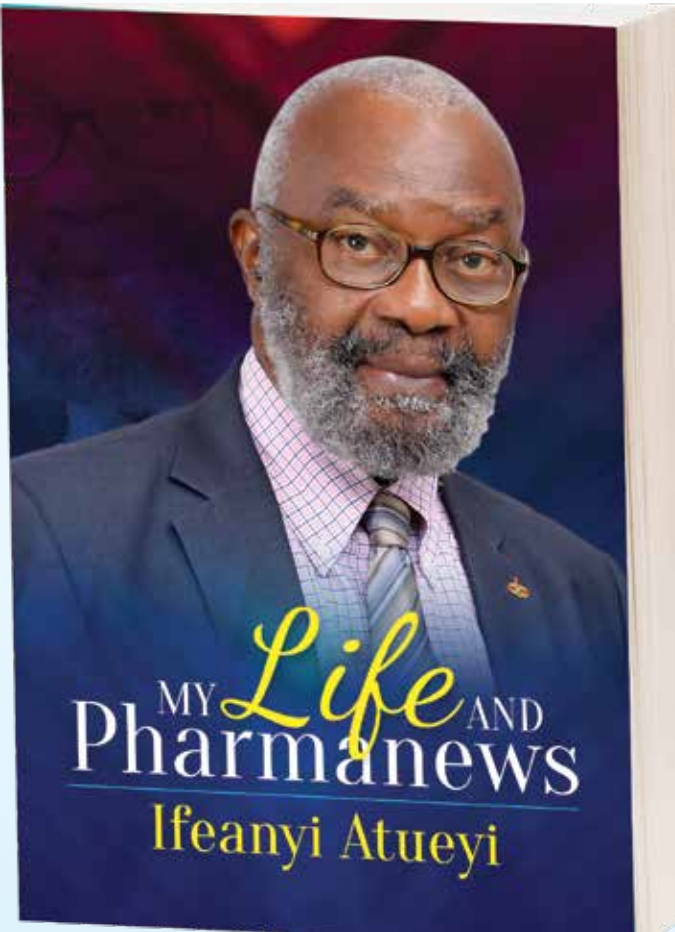
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THE FORMATIVE YEARS (2)

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

Essentially, therefore, my task was unequivocally cut out from the very beginning. Even though I was absolutely sure that I had finally found what I should be doing, I also knew that so much was at stake. With this understanding, I gave the totality of my thinking and being to ensuring that **Pharmanews** not only succeeds but also exceeds expectations. In fact, I can say that while my passion for **Pharmanews** has not dwindled over the years, those first few foundational months and years were particularly remarkable. It was as if I was specially filled with divine strength and insight to handle each of the processes involved in publishing the journal.



me that, indeed, when an assignment is from God, He always equips and provides the individual with all he or she needs to make a success of it.

The Way We Were

I believe that a glimpse into those early years of **Pharmanews** will give the reader a better understanding of the uniqueness of our business and how much progress we have made on this journey in the past 40 years.

Pharmanews started in my apartment back then at 45 Sunmola Street, Mende, Maryland, Lagos. The 3-bedroom apartment had an open space which was used as the children's dining room and also doubled as their "playing room". This was where

I converted to an office for the journal. For the first few months, I went out alone to do most of the news gathering, conducting of interviews, soliciting for articles and adverts, as well as taking of photographs. In that makeshift office, I wrote and edited stories, as the occasion demanded.

Before I resigned from the last company I worked, I was used to waking up early and getting ready for the office, where I was expected to resume at 8 o'clock. Now that I was on my own, I devoted those early hours of the day to doing my writing and editing, and realised that that was my most productive period of the day. By the time it was around 11.00am, I would have done most of my editorial work for the day.

Reminiscing on the way I worked in those early days, Dozie, our son wrote the following, many years later: "It seemed like yesterday, when he suddenly stopped dashing off to work early in the morning, from Monday to Friday. I was not told of the launch of a new project. You can imagine that no one thought it necessary to inform a five-year-old. However, I knew something was up when my siblings and I were restricted from using what had been our "playing room". Instead, we observed that our dad began to spend time there, reading and writing. Soon, people began to visit regularly. They would go straight to our "playing room" and stay there for hours. I was very young but I knew something definitely was going on in that room."

Continues next edition

Each time I look back to that early period and compare it with the present time when we have a large office complex, with a retinue of staff, working with all kinds of gadgets and devices, I marvel at how we managed to get things done in those early years. Obviously, it is easy to

attribute the success in those years to the amount of labour and sweat we put into the work, but then there were also ideas, inspirations and directions that helped to make the labours effective – which certainly were not of my making. This, over the years, has further confirmed to

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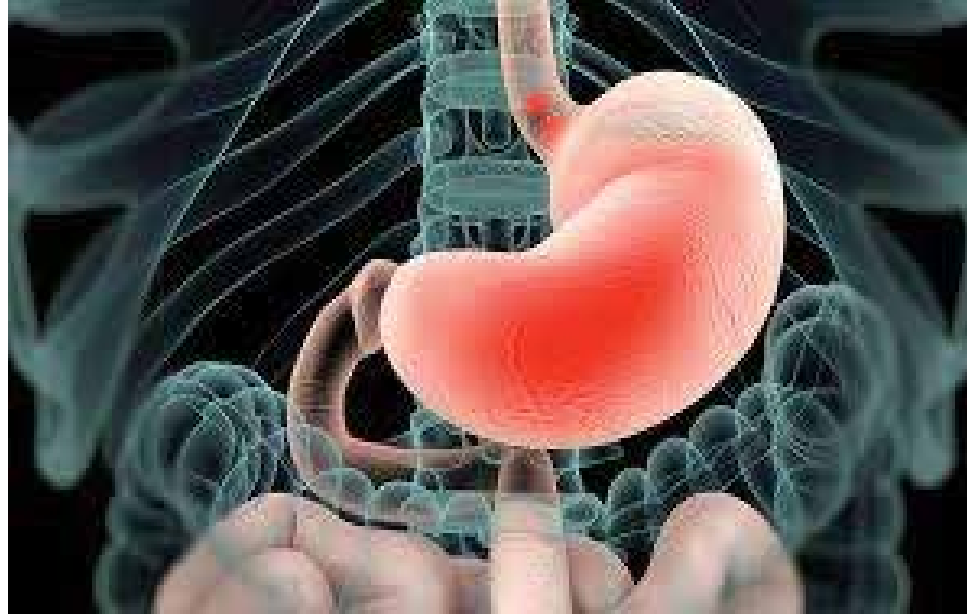
Proven treatments for heartburn and GERD

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stomach acid occurs chronically and causes damage to the body over time. Specifically, stomach acid irritates the lining of the oesophagus, which can lead to serious complications. Chronic injury and inflammation can narrow the oesophagus, making it difficult to swallow. The condition can also cause pain and ulcers.

In their study titled, "Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease: Prevalence and Extraesophageal Manifestations among Undergraduate Students in South West Nigeria", Moses Ayodele Akinola and Titus Ayodeji Oyedele et al, said the reflux of noxious contents of the stomach may cause oesophageal and extra-oesophageal complications either by direct contact of aspirated gastric refluxate with the upper airway or by a vago-vagal reflex. The prevalence of GERD in a similar community-based study carried out in Nigeria was 26.34 per cent, which is comparable to 32.8 per cent reported in the study, though the studies were from different geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

According to Doctor Mary Yeboah Afihene, the medical director, Department of Medicine, Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital, Kumasi, Ghana, heartburn and regurgitation are classic symptoms of GERD. The medical doctor noted that investigating GERD remains a challenge as both invasive methods and symptom-based strategies have limitations. According to her, national guidelines recommend that GERD can be diagnosed clinically, without the need for formal investigations. She pointed out that structured questionnaires are cumbersome to



use in clinical practice and add little to the accuracy of clinical diagnosis.

Symptoms of GERD

According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), part of the National Institutes of Health, US Department of Health and Human Services, gastroesophageal reflux disease commonly cause symptoms such as heartburn and regurgitation. However, the agency noted that not all adults with GERD have heartburn or regurgitation.

Other symptoms of GERD may include chest pain, nausea, problems swallowing or pain while swallowing, complications in the mouth, throat, or lungs, such as chronic cough or hoarseness. Symptoms of GERD may also include chronic cough. "You should see a doctor if you think you

have GERD, or if your symptoms don't get better with over-the-counter medicines or lifestyle changes", the agency said.

Causes of GERD

The lower oesophageal sphincter and diaphragm most often prevent gastroesophageal reflux. However, many people have gastroesophageal reflux once in a while. GERD may develop if your lower oesophageal sphincter becomes weak or relaxes when it should not.

According to NIDDK, factors that may affect the lower oesophageal sphincter and lead to GERD include being overweight or having obesity, being pregnant, smoking or inhaling second-hand smoke. Some medicines can cause GERD or make GERD symptoms worse. Examples of such include benzodiazepines, sedatives, calcium channel blockers,

nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), and tricyclic antidepressants.

A hiatal hernia can also increase the chance of getting GERD or make GERD symptoms worse. A hiatal hernia is a condition in which the opening in your diaphragm lets the upper part of the stomach move up into your chest.

GERD complications

GERD may sometimes lead to serious complications. Such may include:

Esophageal ulcer: Stomach acid eats away esophagus until an open sore forms. These sores are often painful and may bleed. They can make it hard to swallow.

Esophageal stricture: Stomach acid damages the lower part of the esophagus and causes scar tissue to form. This scar tissue builds up until it narrows the inside of the esophagus and makes it hard to swallow food.

Barrett's esophagus: Acid reflux changes the cells in the tissue that lines the esophagus. The lining gets thicker and turns red. This condition is linked to a higher chance of esophageal cancer.

Lung problems: If reflux reaches the back of the throat, it can cause irritation and pain. From there, it can get into the lungs (aspiration). If this happens, the voice may get hoarse. One could also have postnasal drip, chest congestion, and a lingering cough. If lungs get inflamed, one can develop asthma, bronchitis.

Management and treatment of GERD

A healthcare professional is likely to recommend lifestyle changes and nonprescription medicines as a first line of treatment, however, if

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Michael Adikwu: Nigeria's unparalleled achiever in pharmacy scholarship

By Ola Aboderin



Professor Michael Umale Adikwu

In the annals of pharmaceutical and scientific research in Nigeria, very few luminaries have recorded such ground-breaking achievements as Professor Michael Umale Adikwu. Indeed, anyone who has closely monitored his exploits from his university days to date cannot but conclude that he is, so far, the *victor ludorum* of pharmacy scholarship in the country.

A paragon of profound intellect and prolific ingenuity, Adikwu has not only redefined the boundaries of pharmaceutical research but also elevated Nigeria's global standing in this vital discipline. His journey, marked by an unwavering commitment to research, education, innovation and administration, serves as a monumental testimonial of what can be achieved through passionate pursuit and commitment to excellence.

To begin with, Adikwu holds the remarkable record of being the youngest pharmacist to achieve professorship in Nigeria at just 35 years of age – a feat he could have achieved even earlier! Beyond this, however, as each letter of his name rightly suggests, Adikwu is an Accomplished pharmaceutical scientist, a Distinguished academic, an Illustrious innovator, a Kinetic instructor, a Wonderful administrator and an Unstoppable highflier.

Accomplished pharmaceutical scientist

Born on April 19, 1963, Adikwu's path to becoming a revolutionary scientist was shaped from his younger years. Growing up in a village, he often fetched roots of *Alchornea cordifolia* (Christmas bush) for his mother to treat his siblings' malaria. This experience, coupled with his fascination with the natural world, inspired his passion for transforming everyday materials into potential medicinal compounds.

"I was a village boy and very playful, and I thought some of those things that I used to play with could easily be converted to drugs," he recalls. This early interest laid the foundation for his trailblazing accomplishments in pharmaceutical sciences.

From a humble start at St. Paul's Roman Catholic Primary School, in Benue State, to Federal Government College, in Jos, Adikwu showed a strong penchant for excellence. He pursued his passion for pharmaceutical sciences at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, graduating in 1986. Since then, he has consistently expanded the frontiers of pharmaceutical science and education.

Adikwu's pioneering work in raw materials utilisation and sustainability has been significant. His research has also explored genetic engineering, lymphocyte hybridoma, taste-masking of chloroquine through microencapsulation, pharmaceutical microbiology, and, most notably, the beneficial effects of snail and slug mucin.

He has been invited to overseas laboratories thrice: first as an Alexander von Humboldt Fellow in Germany (1999-2000), second as a Matsumae Fellow in Japan (2002), and third as a Royal Society Fellow in Manchester, United Kingdom (2006). He has also received international grants from the Royal Society of Chemistry of Great Britain (2002), the Third World Academy of Sciences, Italy (2004), and the International Foundation for Science, Sweden (2004). Locally, he has received grants from the National Institute for Pharmaceutical Research and Development (NIPRD), Abuja, and the Wellcome Nigeria Trust, Lagos.

In 2007, Adikwu was appointed the national coordinator of Science and Technology Education Post Basic (STEP-B), a project aimed at improving post-basic and higher

education in Nigeria through the World Bank IDA system. Under this project, eleven Centers of Excellence emerged based on various national needs.

Distinguished academic

Adikwu's journey as a distinguished scholar is nothing short of remarkable. Upon graduating with B.Pharm in 1986, his passion for research, ignited during his undergraduate project on genetic engineering, motivated him to pursue a career in academia. He began his postgraduate studies at UNN, focusing on the taste-masking of chloroquine through microencapsulation, under the guidance of his Indian supervisor. Despite balancing his internship and National Youth Service Corps in Kwara State, he completed his master's degree practical work and later defended his thesis.

After a stint at the University of Jos, he returned to Nsukka and fully immersed himself in academic work. His innovative study on the Essential Drugs List Decree and its impact on drug formulations garnered international attention, with his article published in *The Lancet*. This publication significantly advanced his academic career, leading to his rapid promotion to senior lecturer, surpassing his seniors in less than three years.

Three years later, with over 41 research papers, Adikwu applied for professorship but was initially denied due to internal university conflicts. Undeterred, he applied again in 1998 with 61 papers and was eventually promoted to professor, setting an unbeaten record. Adikwu has since mentored numerous postgraduate students, eight of whom are now professors of pharmacy in various universities. His commitment to academic excellence is reflected in his prolific research output, with over 270 publications that have earned him local and international recognition. His contributions have enriched the academic community and have had a lasting impact on pharmaceutical education in Nigeria and beyond.

Illustrious innovator

Adikwu has distinguished himself among his contemporaries by ensuring that his research efforts do not end "on paper." His innovative spirit, driven by childhood curiosity about natural remedies, has led to pioneering pharmaceutical breakthroughs. Among these are his wound healing devices (formulations) based on snail mucin research. This research earned him the prestigious NLNG Nigeria Prize for Science in 2006. The annual prize, awarded for excellence in scientific breakthroughs, is Nigeria's highest scientific award, and Adikwu was the first scientist to win it singlehandedly. He outperformed nine other contestants who submitted works in fields such as Physics, Veterinary Clinical Virology, Quantity Surveying, Mathematics, and Agriculture.

According to the award organisers, Adikwu's work, titled "Wound Healing Devices (Formulations) Containing Snail Mucin," was "a significant contribution to drug formulation and drug delivery systems that would promote the potentials of

local materials in the formulation of drugs." Specifically, the work established that snail biopolymer mucin can be made into various pharmaceutical formulations such as ointments, creams, gels, and films for wound healing, as well as antibacterial, antifungal, and antiviral treatments. Tests on his products on rats and rabbits showed no serious allergic or toxic effects.

Kinetic instructor

As an educator, Adikwu has consistently impacted his students' lives in tremendous ways. His dynamic teaching methods and dedication to fostering critical thinking have helped him nurture a new generation of pharmacists and researchers, many of whom have become celebrated scholars and giants of industry. He once jokingly referred to himself as the "grandfather of professors".

Moreover, Adikwu's passion for all-around intellectual empowerment has led him to advocate for a research foundation to bring postdoctoral fellows from around the world to Nigeria. He believes this is a crucial factor in helping advanced countries with their research and development.

Wonderful administrator

In 2014, Professor Adikwu was selected from a pool of 124 candidates to become the vice-chancellor of the University of Abuja. At the time of his appointment, the university, described by a former minister of education as "a systemic failure," ranked 105th in Nigeria. Under Adikwu's exceptional leadership, the university experienced significant growth and development in every aspect. He ensured that all faculties, except one, moved to the main campus and that all programmes received accreditation.

His ability to foster a harmonious environment among staff and students, coupled with his strategic partnerships with international universities and organisations, transformed the institution, which had risen to the 9th position by the time he left in 2019.

Unstoppable highflier

Given his unparalleled achievements as a scientist, educator, and administrator, it is no surprise that Adikwu's career has been adorned with numerous accolades and recognitions. Besides his historic Prize for Science, he has received the May and Baker Prize for Excellence in the Practice of Pharmacy (2009) and the World Academy of Science Prize for the Development of Materials for Use in Science and Technology (2019), among others.

Despite his numerous achievements and accolades, which have cemented his reputation as a global leader in scientific scholarship and set a benchmark for future generations, Professor Adikwu's dedication and passion remain unwavering. He says, "My research interests have actually not changed. I see my research on snail mucin as incomplete and I am still looking at it very critically. I want to work on slugs and see how they can give indices that can be used to protect the environment."

Proven treatments for heartburn and GERD

continued from page 15

there is no relief within few weeks, prescription medicine and additional testing may be recommended.

Diet and lifestyle changes

According to the Medical Director, WebMed, Hansa D. Bhargava, there are several changes that one can make in lifestyle to help manage or lessen symptoms of GERD. They include:

Avoidance of foods and beverages triggers: Stay away from foods that can relax the LES, including chocolate, peppermint, fatty foods, caffeine, and alcoholic beverages. You should also avoid foods and beverages that can irritate a damaged oesophageal lining if they cause symptoms, such as citrus fruits and juices, tomato products, and pepper.

Eat smaller servings: Eating smaller portions at mealtime may also help control symptoms. Also, eating meals at least 2 to 3 hours before bedtime lets the acid in your stomach go down and your stomach partially empty.

Eat slowly: Take time at every meal.

Chew your food thoroughly: It may help you remember to do this if you set your fork down after you take a bite. Pick it up again only when you've completely chewed and swallowed that bite.

Stop smoking: Cigarette smoking weakens the LES. Stopping smoking is important to reduce GERD symptoms.

Elevate your head: Raising the head of your bed on 6-inch blocks or sleeping on a specially designed wedge lets gravity lessen the reflux of stomach contents into your esophagus. Don't use pillows to

prop yourself up. That only puts more pressure on the stomach.

Stay at a healthy weight: Being overweight often worsens symptoms. Many overweight people find relief when they lose weight.

Wear loose clothes: Clothes that squeeze your waist put pressure on your belly and the lower part of your esophagus.

Acupuncture: In one study, treatment with acupuncture stopped reflux in the test group better than PPIs, with results that lasted longer.

Non-prescription medicines

For non-prescription medicines, options may include:

Antacids that neutralise stomach acid: Antacids containing calcium carbonate, such as Mylanta, Rolaids and Tums, may provide quick relief. But antacids alone won't heal an inflamed oesophagus damaged by stomach acid. Indeed, overuse of some antacids can cause side effects, such as diarrhoea or sometimes kidney complications.

Medicines to reduce acid production: These medicines — known as histamine (H-2) blockers — include cimetidine (Tagamet HB), famotidine (Pepcid AC) and nizatidine (Axid). H-2 blockers don't act as quickly as antacids, but they provide longer relief and may decrease acid production from the stomach for up to 12 hours. Stronger versions are available by prescription.

Medicines that block acid production and heal the oesophagus: These medicines, known as proton pump inhibitors are stronger acid blockers than H-2 blockers and allow time for damaged oesophageal tissue to heal. Non-prescription proton pump inhibitors include lansoprazole

(Prevacid), omeprazole (Prilosec OTC) and esomeprazole (Nexium).

Prescription medicines

Prescription-strength treatments for GERD include:

Prescription-strength proton pump inhibitors: These include esomeprazole (Nexium), lansoprazole (Prevacid), omeprazole (Prilosec), pantoprazole (Protonix), rabeprazole (Aciphex) and dexlansoprazole (Dexilant). Although generally well tolerated, these medicines might cause diarrhea, headaches, nausea or, in rare instances, low vitamin B-12 or magnesium levels.

Prescription-strength H-2 blockers: These include prescription-strength famotidine and nizatidine. Side effects from these medicines are generally mild and well tolerated.

Surgery and other procedures for GERD

GERD can usually be controlled with medicine, but if medicines don't help or patients wish to avoid long-term medicine use, a healthcare professional might recommend surgery or other procedure that may include:

Fundoplication: The surgeon wraps the top of the stomach around the lower esophageal sphincter, to tighten the muscle and prevent reflux. Fundoplication is usually done with a minimally invasive, called laparoscopic, procedure. The wrapping of the top part of the stomach can be partial or complete, known as Nissen fundoplication. The most common partial procedure is the Toupet fundoplication. Your surgeon typically recommends the

type that is best for you.

Linx device: this is a ring of tiny magnetic beads is wrapped around the junction of the stomach and esophagus. The magnetic attraction between the beads is strong enough to keep the junction closed to refluxing acid, but weak enough to allow food to pass through. The LINX device can be implanted using minimally invasive surgery. The magnetic beads do not affect airport security or magnetic resonance imaging.

Transoral incisionless fundoplication (TIF): This new procedure involves tightening the lower oesophageal sphincter by creating a partial wrap around the lower oesophagus using polypropylene fasteners. TIF is performed through the mouth by using an endoscope and requires no surgical incision. Its advantages include quick recovery time and high tolerance.

Meanwhile, because obesity can be a risk factor for GERD, a healthcare professional could suggest weight-loss surgery as an option for treatment but doctor will find out if a patient is a candidate for this type of surgery.

Report compiled by Ranmilowo Ojalumo with additional reports from World Gastroenterology Organisation, the US Drugs and Food Administration (USFDA), Healthline, Cleveland Clinic, MedicineNet, The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, the Washington Post, WebMed, Mayo Clinic, medical news today, The Punch, Premium Times, United Kingdom National Health Service, the Johns Hopkins Health System

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

International Treatment Guidelines

(According to the American College of Gastroenterology)

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

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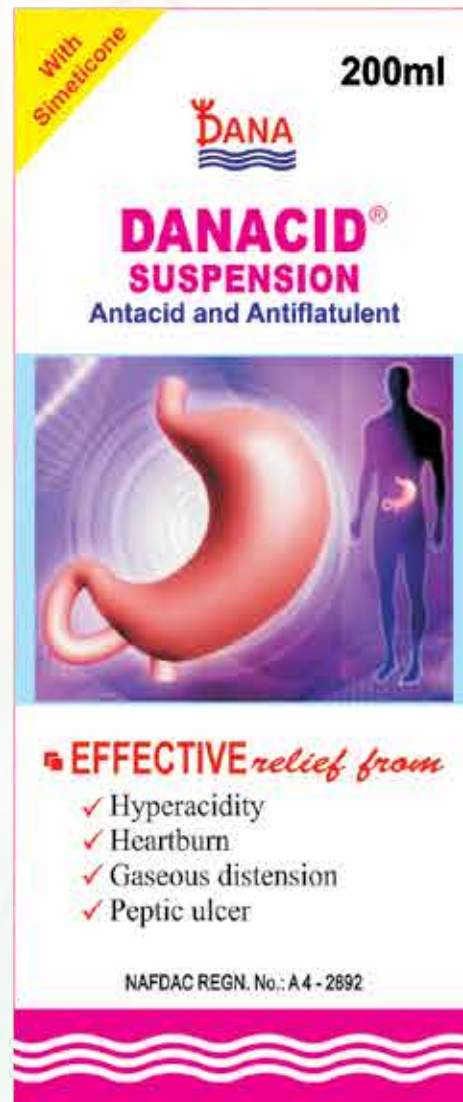
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Pharmacists, friends, family celebrate Mirafash MD, Oluwalade at 60

Ranmilowo Ojalumo

For the Managing Director of Mirafash Nigeria Limited, Pharm. Dr Moses Olurotimi Oluwalade, 6 June 2024, was a day of celebration, as pharmacists, friends, family, and well-wishers gathered at Regency Hall, Ikeja, Lagos, to celebrate his 60th birthday.

In his message during the birthday service, Pastor Wole Ajayeoba, acting regional pastor of Region 11 of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), said that a birthday celebration is an opportunity to reflect and measure one's days on earth.

Ajayeoba explained that there are four stages of life for every person: the morning, afternoon, evening, and night stages. He encouraged everyone to reflect on each stage of their lives, serve God, and contribute to humanity while they still have the strength to do so, emphasizing that a time will come when they may no longer have the strength.

The acting regional pastor described the Mirafash boss as a humble and silent achiever who does not seek attention. He urged everyone to be humble, wise, and above all, to fear God, which he said is the beginning of wisdom.

At the reception, the Chairman of the occasion, Pharm. Rotimi Ogungbade, who is also the managing director of Fontana Pharmacy, described Oluwalade as an honest person with impeccable character, integrity,



Managing Director, Mirafash Nigeria Limited (Pharmaceutical), Pharm. Moses Olurotimi Oluwalade, with his wife, posed with cake during his 60th birthday celebration in Lagos on June 6, 2024.

and a deep fear of God. He advised the celebrant to take things easy at 60 by slowing down a bit and putting processes in place to manage his company effectively.

Mr Seun Oluwalade, a younger brother of the celebrant, described him as the pillar of the family, saying he is someone who always helps and ensures that

people are supported at various levels.

In response to the outpouring of love he received at the event, Oluwalade, who is also a pastor in RCCG, expressed his gratitude and humility. He said, "I don't know what I have done to receive God's favour, but I pray that God will help

me continue doing those things."

Mirafash Nig. Ltd. is an indigenous pharmaceutical company specializing in manufacturing antibiotics, specifically beta-lactam. The birthday event was attended by many pharmacists, top RCCG pastors, family members, and well-wishers.

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DEANS' PROF. ABUBAKAR M. AMALI Corner

Professor Abubakar Muhammad Amali is the current dean of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto (UDUS). A professor of Pharmacology and Toxicology, he is an expert in pharmaceutical care, patient education and counselling, academic research, teaching and mentorship, with a high sense of responsibility and dedication.

Amali attended Waziri Ward Primary School, Sokoto, and Federal Government College, Sokoto, for his primary and secondary education, respectively. He later proceeded to Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, where he studied Pharmacy and obtained his B.Pharm in 2002. He subsequently bagged MSc. in Pharmacology from UDUS, in 2009.

In 2015, Amali bagged his PhD in Pharmacology from Universiti Putra, Malaysia. In 2020, he obtained a professional certificate in Public Health, Logistics and Supply Chain Management, from the Royal College of Public Health Technology, Osun State, Nigeria. He is currently pursuing a Master

of Public Health (MPH), from Maryam Abacha American University, Kano State, Nigeria.

Until his emergence as dean a few months ago, Prof. Amali was the deputy dean of the faculty, from 2020 to 2023. He has been the faculty postgraduate programme coordinator, UDUS, since 2022. He has also been the secretary, State Pharmaceutical Inspection Committee, Sokoto State, from 2006.

Amali was the pioneer head of Department of Clinical Pharmacy, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, UDUS, from 2008 to 2010. He was pharmacist 1 at the Specialist Hospital, Sokoto from 2003 to 2006 and senior pharmacist at the hospital between 2006 and 2007. He was senior pharmacist at the Hospital Services Management Board, Sokoto, between 2006 and 2007. He was also the state drug safety and monitoring officer, Sokoto from 2005 to 2007. He was also the acting head, Pharmaceutical Services, Hospital Service Management Board, Sokoto, between 2006 and 2007.

Amali was the Chairman of the Drug Revolving Fund Monitoring Committee, Sokoto



Scholar citations as of November 20, 2021. He has also supervised several undergraduate and postgraduate projects to completion.

A professional to the core, Amali is a member of many professional and academic bodies. He is a member of the American Society of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET), the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), the National Association

of Pharmacists in Academia (NAPA) and the Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN). He won the Gold Medal at the Research Invention and Innovation Competition (PRPI) in 2014. He is also a Merit Award Winner, of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, Sokoto Chapter (2015).

Prof. Amali has over 30 publications in peer-reviewed journals. He has also written and delivered many research papers at various academic seminars, conferences and workshops. He has over 350 Google

of Pharmacists in Academia (NAPA) and the Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN). He won the Gold Medal at the Research Invention and Innovation Competition (PRPI) in 2014. He is also a Merit Award Winner, of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, Sokoto Chapter (2015).

Prof. Amali, who loves reading, writing and mentoring, is married and blessed with children.

▶ Infectious Diseases ◀

Socio-economic and political dynamics of cholera outbreaks in Africa

By Patrick Iwelunmor

Understanding the socio-economic and political dynamics of cholera outbreaks in Africa requires examining the interplay of factors that contribute to the spread and impact of this infectious disease. Cholera, caused by the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae* and transmitted through contaminated water and food, continues to pose significant public health challenges across the continent. This essay explores the historical context, socio-economic determinants, political influences, and critical dates associated with cholera outbreaks in Africa.

Historical context and early outbreaks

Cholera has been a recurring health threat in Africa since the 19th century, coinciding with European colonial expansion and trade routes. Increased movement of people and goods, inadequate sanitation infrastructure, and crowded living conditions in urban centres and trading posts facilitated the introduction of cholera to Africa during this period.

Important dates:

1830s - Introduction of cholera: Cholera is believed to have first arrived in Africa during the early to mid-19th century through major port cities and trade routes. Initial outbreaks were reported in coastal areas, including ports along the Gulf of Guinea and the Indian Ocean.

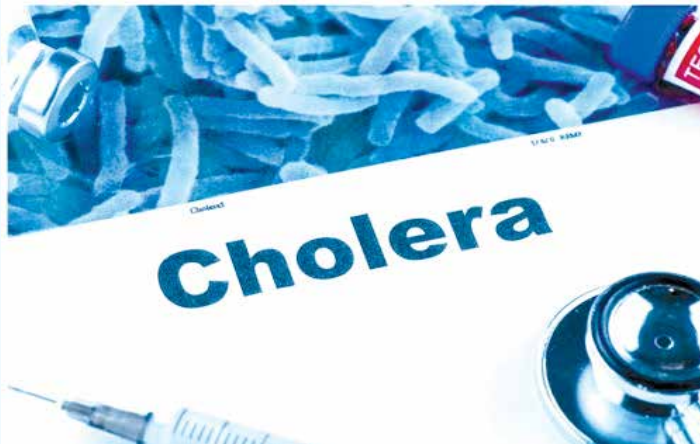
Late 19th to early 20th century (colonial era): During the colonial period, cholera outbreaks were frequent in urban centres and areas under colonial administration. European powers focused on quarantine measures and improving sanitation in port cities to mitigate the disease's spread.

1961 - Ongoing: Modern era challenges: In recent decades, despite advances in healthcare and infrastructure development, cholera outbreaks persist in Africa. Factors such as rapid urbanisation, inadequate water and sanitation facilities, political instability, and climate change exacerbate the vulnerability of populations to cholera.

Socio-economic determinants of cholera outbreaks

Poverty and inequality: Poverty is a significant determinant of cholera outbreaks in Africa. Impoverished communities often lack access to clean water and proper sanitation facilities, increasing their vulnerability to waterborne diseases like cholera. Inadequate hygiene practices and overcrowded living conditions further contribute to disease transmission.

Urbanisation and informal settlements: Rapid urbanisation has led to the proliferation of informal settlements or slums in African cities. These



areas often lack basic amenities such as clean water, sanitation infrastructure, and healthcare services, creating ideal conditions for cholera outbreaks to occur and spread rapidly among densely populated communities.

Climate change and environmental factors: Climate variability, including extreme weather events such as floods and droughts, can impact cholera dynamics in Africa. Flooding, for instance, can contaminate water sources and disrupt sanitation infrastructure, increasing the risk of cholera transmission in affected communities.

Healthcare access and infrastructure: Weak healthcare systems in many African countries pose challenges in cholera prevention, detection, and treatment. Limited

healthcare facilities, medical supplies, trained personnel, and surveillance capacity hinder effective response to outbreaks, resulting in higher morbidity and mortality rates among affected populations.

Response and mitigation strategies

Addressing the socio-economic and political dynamics of cholera outbreaks in Africa requires comprehensive, multi-sectoral approaches:

Water and sanitation infrastructure: Investments in water supply systems, sanitation facilities, and hygiene promotion are crucial for preventing cholera transmission. Improving access to clean water and promoting hygienic practices in communities can reduce the incidence of waterborne diseases.

Health system strengthening: Strengthening healthcare infrastructure, workforce capacity, and emergency response capabilities enhances the ability to detect and respond to cholera outbreaks promptly. Training healthcare workers in cholera management and surveillance improves clinical outcomes and reduces mortality rates.

Community engagement and education: Engaging communities in cholera prevention through health education campaigns, community-led interventions, and behavioural change communication fosters sustainable practices. Empowering local leaders, volunteers, and health promoters enhances community resilience and supports effective outbreak response.

Political commitment and governance: Political commitment to public health, effective governance, and institutional capacity building are essential for cholera control. Policies that prioritize healthcare infrastructure development, sanitation improvements, and disaster preparedness contribute to reducing the socio-economic burden of cholera outbreaks in Africa.

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Dr Patrick Ijewere; B.Sc. Chem, B.Pharm, MD, MBA
 (Specialty: Internal Medicine, from John Hopkins University)
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Wellness

with

From ancestral health excellence to modern health mediocrity

Recently, I had the privilege of reading the book, "Nutrition and Physical Degeneration", by Dr Weston Price, a dentist from North America, who wrote it in 1939. Price and his wife travelled to 14 countries across all continents in search of healthy populations, and his findings were remarkable.

Consistently, he observed perfect health, bone structure, dental health, immunity, and more among indigenous people who maintained their traditional diets.

I also had the privilege of reading the ground-breaking book, "The China Study", by T. Colin Campbell. In this book, Campbell unequivocally states that rural folk who consumed their native meals were healthier than those who migrated to urban areas and often transitioned to Western-style nutrition, especially high animal protein foods.

During my specialty training in internal medicine at Johns Hopkins University, I had professors who

had travelled extensively, including to Africa, South America, and Asia. I recall Professor Greenough, who often asked me what we used in Nigeria for various ailments. He advised repeatedly that there is knowledge in those ancient cultures and encouraged me to go back and retrieve it.

He travelled to Senegal and the Far East, including Indonesia and the Philippines. He noted some similarities in how indigenous people treated diarrhoea in children, such as preparing rice water with added salt. Despite being geographically distant, these cultures had similar practices. He consistently encouraged me to explore the wisdom of these ancient cultures and retrieve that knowledge.

Little did I realise he was planting the seed for me to awaken others and myself who would listen. There is tremendous health in ancestral knowledge and nutrition. He praised the wisdom that existed among ancient

people. Several years ago, I travelled to Indonesia. At a nice upscale restaurant, I observed something strange yet familiar. Next to the sink where patrons washed their hands before meals was a huge clay pot, similar to the kind I had seen at my grandmother's home. In my childhood, during visits to the village, I saw my great-grandma and grandma drink from such pots. This large clay pot had a tap and spout built into it to allow water to flow out.

National Geographic published a study in the early 2000s that examined cultures around the world to identify those with the least health problems and longest lifespans. These communities and geographic areas, now known as Blue Zones, maintain traditional agricultural and nutritional practices. For instance, they consume only original heirloom wheat cultivated traditionally, without chemicals or GMOs. They also follow natural rhythms, such as aligning sleep cycles with the moon and sun.

All these different sources of exposure and knowledge consistently tell us that if we want to be healthy, we should adhere

to natural, organic, ancestral, or traditional agricultural and nutritional practices. These sources, including the books mentioned, observed that people who abandoned these practices and adopted the Western diet and modern agricultural and nutritional processing practices experienced more health problems. They became sicker, less healthy, and even had shorter lifespans.

The evidence is clear: the more we follow the so-called Western modern conventional practices in agriculture and nutrition, the sicker we become and the shorter our longevity. A word to the wise: say no to GMOs, as they are part of these destructive Western agricultural and nutritional practices. They pollute the soil and are detrimental to our health, the environment, bees, and soil microbes.

Your health was excellent before the mediocrity of the modern Western onslaught into our agriculture and nutrition. Reclaim your health and wellness. Reclaim your health and longevity through ancestral practices—natural, organic, chemical-free, and GMO-free agriculture and nutrition.

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The ABCD of success and significance

By Pharm. Sesan Kareem

Success and significance are two sides of the same coin. While success often refers to achieving your goals and reaching a desired state, significance delves deeper, asking if your achievements have a positive impact on the world. The ABCD of success and significance provides a foundational framework to navigate this journey.

A: Action - The spark of progress

The first step on the path to success and significance is action. It is the catalyst that transforms dreams into reality. Ideas and aspirations remain just that without the spark of action. Taking action, however small, sets the wheels in motion. It can be starting that online course you've been eyeing, making that first sales call, or simply writing down your goals.

Action is not a one-time event; it's a continuous process. It's the daily grind, the consistent effort put towards achieving your goals. Whether it's an hour of dedicated work each day or a few focused sprints throughout the week, action is what bridges the gap between intention and achievement.

However, action alone isn't enough. It needs direction. This is where belief comes in.

B: Belief - The fuel for action

Belief is the unwavering conviction in your ability to achieve your goals. It's the inner voice that whispers, "You can do this", even when faced with challenges. It fuels your dedication and provides the resilience to overcome obstacles.

Belief doesn't always come easily.

Doubts and insecurities can creep in, especially when faced with setbacks. Building belief is an ongoing process. Here are some ways to cultivate a strong belief system:

Visualise success: Imagine yourself achieving your goals. Vividly picture the details of your success and use this mental image as a source of motivation.

Focus on your strengths: Acknowledge your skills and talents. Remind yourself of past accomplishments to build confidence in your abilities.

Learn from setbacks: Don't view failures as final. They are stepping stones on the path to success. Analyse what went wrong, learn from it, and adapt your approach.

Surround yourself with positivity: Associate with people who believe in you and inspire you. Their encouragement can be a powerful source of motivation.

C: Consistency - The pathway to mastery

Consistency is the steady and unwavering application of effort towards your goals. It's the daily showing up, even when you don't feel like it. It's about progress, not perfection. Small, consistent steps taken over time lead to significant results.

Think of success and significance as marathons, not sprints. Consistency is the key to building the endurance and stamina needed to run the long race. Here are some tips for building consistency:

Set realistic goals: Break down your big goals into smaller, achievable milestones. This makes the journey seem less daunting and

keeps you motivated.

Develop routines: Schedule dedicated time for working towards your goals. Make it a consistent habit, just like brushing your teeth.

Track your progress: Monitor your progress towards your goals. Seeing your accomplishments, however small, can be highly motivating and reinforce consistent action.

Reward yourself: Celebrate your achievements, big and small. Acknowledging progress keeps you motivated and reinforces positive habits.

D: Discipline - The master of focus

Discipline is the ability to control your actions and emotions in pursuit of your goals. It's saying no to distractions and temptations that can derail your progress. Discipline requires focus, commitment, and the ability to prioritize.

Developing discipline can be challenging, but it's a crucial component of success and significance. Here are some ways to cultivate discipline:

Minimise distractions: Identify and minimise distractions that can derail your focus. This could mean turning off notifications, finding a quiet workspace, or informing others of your dedicated work time.

Prioritise ruthlessly: Not all tasks are created equal. Identify the most important tasks that move you closer to your goals and focus on them first.

Develop self-awareness: Recognise your triggers for procrastination or impulsive behaviour. Develop strategies to



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

address them proactively.

Embrace delayed gratification: Success rarely happens overnight. Learn to focus on the long-term benefits rather than immediate gratification.

Adding significance to success

While achieving your goals is an important part of success, leaving a positive impact on the world adds a layer of significance. Look for ways to use your skills and talents to benefit others. This could involve volunteering your time, mentoring others, creating products or services.

ACTION PLAN: Take action consistently with discipline in your drive to achieve success and significance.

AFFIRMATION: I am action-oriented. I believe in myself. I am consistent and disciplined in my drive for success and significance. I am blessed and highly-favoured.

Sesan Kareem is the visionary founder of Hubpharm Africa, www.hubpharmafrica.com and principal consultant, Sesan Kareem Institute, www.sesankareem.com.ng. He facilitates with clarity, conviction and calmness, moving leaders from success to significance.

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Treating stakeholders with respect, secret to my success at NIMR - Salako

Professor Babatunde Lawal Salako, the immediate past director general of the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research (NIMR), recently concluded his two terms, spanning eight years, at the institute. In this exclusive interview, the professor of Nephrology and former provost at the College of Medicine, University of Ibadan, shares with **Temitope Obayendo** the highlights and defining moments of his stewardship. Excerpts:



Professor Babatunde Lawal Salako

Congratulations on completing your second tenure as NIMR director general. Reflecting on your administration, how would you describe the journey so far?

Thank you. On the 25 July, 2016, two days after my birthday, my appointment as the director general of NIMR was announced. I resumed temporarily on 9 August because I was the provost of the College of Medicine at the University of Ibadan at the time. I needed to oversee the election of a new provost before I could fully take on my role at NIMR. So, for one month, from August to September, I was acting as both provost and DG of NIMR. I fully resumed as DG on 9 September.

The first thing I did was have all departments and units present their current situation, including their challenges and potential solutions. We compiled this into a comprehensive needs assessment document. We concluded that the first step was to create a strategic plan for the institution. In 2016, we organised a national retreat, which led to the creation of our strategic plan for 2016-2021. The plan focused on research development, especially translational research, funding, creating a conducive research environment, and fostering national and international collaborations. Private sector participation in research was also a key focus.

We held bi-annual monitoring and evaluation sessions, with mid-year and end-of-year evaluations conducted during annual retreats. This approach helped staff understand the

importance of setting targets, which significantly improved the working environment. The initial strategic plan ended in 2022, so we developed a new plan for 2022-2026, which we are currently working on.

Looking back at your tenure, what would you identify as your most important milestone at the institute?

It's challenging to single out one achievement as the most important, but if I must choose, it would be establishing adjunct positions for researchers. This initiative allowed our researchers to work in universities, supervise, teach, and examine students. They could also be promoted to professorships. This innovation helped retain researchers who aspired to academic careers similar to those in universities.

Before this, many researchers left NIMR for university positions. By creating MOUs and adjunct positions with Nigerian universities, we were able to promote our first set of five professors in 2018, significantly boosting the research environment and providing hope for younger researchers.

This initiative drastically reduced internal brain drain, as new PhDs and MPhils stayed,

A respectful and inclusive environment motivates the workforce and enhances productivity. I see that as one of the secrets behind the success of this administration. We talked to the unions, we talked to individuals, we talked to seniors, we talked to juniors, and we treated everybody with respect, because that's very important.

seeing a clear path for career advancement. Additionally, university adjuncts also held research positions at NIMR, creating a mutually beneficial relationship. This collaboration led to increased networking, more grant opportunities, and a higher number of publications, enhancing NIMR's visibility both nationally and internationally.

Before now, we've heard about your contributions to research. How has medical research improved healthcare in Nigeria today?

Medical research improves healthcare in numerous ways. Innovations and discoveries lead to new health solutions and product development, which can spur the growth of start-up companies, providing employment and economic benefits. Health research brings new knowledge and solutions to diseases. For instance, the COVID-19 vaccines, developed through health research, helped control the pandemic, revitalising economies worldwide.

Despite the immense benefits, health research in Nigeria is underfunded. Adequate funding could train researchers, support research, foster innovation, and address specific health challenges unique to Nigeria. For example, research could provide lasting solutions to endemic diseases like Lassa fever, which we currently address with a reactive, rather than proactive, approach.

Currently, we are dealing with an outbreak of cholera. What has NIMR done in response to this?

NIMR is actively supporting surveillance and developing a point-of-care instrument to diagnose cholera, using body fluids and water. Cholera often stems from water and food contamination, and poor hygiene. Our diagnostic tool, which is 80 per cent complete, aims to detect cholera quickly and cost-effectively, similar to a dipstick urine test. This tool will be locally produced, affordable, and accessible, allowing for early detection and prevention of epidemics.

We are also conducting surveillance of wastewater in canals and around hospitals to detect potential contamination sources. Cholera outbreaks often follow heavy rains and floods that mix with drinkable water. Our goal is to identify and mitigate

these risks early.

Having spent eight years at NIMR, what are your recommendations for the new DG to move the institution forward?

My first recommendation is to maintain an open-door policy. Accessibility fosters transparency and prevents misinformation. Engaging with unions, individuals, senior and junior staff, and treating everyone with respect is crucial.

A respectful and inclusive environment motivates the workforce and enhances productivity. I see that as one of the secrets behind the success of this administration. We talked to the unions, we talked to individuals, we talked to seniors, we talked to juniors, and we treated everybody with respect, because that's very important.

No matter the innovations or resources brought to the institution, success depends on a motivated and prepared workforce. Treating staff with respect ensures mutual respect and cooperation, which is essential for achieving institutional goals.

As a successful director general, who has served two terms, do you have any regrets?

I pride myself on being "Mr No Regrets." I believe in taking decisions and accepting responsibility for their outcomes. However, if I must mention something, it would be the superficial oversight that sometimes costs the institution unnecessary expenses. While oversight is necessary, it should be altruistic and genuinely aimed at improving the institution, not hindering its progress.

There were moments of frustration when it felt like genuine efforts to help the system were met with obstacles. But overall, I have no regrets and believe in taking responsibility for my actions and moving forward.

You have achieved so much at NIMR and raised the bar. Where do you see NIMR in the next five years?

In five years, I envision NIMR as a hub for scientists seeking knowledge, skills, and research funding. By then, we should have established a funding agency that supports extensive research. NIMR will be akin to the US National Institutes of Health, a center for learning, research funding, and innovation.

We will see many policy supports, treatment guidelines, and discoveries arising from our research. NIMR will continue to be a beacon of scientific excellence, contributing significantly to healthcare advancements in Nigeria and beyond.

What is your next step after leaving NIMR?

I was the provost at the College of Medicine, and I still have some years left in the system. I believe my job is waiting for me, so I will continue working for the government and contributing to medical research and education.



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Academia is bedrock of pharma innovation – Ilomuanya

Dr Margaret Ilomuanya is the acting dean of the Department of Pharmaceutics and Pharmaceutical Technology at the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Lagos. She is the chief investigator in the collaboration between Population Council, New York; Jaiven Pharmaceuticals Consulting, New Jersey; and the University of Lagos—a project that resulted in the establishment of the General Manufacturing Practice (GMP) laboratory, housed in the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Lagos. In this exclusive interview with **Patrick Iwelunmor**, she discusses the significance of the GMP laboratory and how academia can collaborate with industry to maximise the potential of local manufacturers in Nigeria. Excerpts:

Kindly tell us about the MED-AFRICA GMP laboratory. How did it come about?

The GMP laboratory came about as a result of collaboration between Population Council, New York, Jaiven Pharmaceuticals Consulting, New Jersey and the University of Lagos with me being the Principal Investigator. With the long-standing collaboration I have with Population Council, New York, I secured research funding from Jaiven Pharmaceuticals. They established the MED-AFRICA Foundation Fund, which financed the construction of the GMP laboratory. The GMP laboratory is designed to produce clinical trial batches for HIV prevention products.

What is the significance of academia-industry collaboration?

The bedrock of innovation lies in academia. If we can foster a cohesive academia-industry synergy, we can achieve translational research. This means that innovations developed in academic settings can be scaled up in facilities like the MED-



Dr Margaret Ilomuanya

AFRICA GMP laboratory. Once we demonstrate the feasibility of manufacturing on a pilot scale, we can scale up to larger productions, where big pharma can get involved.

This pathway allows us to develop home-grown solutions, making university-developed products available for Nigerians.

Do you believe that maximizing local manufacturing could address challenges regarding access to quality medicines in Nigeria?

Local production might be expensive initially, but it will become more affordable as we reduce dependency on imports and manufacture everything locally. For example, currently, 99% of APIs used in Nigeria are imported. Imagine a Nigeria that manufactures its APIs and finished pharmaceutical products. This would lower overall product prices, increase availability, and ensure that locally produced medicines meet high regulatory standards, given the proximity of manufacturers and regulators.

With Nigeria's abundant flora and fauna, why aren't we producing our own APIs?


We can produce APIs, but the government needs to support manufacturers with the costs of machinery and power. Power is a primary challenge in local manufacturing. Without power issues, production would be more seamless.

Do you think the challenges you've identified pose a serious threat to producing our own APIs?

We shouldn't let today's challenges stop us from starting. The GMP facility at the University of

continued on page 36

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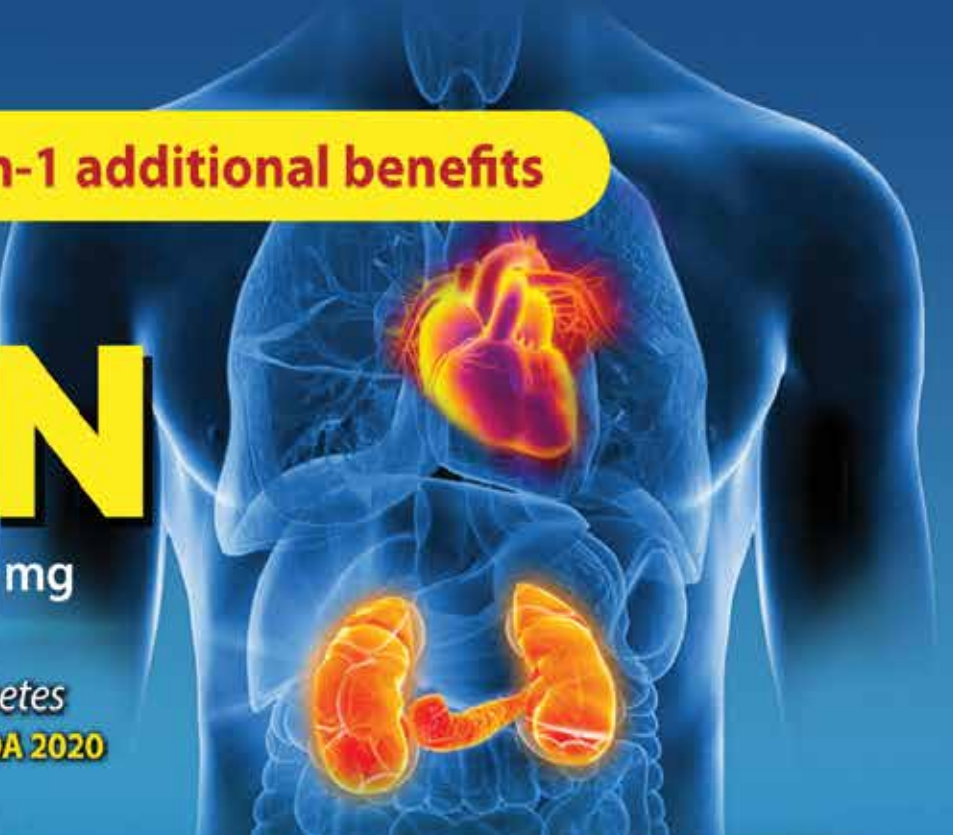
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1. Cardiovasc J Afr. 2010 Feb; 21(1): 61-62.; 2. Drugs. 2006;66(1):51-83.; 3. Expert Opinion on Pharmacotherapy 2011;12(17):2719-2735

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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.

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Academia is bedrock of pharma innovation – Ilomuanya

continued from page 34

Lagos is the first of its kind in Nigeria and the only one in West Africa housed in a university. We should begin and address challenges as they arise.

What major challenges do researchers in academia face?

Innovation in cutting-edge technology and pharmaceutical products requires funding for materials, equipment, infrastructure, personnel, and principal investigators. If the government is serious about innovation, it should fund our universities and educators at all levels. This would nurture capable, brilliant minds who can become innovators.

Where there is a funding gap, two things happen. The first is brain drain, where we have people taking knowledge outside. You can see how Nigerians are being innovative and making their marks everywhere around the globe. The second thing is that those who remain in the system would decide to work with foreign entities who fund their research; or they may choose to be redundant, giving the system just as much as what the system is giving to them. If we are serious about innovation, education has to be prioritised. If we want cutting-edge technology, our laboratories must be cutting-edge. If you come into our GMP laboratory and see cutting-edge research, it is because someone has funded a cutting-edge facility for us.

There are many research institutes in Nigeria, yet we still struggle with access to quality medicines. Why is that?

While some research institutes, like NIPRD, have products, we need to make these products more mainstream. The issue isn't the number of research institutes but proper regulation and utilisation of their research. Collaboration with universities could improve outcomes.

Do you think NAFDAC is focusing more on revenue generation than its core regulatory role?

As an academic, I don't have a specific perspective on this. While NAFDAC is aware of our GMP laboratory, we have yet to formally invite them as a regulator. We need more synergy to move forward, creating rules that cater to our needs, and the need of the Nigerian pharmaceutical industry right now is the provision of quality medicines at affordable prices. Anything that would hinder a company from providing good quality medicines at affordable prices should be looked into, to ensure the Nigerian populace get benefits.

Is NAFDAC meeting expectations as a regulator?

The issue often lies in balancing regulatory and business needs. As a government agency, NAFDAC operates within certain constraints. The current administration has taken steps, like waiving taxes on imported items, to reduce medicine costs. I hope similar issues within the pharma sector and NAFDAC will be addressed. NAFDAC is doing its best, and like everything, there's room for improvement.

What motivates you in your pursuit of better outcomes

for Nigeria's pharmaceutical sector?

I graduated from the University of Lagos at a time when the laboratories were very good, when the classrooms were not crowded, and when the living accommodation was optimised and comparable to those of other universities around the world. My motivation stems from the desire to bring such facilities to the younger ones we are training.

It was the impact of the kind of training I had that is enabling me do the kind of research I am currently doing. During my PhD, I had the opportunity to work in the UK and the US, where such facilities abound and that also fuelled my motivation that if this can happen, then there must be something, no matter how little, I can do to replicate same in Nigeria.

What challenges did you encounter in realising the GMP laboratory project?

I faced challenges but focused

on possibilities and the unexpected champions who supported my vision. Dwelling on challenges won't get us anywhere, so I chose to focus on positive aspects and supporters.

How did you balance family commitments with your professional responsibilities, especially during travel for your fellowship?

My family has been my backbone, especially my husband, who is my biggest champion. He is the one that encourages me when I am faced with difficult situations. Without him being there to help out, it would have just been impossible to achieve some of these things. He runs his own company and when he needs to travel, I am available to take care of the home. Sometimes, when the need arises, we even travel together. It is more like a tag-team. We have found a way to make things work and I think it is all about understanding.

What are your most urgent needs to sustain the GMP laboratory?

We need collaboration with big pharma for contract manufacturing and clinical trials. We also require regulatory agency support to test for quality. We are open to collaborations at all levels of drug development.

Then, we can also look at collaboration with the regulatory agencies where they can give us some equipment that we can use to test. So, this point will be a point for testing for quality. We are open to collaboration at all levels of drug development.

What advice would you give the government to create an enabling environment for local manufacturers?

For local manufacturers to thrive, government must provide power. They must also provide security. Once these two are sorted out, every other thing will sort itself out.

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By Adebayo Oladejo



Pharm. Abimbola Bowoto, assistant general manager, Sales and Marketing, Geneith Pharmaceuticals Limited, unveiling the newly launched Coatal Gelatin Soft Gel during the 43rd national conference of the ACPN, tagged Oluyole 2024 in Ibadan.

Dr Michael Obaro, a consultant clinical pharmacologist and malaria scientist at University College Hospital (UCH), Ibadan, has highlighted the potential of soft gel technology in revolutionising malaria treatment in Nigeria.

Obaro, who is also a senior lecturer in the Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics, University of Ibadan, gave the recommendation at the official launch of Coatal Forte Soft Gelatin Capsules—a formulation of artemether and lumefantrine—by Geneith Pharmaceuticals Limited.

The launch event took place during the 43rd Annual National Conference of the Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN), held at the International Conference Centre, University of Ibadan. It was attended by eminent pharmacists, nurses, doctors, and other dignitaries.

The expert noted that malaria, caused by the Plasmodium parasite and transmitted through mosquito bites, affects millions annually, saying despite the availability of effective treatments, challenges, such as drug resistance, poor patient adherence and limited accessibility, hinder the global fight against malaria.

He revealed that over 60 per cent of Nigerians discontinue oral medications while undergoing treatment, which he said remains a significant barrier to effective malaria management.

According to him, soft gel capsules, known for their enhanced bioavailability and patient-friendly properties, are gaining attention in the pharmaceutical world, adding that unlike traditional tablets, soft gels can improve drug absorption, ensure consistent dosing, and provide a stable medium for active ingredients.

“Soft gels facilitate quicker and more efficient absorption of antimalarial drugs, ensuring rapid therapeutic effects. Their ease of swallowing can lead to better adherence, particularly among children and the elderly. Additionally, they can protect sensitive drug compounds from degradation, maintaining their potency over time,” Obaro explained.

He credited the development of the soft gelatin capsule formulation to Robert Pauli Scherer, an American inventor who developed the rotary die encapsulation process for manufacturing soft gel capsules in 1933. This innovation allowed for the mass production of soft gels, providing

a reliable and efficient method to encapsulate liquid and semi-solid water may be limited, and include

formulations within a gelatin shell.

Speaking on the newly launched Coatal Forte Soft Gelatin Capsules, Obaro stressed that it is a popular antimalarial gelatin formulation, containing Artemether 80 mg and Lumefantrine 480 mg, known for its high safety and efficacy.

Furthermore, he noted that soft gel formulations can be marketed as premium products due to positive consumer perception. “They can be taken without water, offer convenience for patients in areas where access to clean

tamper-evident features, providing an additional layer of safety and trust for consumers,” he said.

Obaro emphasised that malaria thrives in areas with a regular flow of water or availability of water sources, poor environmental conditions, and large populations. He noted that medications alone cannot eliminate malaria in Nigeria; mass treatment and a change in individual mindsets are also required.

Pharm. Abimbola Bowoto, assistant general manager, Sales and Marketing, Geneith Pharmaceuticals Limited, and Pharm. Simeon Azubike Okechukwu, assistant general manager, Sales, described the Coatal Soft Gel as patient-friendly, accessible, affordable, and suitable for all ages. They explained that the emergence of the product, available in two formulations—Coatal Gelatin Soft Gel 80/480 and 20/120—provides patients with options and reduces non-compliance with medications.

The duo emphasised that access to good quality drugs is crucial to patient survival and encouraged citizens to take advantage of the product, now available in the Nigerian market.

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People skills for sales leaders: 11 items for emotional intelligence development

Emotional intelligence (also known as emotional quotient or EQ) emerged as a revolutionary concept, challenging the conventional wisdom that intelligence quotient (IQ) alone determines success. Surprisingly, individuals with average IQs often outperform those with the highest IQs, highlighting the pivotal role of EQ in achieving favourable outcomes. Research indicates that 90 per cent of top performers possess high emotional intelligence, underscoring its critical importance in personal and professional success.

Despite its undeniable importance, assessing and enhancing emotional intelligence can be challenging, due to its intangible nature. While scientifically validated EQ tests offer valuable insights, they are not always readily available. However, by analysing data from EQ assessments, we can identify common behaviours associated with low EQ, providing valuable guidance for improvement.

1. Stress management is a fundamental aspect of emotional intelligence, enabling individuals to recognise and effectively manage stressors. Those lacking EQ often struggle to cope with stress, leading to heightened anxiety and tension. By developing stress management techniques, such as mindfulness, deep breathing, and time management, individuals can enhance their EQ and improve their overall well-being.

2. Assertiveness, coupled with empathy, is crucial for conflict resolution. Emotionally intelligent individuals strike a balance between assertiveness and understanding, avoiding passive or aggressive responses that can exacerbate conflicts. By practising active listening, considering others' perspectives, and communicating assertively yet respectfully, individuals can foster healthier relationships and navigate conflicts more effectively.

3. Emotion identification is a hallmark of emotional intelligence. Individuals with high EQ can accurately label their emotions, providing them with greater insight into their feelings and behaviours. This self-awareness allows them to make more informed decisions in order to navigate complex social situations effectively. Through practices such as journaling, self-reflection, and mindfulness meditation, individuals can enhance their emotional self-awareness and develop a deeper understanding of their emotions.

4. Quick assumptions and confirmation bias are common pitfalls for those lacking emotional

intelligence. Emotionally intelligent individuals take the time to consider different perspectives and weigh evidence before forming opinions, reducing the likelihood of biased or irrational decision-making. By cultivating a mindset of curiosity, open-mindedness, and critical thinking, individuals can overcome confirmation bias and make more objective judgments.

5. Holding grudges can have detrimental effects on mental and physical well-being. Emotionally intelligent individuals understand the importance of forgiveness and letting go of past grievances, leading to improved overall health and well-being. By practising forgiveness, empathy, and compassion, individuals can release the burden of resentment and cultivate healthier relationships with themselves and others.

6. Learning from mistakes is essential for personal growth and development. Emotionally intelligent individuals acknowledge their mistakes without dwelling on them, using them as opportunities for learning and improvement. By adopting a growth mindset, embracing failure as a natural part of the learning process, and seeking constructive feedback, individuals can turn setbacks into opportunities for growth and resilience.

7. Effective communication is a cornerstone of emotional intelligence. Individuals with high EQ are adept at expressing their thoughts and feelings clearly and concisely, minimising misunderstandings and conflicts. By practising active listening, empathy, and assertive communication, individuals can enhance their interpersonal communication skills and build stronger connections with others.

8. Understanding triggers is vital for managing emotions and reactions. Emotionally intelligent individuals recognise their triggers and take proactive steps to avoid situations that may provoke strong emotional responses. By identifying triggers, developing coping strategies, and practicing self-regulation techniques, such as deep breathing and visualisation, individuals can manage their emotions more effectively and respond to challenging situations with greater composure.

9. Authenticity is valued in emotional intelligence. While positivity is important, emotionally intelligent individuals recognise the importance of expressing negative emotions when appropriate, fostering genuine and meaningful connections with others. By embracing vulnerability, authenticity, and emotional honesty, individuals

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can build trust, empathy, and rapport in their relationships.

10. Taking responsibility for one's emotions is a key aspect of emotional intelligence. Blaming others for how we feel only serves to disempower us, while accepting responsibility empowers us to take control of our emotions and responses. By practising emotional self-awareness, accountability, and self-regulation, individuals can cultivate a sense of agency and autonomy in managing their emotional experiences.

11. Building resilience is essential for navigating life's challenges. Emotionally intelligent individuals develop resilience by cultivating self-confidence and self-assurance, allowing them to bounce back from setbacks and adversity. By reframing setbacks as learning opportunities, maintaining a positive outlook, and seeking support from others, individuals can strengthen their resilience and adaptability in the face of adversity.

In conclusion, emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in personal and professional success. By cultivating emotional intelligence and practising behaviours that promote self-awareness, empathy, and resilience, individuals can enhance their ability to navigate complex social dynamics, manage stress, and build meaningful relationships. As Jack Welch aptly stated, "You just can't ignore" the importance of emotional intelligence in leadership and life."

Tunde Oyeyiran, B Pharm. MBA, FSPMN, a sales/marketing strategist, selling/sales management trainer and personal sales coach is the lead consultant, Ekini White Tulip Consulting Limited (eWTC), Lagos. eWTC provides training, recruitment, online cme/medico-marketing and field force management solutions services. Feedback Channels: 080-2960-6103 (SMS/WhatsApp) / ekiniwhitetuliptraining@gmail.com or check out <https://fb.me/EkiniWhiteTulipConsulting>

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Encomiums, as Mendie marks 40 years of meritorious scholarship

- Launches books on potable water, wellness

By Ranmilowo Ojalumo

It was a moment of fulfilment for Professor Udoma Mendie on 11 July, 2024, as he celebrated 40 years of meritorious scholarship with an epic book launch.

The event, held at the Old Great Hall, College of Medicine, University of Lagos, attracted prominent personalities from academia and the pharmacy profession. The occasion marked the unveiling of two new books by Mendie, the first professor of Pharmaceutical Microbiology and Biotechnology at the University of Lagos.

The books, titled "Life and Living Waters: Choices and Standards" and "Think Wellness, Act Rightly to Get Riches," focus on the importance of potable water and wellness, respectively.

Former Minister of Health, Prince Julius Adelusi-Adeluyi, who was the chairman of the occasion, commended Mendie for his dedication to writing the books. He highlighted the fundamental importance of water to human life, noting that water transcends its chemical composition and has physical, metaphysical, and spiritual dimensions. He emphasized that there is no substitute for wellness and noted that the United Nations declared 11 July as World Population Day, which coincidentally aligns with the launch of the book on wellness.

Adelusi-Adeluyi praised Mendie for his depth and expertise in the subjects discussed in the books, urging Nigerians to read, understand,



The Author, Prof. Udoma Mendie (5th left); Chairman of the occasion, Prince Julius Adelusi-Adeluyi; first book reviewer, prof. Ezechiel Longe; second book reviewer, Prof. Lere Baale and other notable dignitaries at Professor Mendie's epic book launch recently.

and apply the knowledge contained within.

Dr Daniel Kolawole Olukoya, General Overseer of Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries, represented by Prof. Ayolabi Elijah, Vice-Chancellor of Mountain Top University, commended Mendie for his effort in publishing the books.

Prof. Wale Oke, Provost of the College of Medicine, University of Lagos, also praised Mendie for his academic contributions and dedication to publishing the new books.

Also speaking, Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Lagos, Prof.

Gloria Ayoola, highlighted Mendie's significant contributions to the faculty and his impact on many young minds as a past dean. She acknowledged his ongoing efforts and commitment to the field.

The book, "Life and Living Waters: Choices and Standards" was reviewed by Prof. Ezechiel Longe, a professor of Water Resources & Environmental Engineering. He noted that the book comprises 15 chapters and 342 pages, educating readers on the importance of potable water to life, water standards, and the necessity of regulating these standards.

He warned readers to be cautious of the water they consume, as not all packaged water is safe for drinking. Longe commended the author for the book's readability and clarity.

Prof. Lere Baale, chief executive

officer of Business School Netherlands International, Nigeria, reviewed the second book, "Think Wellness, Act Rightly to Get Riches."

He described Mendie as a versatile author and noted that the book consists of 28 chapters, 492 pages, and contributions from 12 authors. Baale

praised the book as rich in content, suitable for adolescents, middle-aged individuals, and the elderly who seek genuine wealth. He emphasised its value for transformation, education, empowerment, and future generations.

In his remarks, Mendie attributed his ability to write the books to the grace and power of God. He expressed gratitude to the dignitaries who attended the event and urged pharmacists and all Nigerians to prioritise wellness, filling their hearts with joy. He also stressed the importance of consuming only good-quality water, stating that water is life.

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Kaduna deputy governor seeks more women's participation in healthcare

- As Okoli, Awosika, Zamba, others win 2024 EWAH Awards

By Adebayo Oladejo



Dr Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe, Deputy Governor of Kaduna State, receiving an award plaque and certificate from Pharm. (Mrs) Clare Omatseye, chairperson of EWAH's Advisory Board; Sir Stanley Evans, past president of the British Business Group; and Pharm. (Mrs) Bisi Bright, Regional Representative for EWAH Awards Africa, at the EWAH Awards 2024 in Lagos.

The Kaduna State Deputy Governor, Dr Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe, has emphasised that increased participation of women in healthcare would enhance healthcare delivery in the country. She encouraged women to strive for excellence in healthcare and all spheres of life to overcome the disadvantages they often face.

According to her, women frequently need to exceed the efforts of men to gain recognition. Nonetheless, many women have successfully broken barriers and achieved significant accomplishments.

The deputy governor expressed these views at the 2024 Extraordinary Women Advancing Healthcare Awards (EWAH 2024), recently held at Wheatbaker Hotel, Ikoyi, Lagos. At the event, Dr Balarabe and nine other Nigerian women were honoured for their substantial contributions to the Nigerian

healthcare sector.

Speaking to fellow award recipients, Balarabe, who has 30 years of experience in public health and has excelled as a public health physician, consultant, administrator, and politician, expressed deep appreciation for the recognition. She noted that it would motivate the awardees to continue their efforts.

"We have given our best, but we know that it is still not enough, considering the current state of affairs in Nigeria. Therefore, we will continue to work even harder because failure is not an option. This award is a torch that we carry, and I hope it will continue to illuminate our path," she said.

She also encouraged the younger generation, stating, "Your dreams can come true. Never let anyone tell you that you cannot achieve your goals. On behalf of all awardees, we pledge to continue

working tirelessly for the betterment of health and the greater good of Nigeria."

In her welcome address, Pharm. (Mrs) Clare Omatseye, chairperson of EWAH's Advisory Board and CEO of JNCILimited, highlighted that the stories of the 10 outstanding awardees would serve as inspiration for other women. She noted that EWAH is a programme under the Commonwealth Institute, now known as the Women's Edge, designed to highlight the inequities in the health system, particularly at leadership levels.

According to Omatseye, this second edition of the award series honoured 10 exceptional women who have made significant strides in various healthcare fields. The EWAH Award aims to inspire more women to pursue careers in healthcare and leadership roles.

Omatseye stressed that EWAH is more than just an award ceremony; it serves as a powerful call to action for all stakeholders in the Nigerian healthcare system. She emphasised the need for increased investment in healthcare education, especially in STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) for young women.

In his speech, Sir Stanley Evans MBE, Past President of the British Business Group, remarked that the EWAH Awards are distinct from most conventional awards. The awardees do not necessarily have to be healthcare professionals themselves; the awards recognise women who have made impactful contributions across various aspects of healthcare, from public health and policy to community health education and leadership, and from academia and research to healthcare industry manufacturing and distribution.

Evans continued, "Behind every successful man is a woman. My mother once told me that if you want a job done properly, get a woman to do it. We've just had an election in Britain, and I'm delighted to inform you that, for the first time in our history, 40 per cent of the politicians elected were female. What we've witnessed this evening is the beginning of something truly great."

Also speaking at the event, Pharm.

(Mrs) Bisi Bright, CEO of LiveWell Initiative and regional representative for EWAH Awards Africa, stated that the primary purpose of the Awards is to create national and international recognition for emerging, dynamic healthcare leaders who are women. She noted that the Awards celebrate and appreciate the power of women to change the world.

According to Bright, a key aspect of the EWAH Awards is the "miles-to-go mindset," which acknowledges women who are not only making a difference today but are also committed to continuous improvement. Unlike typical awards with public nominations and voting, the EWAH Awards feature a curated selection process to identify exceptional women across various healthcare roles, from community health workers to medical professionals and community leaders.

A total of 10 women healthcare leaders were honoured at the event. They included Dr Stella Okoli, founder and group managing director of Emzor Pharmaceutical Industries Limited, who received the Lifetime Achievement Award; Dr Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe, Deputy Governor of Kaduna State and the first female Deputy Governor in the state; Fola Laoye, an alumnus of Harvard Business School and co-founder and CEO of Iwosan Investments.

Other honourees were Dr Ajoritsedere Awosika, a Nigerian businesswoman and honorary consul general to The Hague, Netherlands; Dr Temitope Ilori, the first female director-general of the National Agency for the Control of AIDS in Nigeria (NACA); Pharm. Zainab Ujudud Shariff, founder of Nigeria's first Herbal Pharmacy; Dr Emmanuella Zamba, permanent secretary of the Lagos State Health Management Agency (LASHMA); Mrs Nkeiruka Obi, vice-president and regional director for Africa at Smile Train; Mrs Lois Auta, a disability inclusion and development expert; and Edidiog Okon Asanga, recently named among the Top 100 Nurses worldwide by the Commonwealth Nurses Association.

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The Biafra run for B.Pharm (5)

By Pharm. John Obasi

Editor's note: In concluding this series of reminiscences, this and the next edition contain the accounts of two of the Igbo students who did not return to Ibadan with others, as they were not in their final year.

Tension began to rise when the Aburi Accord failed, and Ojukwu asked non-easterners to leave the east, as he couldn't guarantee their safety, given the mood of the people. Students in institutions in the east had to leave. As a result, many students of eastern origin left the Universities of Lagos and Ibadan to relocate to the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

The pharmacy students at the University of Ife, Ibadan Campus, were stuck in Ibadan as there was no pharmacy course at Nsukka. Thus, after Col. Ojukwu's early morning broadcast on 30 May, declaring Biafra and making us foreigners in Nigeria, it became necessary for us to seek protection!

We gathered at the Porter's Lodge. This togetherness encouraged everyone. We all moved to the vice-chancellor's lodge. The VC, Prof. Hezekiah Oluwasanmi, met with us and showed understanding and concern for our dilemma. He immediately got in touch with the military governor of the Western Region. Within a short time, arrangements had been made for two buses with police escorts to take us to Benin, the capital of the Midwest Region. We left the VC's place to pack our luggage.

For me, I couldn't leave Ibadan without my niece at the nursing school at UCH Ibadan. I had to go and bring her along with two of her friends to join us.

Exit from Ibadan

When we eventually boarded the vehicles to depart, some other students came to say goodbye. Most of them were ladies. We left the campus in two luxury buses, but Eugene Okonkwo, Bona Obiorah, and Moses Azuike had their own cars and gave lifts to some of us.

Change of mind

As the saying goes, "There is no point in having a mind if you can't change it." By the time we reached Ore to refuel and refresh, a few students including Felix Agwaniru and Felix Anazodo decided to return to Ibadan that night.

For the rest of us who continued the homeward journey, when we arrived in Benin, we were handed over to the Midwest police command, which had been duly informed of our arrival. Our police escorts from Ibadan bade us goodbye and left. The Midwest command assured us of our safety, consequently, we required no escorts to travel through their territory to Asaba.

From Asaba the final year students returned to Ibadan in a hired vehicle. These students were Ifeanyi Atueyi, Eugene Okonkwo, Bona Obiorah, Pius Ogwueleke,

Dennis Okolo and Moses Azuike.

At Asaba, we found that the Niger Bridge had been blocked to any form of vehicular movement. To cross to Onitsha, we carried our bags with the help of some hirelings.

Those involved in this ordeal included Dick Nwoke, Isaac Onyedum, Dave Ifudu, Ignatius Onaga, Evans Chidomere. The ladies were Mercy Uzuegbu, Kate Nwagbogu, Rose Atako, Stella Onyeike, Chinelo Ofodili, and others.

Once at Onitsha, everyone found their way to their respective destinations.



Pharm. John Obasi

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Ricinus communis

Castor seeds are obtained from the castor plant, which is scientifically known as *Ricinus communis* Linn (Fam. Euphorbiaceae). Though the plant originated from East Africa, the Indian subcontinent and the Mediterranean Sea are currently the two extensive sources of the castor plant. The plant is called *cika-gidaa* in Hausa, *ogili ugba* or *ogili isi* in Igbo and *ilara* in Yoruba. Other names of the plant include African coffee tree, Castorbean, Castor Bean, Castor Bean Plant, Castor Oil, Castor Oil Plant, Castor Seed, Ricin, *Ricinus communis*, Tangantangan Oil Plant, Wonder Tree.

Constituents: Castor seeds are found to be rich in proteins, carbohydrates and calcium. They also contain oleic acids, ricinoleic acids and linoleic acids, among other fatty acids, that are extremely beneficial for a person's health.

Preparations: The plant castor can be available as the seed, oil or paste.

Pharmacological actions and medicinal uses: The major benefits of castor oil are relief of muscle and joint problems like rheumatism and arthritis, as well as relief of menstrual pain. The

ricinoleic acid found in castor seeds eases the flow of menstruation and relieves the extreme pain along with the cramps. The extreme levels of pain caused by arthritis can be alleviated considerably by regularly massaging castor seed oil onto the affected areas.

Application of castor seed oil is said to help in fighting acne, stretch marks, dryness and sunburn, improving skin tone and texture among other things; thus its use as an ingredient for skin creams used in treating stretch marks all over the world. Castor seed oil is a great remedy for bruises and wounds and much more. This may be because it is effective against yeast and fungal infections, warts and many more. The high concentration of fatty acids in castor seed oil can penetrate the skin with ease, providing quick relief from dryness and cracked skin, thus making it a great skin moisturizer.

Castor seed oil enhances hair growth, is a remedy for treating split ends and controlling hair breakage problem, and can also help enhance the thickness of the eyelashes.

Castor oil is used as a laxative for constipation, to start labour in pregnancy, and to start the flow of breast milk. Castor seeds can be used to stimulate the lactation process. Castor seeds contain trace amounts of toxic protein, ricin, which when used in very small dosages, can be tremendously effective for birth control. It is said that castor oil may be a great

ingredient for spermicidal lotions, gels, and creams.

Some people apply castor seed paste to the skin as a poultice for inflammatory skin disorders, boils, carbuncles, pockets of infection (abscesses), inflammation of the middle ear, and migraine headaches. Castor oil is used topically to soften skin, bunions and corns, to dissolve cysts, growths and warts. Castor oil is used in the eyes to soothe membranes irritated by dust or other materials.

Adverse effects: Excessive use of castor seed oil during pregnancy can lead to abortion. In some people, castor oil can cause stomach discomfort, cramping, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, dehydration and faintness, liver, kidney and pancreas damage, and death. Excessive use of castor oil on the skin can turn skin red.

Economic uses and potentials: When pressed, castor seeds yield an oil that can be transformed into biodiesel, a renewable energy source. In manufacturing, castor seeds are used to make paints, varnishes, and lubricating oils. Ricin from the hull of the castor seed has been tested as a chemical warfare agent. In 2018, a tonne of castor seed cost ₦180,000.00. Castor oil has potentials in the pharmaceutical, cosmetics, energy and paint industry.

Reference

Fordous H. (2020). Health Benefits of Castor Seed And Its Side Effects. **Lybrate**. Available at: <https://www.lybrate.com/Topics>. Accessed July 10, 2024.

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Beta-Lactamase Stability	Unaffected by Beta-Lactamases	Unaffected by Beta-Lactamases

Reference:
1. FAU Amir, J et al. Comparative Evaluation of Cefixime Versus Amoxicillin-clavulanate Following Ceftriaxone Therapy of Pneumonia - Department of Pediatrics, Hasharon Hospital, Israel, 1996 Dec.

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Events in Pictures



His Royal Highness (HRH) Dr Haliru Yahaya, the Emir of Shonga in Edu Local Government Area of Kwara State and former Chairman, National Primary Health Care Development Agency (right), presenting a plaque of 'Lifetime Achievement Award' to Dr Fidelis Ayebae, managing director, Fidson Healthcare Plc, at the NHEA 2024.



Dr Anthony Omolola, presenting a lifetime achievement award plaque to Chief Varkey Verghese, founder, JAWA Group of Companies at the NHEA 2024.



L-R: Former Minister of Health, Prof. Isaac Adewole; daughter of the celebrant; Ogun State Deputy Governor, Mrs Noimot Salako-Oyedele; the celebrant and wife, Prof. Babatunde Lawal Salako and Alhaja Salako; Former Minister of Works and Housing, Babatunde Fashola; and the Olota of Ota land, HRH Oba (Prof) Abdulkabir Adeyemi Obalanlege, at the send-off ceremony of the outgoing Director General of NIMR, Prof. Salako, in Lagos, recently.



Prof. Udoma Mendie, University of Lagos; Prince Julius Adelusi-Adeluyi; Prof. Lere Baale and Prof. Olukemi Odukoya at Prof. Mendie's epic book launch, held at the Old Great Hall, College of Medicine, University of Lagos, recently.

Coming Events

82nd FIP World Congress

Date: 1st- 4th September, 2024
Venue: Cape Town, South Africa

7th Nigerian Pharma Manufacturers' Expo

Date: 4 - 5 September, 2024
Venue: Balmoral Convention Centre, Sheraton Hotel Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria.

NAPharm Annual General Meeting & Investiture of New Fellows

Date: 18th & 19th September, 2024
Venue: University of Lagos, Akoka

2024 NAPPSA Annual Scientific Conference & Exposition

Date: 28th -29th September, 2024
Venue: Marriott San Antonio Airport Hotel, San Antonio, Texas

PSN National Conference

Date: 4th - 9th November, 2024
Venue: Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.



Members of the College of Past PSN Presidents: Dr UNO Uwaga, Pharm. Olumide Akintayo, and Pharm. Azubike Okwor, at the opening ceremony of the Oluyole 2024 ACPN Conference, at the International Conference Centre, University of Ibadan, Oyo State.



Pharm. Wale Oladigbolu, immediate past chairman, ACPN, (middle), flanked by other members of his administration, at the Closing Banquet of the Oluyole 2024 ACPN Conference, at the International Conference Centre, University of Ibadan, Oyo State.



MD of Tandem Pharmaceuticals (middle) with other participants in the Vitabiotics Walk 4 Life project, held recently in Lagos.

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SHAPED: Making an extraordinary difference in your leadership (2)

By Prof. 'Lere Baale, *FPSN, FPCPharm, FNAPharm, FNIM*
(Business School Netherlands International)

1.1. Identifying and nurturing your unique talents

Every person has unique gifts and talents, and there is always something unique that can be used for other people. It is essential to know our unique talents because by identifying our talents, we can get to our maximum potential. The uniqueness that talents give empowers us in a way that helps us and those around us, be it neighbours, classmates, or people on the other side of the world.

There are many different types of talents, and people find them in various ways. Some individuals' talents are so strong that they come naturally, and some are challenging. There many different types of methods and tests that can be used in helping people to find and cultivate their talents. One of such tests is the "Meyers Briggs Type Indicator" test. This test is based on Jung's theory of psychological types. It measures a person's personality, which is divided into introvert (I), extrovert (E), thinking (T), feeling (F), sensing (S), intuitive (N), judging (J) and perception (P).

I have taken this test once, and the result was that my personality type is ENFP – 22 per cent for extrovert and 14 per cent for introvert; 10 per cent for intuitive and 9 per cent for sensing; 24 per cent for feeling and 12 per cent for thinking; 19 per cent for perception and 10 per cent for judgment.

The test result also showed that I am a "catalyst" type, which means I am innovative and creative. It also showed that I can work well with intuition and feeling. I was shocked when I saw the result, and I retook the test to check whether the result would be the same. It was still the same, and then I took a further test that helped me find my unique talents according to my personality type.

My leading talent is in creating new ideas and new methods. With my talents, I have a lot of opportunities to serve other people's needs.

1.2. Utilising your gifts to impact others

Mother Teresa's life story is a testimony to this. Her acts of goodness and the impact that she made on so many lives resulted from her choice to utilise her gift, which, in turn, gave her a chance to change not only others' lives but her own life as well. By using what she held dearest to serve a purpose greater than herself, she found a unique joy and fulfilment built upon the value of sacrificing her time and energy to make a difference in the world. She allowed her life to be shaped by the needs of people and the potential of her gift, which made her time genuinely extraordinary.

When you take the initiative to use what you have been given to make a difference in someone's life, you may soon find that your passion becomes not just a lifestyle or a favour to others but a powerful tool, not only for making a real and positive impact to society but also for shaping you into the person you are meant to be.

Creative and meaningful work that utilises our gifts can excite, inspire and fulfil us, opening our hearts to help others, while stimulating personal growth and self-discovery. A life truly lived in the service of others brings

a unique and profound kind of happiness and contentment that is hard to find anywhere else.

The thing about utilising your gift to impact others is that it doesn't necessarily have to involve a grand-scale missionary project. It can be anything from helping a colleague with his workload, when you know your gift and expertise in doing such work could lighten his stress; to creating something that uplifts and instils hope in people's hearts, such as music, literature or art, or to find a way to translate your passion and talents into actions that help a local community. Whatever form it may take, the heart of utilising your gift to impact others lies in discovering the intersection between what you love to do and what others would benefit from and then finding ways to devote that particular skill to those in need in some way.

One great example of a person using their unique gift to impact others is Mother Teresa. Known for her ability to provide encouragement, support, and a sense of hope to many people, Mother Teresa selflessly used her gift of compassion to offer hands-on service and advocate for those who could not help themselves. As a result of her decision to take action and utilise her gift, her life went on to make a difference in our world far beyond the time she spent on earth. And she is globally celebrated today for her acts of goodness.

1.3. Embracing the power of uniqueness

Differences should not be considered simply better or worse but different. Every individual has a unique perspective; we can solve problems in other and better ways. It is not diversity that makes a difference in the working world; it is each person's uniqueness. Diversity of thought - not of race, gender or sexual orientation - is the key to an innovative, exciting and inspiring workplace. Valuing individual differences and developing an inclusive work culture will enable organisations to succeed.

It is important to embrace diversity and make it part of your everyday life. To do this, you must encourage and foster an environment where people feel safe and supported; everyone's best and most authentic self can be realised. You can start by getting to know your colleagues and learning from their unique experiences, working styles, and opinions. Purposefully seek out views other than your own and be open to new and alternative ways of solving problems.

The broader the input into a project, the more exciting and multidimensional the outcome will be. Remember, to become successful, you need to work with others to make the workplace a place everyone can feel proud

It is important to embrace diversity and make it part of your everyday life. To do this, you must encourage and foster an environment where people feel safe and supported; everyone's best and most authentic self can be realised. You can start by getting to know your colleagues and learning from their unique experiences, working styles, and opinions. Purposefully seek out views other than your own and be open to new and alternative ways of solving problems.

to be part of. You can create something new and game-changing by understanding how different people interpret the world and then using this to make unique and considered decisions.

Embracing a positive and inclusive culture on a personal level and encouraging this culture in your workplace means you get to work alongside various unique people every day, and the quality of the work produced is much better. Our personal and professional experiences shape us. By seeking understanding and mutual respect, you can continue to grow and inspire others through your work in ways that benefit you and your colleagues in the present and change the future. And that's truly extraordinary.

2. Heart: The seat of passion

Trial-and-error attempts to find what ultimately brings us joy and satisfaction are valid. We may find something that satisfies us and then want to commit to that joy.

First and foremost, spending time with loved ones can contribute to our search for passion. We can note what makes us happy, such as helping our friends and families, and try to do these activities more frequently. Doing so will launch a personal investigation into the most crucial aspect of ourselves and show us the activities we are genuinely passionate about.

How do we find our passion? Sometimes, our passions are apparent, while we need help other times. Passion is an intense and overwhelmingly emotional experience that leads to utter satisfaction in one's life. It is important to note that we will only achieve the final product of satisfaction after some time, but we will know if we are getting closer to our goals.

As Steve Jobs points out, passion is the driving force behind fulfilled and successful lives. Are all of us born with passion? Not necessarily, though people may possess different capabilities of passion being incubated. Since passion is an intense and overwhelming emotional experience, it cannot be forced upon or created at a whim. The reality is that sometimes people need to find their passion, which means that certain mental and spiritual fevers can catalyse passion's appearance on a selective basis.

According to Jobs, passion is a powerful and essential tool in experiencing success. Jobs explains that work is a large part of our lives, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what we believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what we do. If we have yet to find it, we must keep looking and not settle. Once we see what we love, we will know when we get there because



our work will show it.

The heart is not merely a muscle that pumps blood through our bodies or a clichéd symbol of love and affection. It is the epicentre of our being, driving life and purpose.

2.1. Discovering and Igniting Your Passions

Indeed, discovering your passions and what makes you unique is an essential and transformative process. However, it is also worth noting that this process is not just about self-discovery. Instead, discovering your passions involves many personal and professional exposures.

To start, let's talk about the types of passion. There are various types of passion, such as internal or external, instant hit or long-term, and even hub passion. Yet, how do we define passion? In the context of career or work, career experts tend to define passion as a positive and strong emotion that combines (a) enthusiasm for one's work that provides contentment and (b) a sense of strong meaningfulness in the work. This is different from what we find in research studies that are strongly related to the experience of discovery of the inner passion within.

A research in the *Journal of Vocational Behaviour* reported a significant positive relationship between work passion and intrinsic career success. Yet, many of us may not even find one of those passions that experts have defined throughout our lives. This is because there is another level of perception towards the term passion.

Another study from the *American Behavioural Scientist* addresses complications in defining passion in research. The study explains that passion is often assumed to be a driving force of willpower, and it is contrary to a contemporary understanding of the emotional connotation of the words "passion". As the study has addressed, passion is often defined as "a stand for the prevailing emotional self-compact, a blend of strivings and gratifications of the genuine desires and consistent networks of interest, when, and mentally and physically limited and capable."

In simpler terms, passion comes from complex networks of emotions and passions for different daily life activities or long-term passions. It is active in a cognitive and emotional process. (Yukhymenko-Lescroart & Sharma 2022), (Liu et al., 2021), (Hussain et al. 2023), (Zhang et al., 2023), (Nilawati et al., 2021), (Luksyte & Carpini, 2024), (Chen et al., 2020)

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Healthcare leaders flay FG over health research funding

continued from back page

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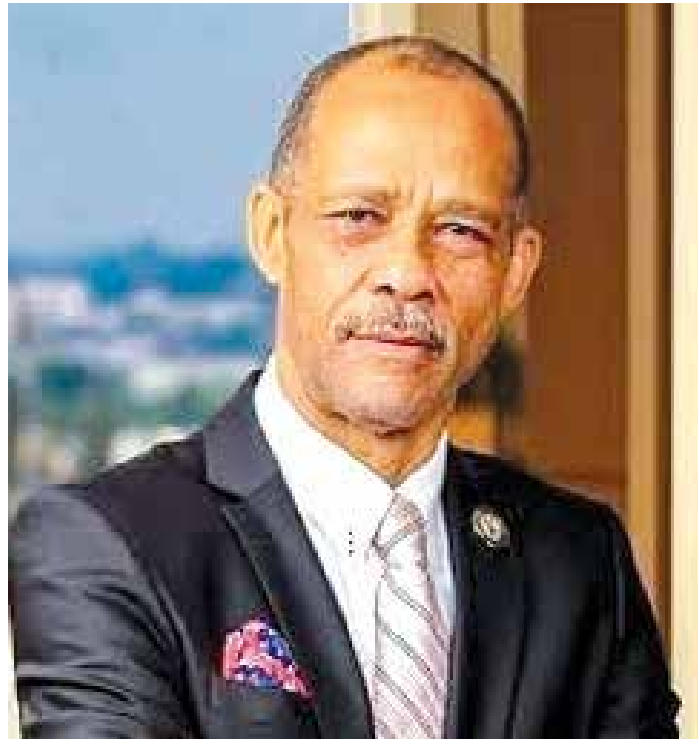
According to Prof. Abayomi, "It is a shame that we rely on external funding for our own indigenous research, because external funding comes with its own agenda. They say, 'He who pays the piper calls the tune', so we need to call our own tune in Nigeria.

"We need to dedicate enough money to research institutions so that they can do local research to develop the local innovation pipelines. Just like the cocoa bean that they export to America and Europe to make fine chocolate, let us do our research here to keep the innovation and intellectual property in Nigeria, and be able to drive change.

"That's why they always put research and development together. It's only with the research that you get the development. It's only with the research that you get the innovation pipelines."

The Lagos health commissioner further emphasised that adequate allocation of resources to health research is a hallmark of every civilised society. He added that government must see the necessity of formulating policies in favour of investment in research and development.

Taking cues from the performance of the outgoing NIMR DG, Abayomi stated that people at the helms of affairs can attest to the importance of funding local research, particularly with the role the agency played in the fight against COVID-19, saying it was the fruit of research, innovation and



Professor Akin Abayomi
Lagos State Commissioner for Health

development.

"You see, that's why they call it research and development. Without the research, your community cannot develop and so government has to realise that they need to put resources into research so that the fruit of research can result in development," the commissioner said.

For Prof. Akanmu, the Federal Government needs to completely change its orientation about investment in the health sector, which he describes as the backbone of the health of the populace.



Prof. Alani Sulaimon Akanmu
Professor of Immunoheamatology and HIV Medicine

He cited the example of the 2024 health budget, saying it is nothing in comparison with what obtains in a country like the USA, where the allocation to a single unit of their health ministry – the National Institute of Health (NIH) – is more than the total health budget of Nigeria.

Akanmu, a staff of College of Medicine, University of Lagos and guest lecturer at the occasion, highlighted the benefits of a well-funded health sector and research & development unit, saying aside from ensuring medicine security, it

also preserve lives and intellectual properties, boosts tourism, and promotes international exchange programmes, among others.

In his words: "Our government needs to invest in research and development because, looking at the example of the NIH, a unit in the United States Department of Health and Human Services, its budget for 2024 is more than the total budget for health in Nigeria in 2024. \$51 billion to support health research - far more than the Nigeria's \$36.7 billion health allocation for 2024."

Loveworld introduces nuclear medicine to end medical tourism - As oncologists advocate radionuclide therapy

By Adebayo Oladejo



L-R: Dr Emeka Eze, ISRT chairman; Dr Augustine Uduoise; Dr Masha Maharaj; Dr Olajumoke Akinsanya; Dr Deola Phillips, executive chairman, LMC; Prof. Mboyo-Di-Tamba Willy Vangu; Prof Tamara Geliashvili; Prof Knut Liepe and Dr Anthony Oseghale, chief operating officer, LMC, during the International Symposium on Radionuclide Therapy and Oncology, hosted by Loveworld Medical Centre, in Lagos.

Loveworld Medical Centre (LMC) is poised to reduce the need for medical tourism among Nigerians by offering advanced nuclear medicine services that are described as innovative, cost-effective, and devoid of side effects.

Dr Anthony Oseghale, Chief Operating Officer of LMC, made this announcement in Lagos during the International Loveworld Medical Symposium on Radionuclide Therapy and Oncology, themed "Evolving Role of Nuclear Medicine and Personalised and Precision Medicine."

According to Oseghale, nuclear medicine, a medical speciality that uses radioactive substances to

diagnose and treat diseases, will now be accessible to Nigerians through LMC's cutting-edge technology. He assured that the initiative will provide advanced, reliable, and comprehensive care to Nigerians who often seek medical treatment abroad.

"Consider the cost of a flight ticket out of the country now. Whatever you are going to get outside this country, you can get it here. So maybe your flight ticket could just handle all your costs. If you go outside the country, you pay for your flight ticket, accommodation, and the treatment itself, which, of course, will be a multiple of your flight ticket and accommodation costs.

"We are very big on giving quality

services. In the last six months, we haven't done any publicity; we just made sure our processes are excellent, and the patients we have cared for have been the ones spreading the information about the facilities. Today, we are excited to introduce nuclear medicine, opening new opportunities for advanced medical care. The installation and commissioning of our Gamma Camera mark a significant milestone, and we eagerly anticipate the benefits this technology will bring to our patients," Oseghale explained.

The chief operating officer added that LMC's nuclear medicine services will bring transformative changes to the healthcare sector, not just in Nigeria but globally. He highlighted LMC's vision to lead the healthcare industry with holistic, accessible, and best-in-class services, and its mission to deliver exceptional and compassionate care through innovation and technology.

"Our unique selling points include our spiritual advantage, as we pay attention to the whole person. Our multidisciplinary approach ensures quick and accurate diagnoses, and our comprehensive in-house facilities offer all necessary medical services under one roof. We provide affordable, high-quality care, partnering with several HMOs, such as Lifesaver HMO, to extend our services to those in need. We are proud to offer world-class medical services right here in Lagos, eliminating the need for medical tourism," he said.

Also speaking, Dr Emeka Eze, clinical director of LMC, explained why nuclear medicine technology as innovative, cost-effective, and free of side effects.

"It targets only damaged cells. If we are treating people with

chemotherapy, you know the kind of side effects it has because it attacks all fast-growing cells at the same time. But nuclear medicine only targets cells that are inflamed or mitotic. So it just goes to the local area where the problem is and deals with it. It is much cheaper, has fewer side effects, requires minimal hospital stay, and offers long-term resolution," Eze said.

He mentioned that nuclear medicine is effective in treating thyroid disease, cancers, arthritis, and more.

According to him, "Right now, it has been very well tried with prostate cancer and it's very, very good. It also treats arthritis and knee problems. Many Nigerians today, as they reach a certain age, develop arthritis. People who are obese have leg problems, and with the dietary changes in Africa, many Africans are getting obese and developing arthritis as they age. So it is a game changer for arthritis."

Dr Deola Phillips, executive chairman of LMC, emphasised that the multi-specialist hospital was born out of the vision of its founder, Rev. Chris Oyakhilome, President of Loveworld Inc. Phillips said the centre is set to make significant strides in radionuclide therapy, offering renewed hope to patients battling various forms of cancer.

"This treatment modality harnesses the power of radioactive isotopes to target and destroy cancerous or diseased cells with unprecedented precision.

"From state-of-the-art diagnostic imaging to personalised treatment plans across multiple specialities, we strive to tailor each patient's journey to their unique medical needs. We remain steadfast in our commitment to innovate and expand our capabilities to meet the evolving healthcare needs of our diverse patient population. We ensure that our community receives comprehensive and compassionate care close to home, in line with our mantra - 'advanced, trusted, wholesome care,'" Phillips stressed.

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Healthcare professionals seek enforcement of compulsory health insurance

continued from back page

privileged individuals can afford it. However, with health insurance, everyone can access quality healthcare as it ensures adequate financing.

The NHIA Act 2022 mandates all Nigerian residents to obtain health insurance, covering public and private sector employees and informal sector workers. Despite this, enrolment remains low, undermining the scheme's effectiveness. Healthcare professionals are calling for the act's enforcement to increase the number of enrollees, which they argue is crucial for the scheme's success.

A major point of contention is the government-set capitation rate. Capitation is a fixed amount of money per patient per unit of time paid in advance to physicians for healthcare services. The last capitation under the NHIS was N750, temporarily increased by 60 per cent in July. However, professionals argue this is still insufficient.

Dr Chijioke Mbelu, convener of the Afrihealth Conference, urged NHIA to launch a massive enlightenment campaign to encourage people to enrol in health insurance.

Also speaking, Dr Jimmy Arigbabuwo, national president of the Healthcare Provider's Association of Nigeria (HCPAN), stated that healthcare financing can be cumbersome, stressing that health insurance is the best way to reduce out-of-pocket payments for medical care.

Prof. Emem Bassey, chief medical director of the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, noted that only N1.3 trillion, or about 4.7 per cent of the 2024 budget, is allocated to health, far short of the 15 per cent Abuja Declaration target. He argued that the capitation rate should not be less than N10,000 given Nigeria's current economic realities.

Bassey, who is also chairman of all chief medical directors in Nigeria, said the major reason government hospitals are owing pharmaceutical companies is because of the consumption from NHIA enrollees, adding however that the agency is not paying the hospitals enough as and when due.

The CMD further called for the establishment of a Health Tertiary Development Fund, just like Tefund that is aiding infrastructural development in education.

Dr Kayode Adesola, national president of the Association of Nigerian Private Medical Practitioners (ANPMP), reported that only 3.526 million Nigerians were enrolled in the NHIS as of June 30, 2024, which he described as abysmal. He mentioned that a temporary 60 per cent increase in capitation and 40 per cent increase in Fee-for-Service (FFS) payments were negotiated in July, but these adjustments are set to expire in September 2024.

Dr Makinde Akinlemibola, chairman of the Lagos State chapter of ANPMP, stressed that mandatory health insurance is essential for affordable quality healthcare financing.

Pharm. Biola Paul-Ozieh, Chairman of the Healthcare Provider Association of Nigeria, Lagos Chapter, called for greater commitment from the government and more advocacy from the NHIA



L-R: Head of Operation, Leadway Health Insurance, Dr Godwin Anumba; Chairman, Healthcare Provider Association of Nigeria, Lagos Chapter, Pharm. Biola Paul-Ozieh; Chairman, Association of Nigerian Private Medical Practitioners, Lagos State chapter, Dr Makinde Akinlemibola; Convener, Afrihealth Conference and Exhibition, Dr Chijioke Mbelu; National President, Healthcare Provider's Association of Nigeria, Dr Jimmy Arigbabuwo; Coordinator, Lagos State Office, NHIA, Mrs Aisha Haruna Abubakar and Chief Medical Director, University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Prof. Emem Bassey, during one of the sessions at Afrihealth Conference and Exhibition in Lagos recently.

to boost enrolments.

According to her, "Healthcare providers should have one unified voice and segregation of facilities, so as to make health insurance work. Since 2022, when the NHIA act was signed, we have not moved fast enough. Even though the DG of NHIA has been trying since he took over a few months ago, everybody must be part of the health insurance scheme. Today, I don't know how many pharmacists are still operating under NHIA because when they supply drugs, they are not being paid."

Pharm. Dr. David Ehikhuemen, Managing Director of Caremax Nigeria Limited, emphasized that NHIA is crucial for healthcare financing in Nigeria and must be made compulsory. Mrs. Aisha Haruna Abubakar, Coordinator of the Lagos State Office, NHIA, reiterated that the NHIA Act, passed in 2022, should be enforced, and all Nigerians must cooperate to ensure its success.

Pharm. Wale Oladigbolu, Chairman of the Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN), urged the federal government to investigate NHIA's activities to make the scheme more beneficial for Nigerians. He pointed out the poor coverage of health insurance, with less than 5% of the population covered.

He said, "The reality of health insurance in Nigeria is quite dismal. Coverage is poor, with less than 5 percent of the population covered. Out of this, 4 percent are in public service and the remaining 1 percent are in private service."

He said, "Paying capitation for 1,000 patients every month regardless of the actual number seeking treatment is not sustainable. Facilities without pharmacists are being paid for drugs, which shortchanges patients by not providing the requisite oversight from pharmacists."

In response to these issues, Lagos State has implemented compulsory health insurance. Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu issued an executive order requiring all ministries, departments, and

agencies to provide services only to those enrolled in the health plan provided by the Lagos State Health Management Agency (LASHMA) or other Lagos State NHIA-accredited private health insurance providers.

He added that the exception to this are life-threatening situations. "In emergencies, healthcare facilities must stabilise patients

without requiring evidence of insurance. However, once stabilised, patients must provide proof of enrollment or register," the governor said.

This order, effective from July 16, mandates full compliance to ensure quality healthcare services for all residents, regardless of their financial status.

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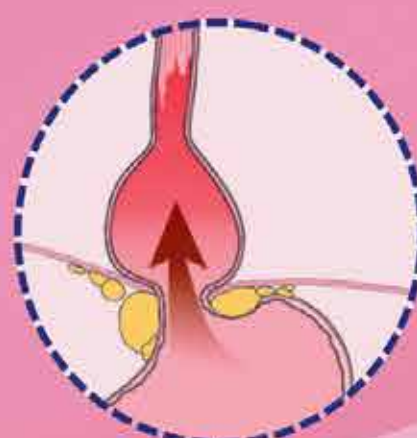
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Healthcare leaders flay FG over health research funding

By Temitope Obayendo

The Lagos State Commissioner for Health, Professor Akin Abayomi, and Professor of Immunohaematology and HIV Medicine, Alani Sulaimon Akanmu, have berated the Federal Government for what they describe as indifference to health research, citing over-reliance on international funding for indigenous investigations.

The healthcare leaders, who called for improved funding for local research, say such an effort will drive development through innovative ideas and approaches, while also boosting human capacity.

They also pointed out the implications of over-dependence on international agencies for indigenous research funding, saying the interest of donors may conflict with the immediate needs of the country.

Speaking in separate interviews at the send-off ceremony organised for the outgoing Director General of the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research (NIMR) Yaba, Lagos, Prof. Babatunde Lawal Salako, the notable scientists said it is high time Nigeria



L-R:- Pharm. Simeon Azubike Okechukwu, assistant general manager, sales, Geneith Pharmaceuticals; Dr Michael Obaro, a consultant clinical pharmacologist and malaria scientist, University College Hospital (UCH), Ibadan; Pharm. Abimbola Bowoto, assistant general manager, sales and marketing, and Pharm. Somtochukwu Chimbiko, product manager, at the launch of Coatal Gelatin Soft Gel in Ibadan.

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Healthcare professionals seek enforcement of compulsory health insurance

- As Lagos mandates health insurance to access public services

By Ranmilowo Ojalumo

Healthcare professionals across Nigeria have called for the enforcement of compulsory health insurance nationwide, asserting that it is the surest way for Nigerians to access quality healthcare services. This move, they believe, will help the nation achieve universal health coverage.

At the Afrihealth Conference

and Exhibition, held in Lagos from 3-5 July, 2024, professionals expressed concerns over the low enrolment rates in the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), managed by the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA). They emphasised that quality healthcare is expensive, and only a few

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