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- As PSN holds 97th Annual National Conference in Uyo

The Federal Government has assured that the nation's pharmaceutical industry is being prioritised like never before, stating

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access to medicines for Nigerians and contribute to socio-economic progress across various sectors

continued on page 8

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L-R: Emmanuel Onoja, national sales manager, Kalbe International; Mr Marvin Lucky, country manager, West and East Africa, Kalbe International; Prof. Cyril Usifoh, immediate past president of PSN; and Nikolas Alexandro, brand manager for Procold, Kalbe International during the unveiling of the new modern look of Procold, held at the just concluded PSN National Conference, in Uyo.

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**NAFDAC, Customs sign MoU to combat illicit drugs, foods, healthcare products**

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**Iyalla Peterside: The Opobo man who became America's best physician**

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Editor  
08135439281

**Ola Aboderin**  
Sub-Editor  
07033179360

**Moses Dike**  
Business Development Manager  
08028396755

**Temitope Obayendo**  
Online Editor  
08026748215

**Adebayo Oladejo**  
Senior Reporter  
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Graphic Artist  
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**CORRESPONDENCE:**  
All correspondence on editorial matters should be directed to:  
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Pharmanews Limited  
8 Akinwunmi Street, Mende,  
Maryland, Lagos  
P.O. Box 2213, Ikeja  
Tel: 08057235128, 08055212962.

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

### PHARM. (DR) ALGREEN OLATUNJI-KOOLCHAP

Pharm. (Dr) Algreen Olatunji-Koolchap, the pharmacist director at Biomedical Limited and former chief consultant pharmacist for Nigeria's pioneering online pharmacy platform, Pharmslat Limited, is a respected professional with an impressive four decades of experience across Europe and Nigeria. His expertise spans both clinical and industrial pharmacy, enriched by his accomplishments as a writer, author, publisher, certified professional counsellor, independent consultant, computer scientist, and internationally certified risk management professional.

Olatunji-Koolchap's career encompasses diverse sectors of pharmacy, including hospital, industrial, community, consulting, and publishing. Notably, he served as a consultant for Nigeria's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) initiative and as an external examiner for the Chartered Institute of Stockbrokers.

His entrepreneurial spirit led him to establish multiple ventures, including Abbey 3X Consulting, Abbey 3X Microsystems, Fort Moses Pharmaceuticals Limited, and Intrepid Publishers. Additionally, he has made significant contributions to academia as an adjunct lecturer at Yaba College of Technology, Lagos.

In his over 15 years of leadership within the pharmaceutical profession, Olatunji-Koolchap has held key positions such as national secretary, assistant secretary, and editor-in-chief of the Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN). His influence extends to Lagos State pharmacy development, where he served as editor-in-chief and chairman of the PSN Editorial Board, and contributed to the Pharmacy Week and Annual Luncheon Committees.

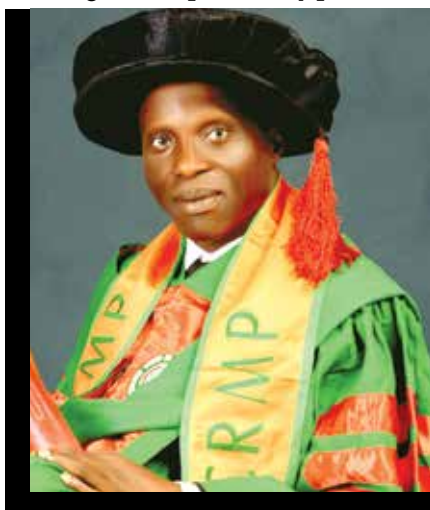
An internationally recognised scholar, Olatunji-Koolchap earned his pharmacy degrees from Kharkov State Pharmacy Institute in Ukraine and a degree in Computer Science from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. He further holds an MSc in Software Engineering, with a focus on developing drug information and prescription management systems.

As a prolific author, Olatunji-Koolchap has published over 60 articles and several influential books, including *The Essentials in Pharmaceutical Practice*, *Risk Management in Pharmacy and the Industry*, and *History of Pharmacy Development in Nigeria*.

Olatunji-Koolchap is affiliated with numerous professional organisations, such as the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, Clinical Pharmacists Association of Nigeria, International Pharmaceutical Federation, Nigeria Computer Society, and the Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered). He is also a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Loan and Risk Management of Nigeria, The Economics Institute, Certified IT Alumni Association, and ICRMP in the UK.

His exceptional contributions have garnered multiple accolades, including the ACPN Service Excellence Award, PSN Lagos State Merit Award, ACPN Distinguished Community Pharmacist Award, Chief E. A. Osadolor Merit Award from the University of Benin Faculty of Pharmacy, and The Inspiration Excellent Leadership Award from Inspiration International, Inc., USA.

Pharm. (Dr) Olatunji-Koolchap is married and blessed with children.



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## Inspiration

Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma – which is living with the results of other people's thinking. - **Steve Jobs**

The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing. - **Walt Disney**

The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall. - **Nelson Mandela**

Spread love everywhere you go. Let no one ever come to you without leaving happier. - **Mother Teresa**

The only thing we have to fear is fear itself. - **Franklin D. Roosevelt**

Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that. - **Martin Luther King Jr.**

Do one thing every day that scares you. - **Eleanor Roosevelt**

Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail. - **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Be yourself; everyone else is already taken. - **Oscar Wilde**

You will face many defeats in life, but never let yourself be defeated. - **Maya Angelou**

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

In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years. - **Abraham Lincoln**

Many of life's failures are people who did not realise how close they were to success when they gave up. - **Thomas A. Edison**

"The only impossible journey is the one you never begin." - **Tony Robbins**

"Keep smiling, because life is a beautiful thing and there's so much to smile about." - **Marilyn Monroe**

"The purpose of learning is growth, and our minds, unlike our bodies, can continue growing as we continue to live." - **Mortimer Adler**

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



**W**orld Diabetes Day (WDD), commemorated annually on 14 November, serves as a global platform to raise awareness about the far-reaching impact of diabetes and the importance of effective management strategies. This year's theme, "Diabetes and Wellbeing" highlights the enormous effects of this chronic condition on both the physical and mental health of individuals. For Nigeria, where diabetes prevalence is on the rise, the day highlights the urgent need for collective action to tackle the growing epidemic.

In Nigeria, diabetes has become a critical public health concern. The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) estimates that 5.8 million Nigerian adults are living with diabetes, with the vast majority of cases being Type 2 diabetes, a preventable condition often linked to lifestyle factors. Shockingly, many more individuals remain undiagnosed due to the absence of routine screening and widespread ignorance about the disease. The National President of the Diabetes Association of Nigeria (DAN), Dr Ejiogor Ugwu, recently revealed that an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 Nigerians die annually from diabetes. He further noted that two-thirds of diabetes cases in the country are undiagnosed, underscoring the importance of early detection and education.

Rapid urbanisation, unhealthy diets, sedentary lifestyles, and increased stress levels are driving the surge in diabetes cases in Nigeria. Traditional diets once rich in whole grains, vegetables, and local fruits are being replaced

## World Diabetes Day 2024: Uniting to stem the scourge

by processed, calorie-dense foods laden with sugars and unhealthy fats. This shift, coupled with reduced physical activity, has created fertile ground for a diabetes epidemic, particularly among young people.

Beyond its physical toll, diabetes also poses significant mental and emotional challenges. Managing the disease demands strict adherence to medication schedules, constant blood sugar monitoring, and major lifestyle adjustments, all of which can lead to stress, anxiety, and depression. In a society like Nigeria, where mental health awareness remains limited, this psychological burden is often overlooked, leaving many sufferers without adequate support.

The impact of diabetes extends beyond the individual to families and communities. Caregivers often face emotional

strain and financial challenges while supporting loved ones with the disease. In Nigeria's extended family structure, the ripple effects are deeply felt, highlighting the need for community-wide interventions.

Efforts to combat diabetes in Nigeria have made some headway, but much remains to be done. Public health campaigns led by organisations such as DAN are raising awareness about early detection, prevention, and proper management of diabetes. These initiatives, alongside calls for improved healthcare infrastructure and more affordable treatment, are vital steps forward.

The Nigerian government has also taken steps to address non-communicable diseases like diabetes. The National Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases, launched in 2019, outlines strategies to improve

healthcare access, promote healthy lifestyles, and enhance disease surveillance. However, effective implementation of these policies, particularly in underserved rural areas, remains a significant challenge.

Community-based initiatives offer a beacon of hope. Programmes that encourage physical activity, healthy eating, and routine health check-ups are essential in curbing the rise of diabetes. Collaborations between the government, private sector, and non-governmental organisations can further expand access to affordable care and provide much-needed support for those living with the disease.

As Nigeria marks World Diabetes Day 2024, all stakeholders—government agencies, healthcare providers, civil society, and individuals—must unite to prioritise both the physical and mental wellbeing of those affected. Public health campaigns must be scaled up to promote healthy lifestyles and reduce the stigma surrounding diabetes, while policies must focus on making diabetes care accessible and affordable for all Nigerians.

Diabetes is a formidable challenge, but it is not insurmountable. With concerted efforts, increased awareness, and improved access to care, Nigeria can turn the tide against this growing epidemic. World Diabetes Day serves as a reminder that the fight against diabetes is not just a medical battle—it is a collective mission to safeguard the health and wellbeing of our nation.

**As Nigeria marks World Diabetes Day 2024, all stakeholders—government agencies, healthcare providers, civil society, and individuals—must unite to prioritise both the physical and mental wellbeing of those affected. Public health campaigns must be scaled up to promote healthy lifestyles and reduce the stigma surrounding diabetes, while policies must focus on making diabetes care accessible and affordable for all Nigerians.**

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## Listening to God

By Sir Ifeanyi Atueyi

It is wise to listen to God and then do what He has asked you to do. Listen carefully for His instruction. Often, God speaks to people, but they don't realise or believe that it is Him speaking to them. This happened to young Samuel; when God called him, he thought it was Eli, the priest.

Hearing from God is something you develop with practice. Talkers often miss the voice of God because they are not good communicators. When you are always talking to someone without giving them a chance to respond or contribute, you are failing to communicate effectively.

Psalm 46:10 (NKJV) says, "Be still, and know that I am God." Don't just keep talking to God when you need something. Give Him time to speak to you. Spend time listening. He will reveal certain things to you or even ask you questions.

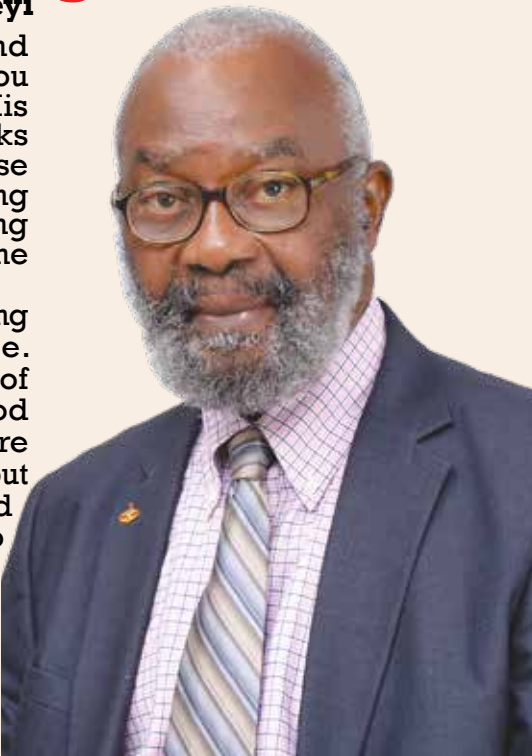
In my own experience, I often ask Him questions and wait for an answer. The answer may not come immediately, but it will surely come. His timing is not ours. Even before I was born again, I would ask God direct questions—not in prayer, just simple questions. And He was ready to answer me. Jeremiah 33:3 (NIV) says, "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know."

At times, I reflect on the great things God has done in my life. They were not always because I prayed. No, I wasn't praying because, at that time, I didn't know how to pray. But I was good at asking. I remember the story of the woman who had the issue of blood for 12 years, as told in St. Mark's Gospel, chapter 5. She did not even ask Jesus for healing. The Bible says she only thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." She managed to touch the hem of Jesus' garment, and the bleeding stopped immediately.

I strongly believe that God has already determined what each person will do in their lifetime, and He continues to work out His purposes for their lives. That is why He speaks to people and desires that they listen and obey.

When I started **Pharmanews** in 1979, I was asking myself what professional training would qualify me as a pharmaceutical journalist. Was I to practise as an amateur? I was simply asking God. I hadn't attended any journalism school but only had experience editing the PSN journal. I wasn't praying but simply asking God.

God knew the desires of my heart and His plans for my life. A



few years later, He opened the door to international training that would equip me for service. In 1984, the World Health Organisation (WHO) offered me training for health editors in Copenhagen, Denmark. This opportunity exposed me to editors of international journals—people I had read about but never dreamt of meeting. That training introduced me to the European Association of Science Editors (EASE), and I began attending their annual conferences. Later, I also joined the International Federation of Science Editors (IFSE) and attended their conferences.

When you hear from God, believe Him and do what He has asked you to do—that is obedience. Job 36:11 (KJV) says, "If they obey and serve Him, they shall spend their days in prosperity and their years in pleasures."

Some people make the mistake of asking for other people's opinions after God has instructed or directed them. This shows distrust and dishonours Him. You must learn to trust God after hearing from Him, without seeking reassurance from anyone else—be it a pastor, counsellor, parent, teacher, or anyone else. Be cautious when seeking advice regarding decisions for your life. God has given you your life and is in charge of it. He must come first.

When you listen carefully and hear from God, the devil, who doesn't want your progress, will try to make you doubt whether you truly heard from God or whether you are qualified to hear from Him. As a child of God, the Holy Spirit, who dwells within you, will give you the best counsel for your life.



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# Manufacturers to FG: Address forex crisis to reduce rising cost of drugs

By Ranmilowo Ojalumo

Drug manufacturers and importers in Nigeria have identified the forex crisis and the persistent depreciation of the naira against foreign currencies as the primary factors driving the continuous rise in drug prices.

Speaking to *Pharmanews* in separate interviews, they commended the Federal Government for removing tariffs and duties on pharmaceutical products but warned that the forex crisis might negate the benefits of this policy unless the government provides a lasting solution.

The Managing Director of May & Baker PLC, Pharm. Patrick Ajah, expressed concern over the impact of the forex crisis on pharmaceutical manufacturing in Nigeria. While lauding the removal of tariffs and duties on pharmaceutical products, he urged the government to urgently address the forex issue.

"There is a limit to what companies can do regarding the rising cost of drugs. Most of the materials used in drug production, such as active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), are imported, and with the current forex situation, companies have little room to manoeuvre. As long as the naira remains as devalued as it is, if the government doesn't address the forex problem, the prices of drugs and other products will continue to rise persistently," Ajah said.

He added, "Companies are incurring losses. Two years ago, the exchange rate was N461 to \$1. Now, it is about N1,600-N1,700, a more than 300 per cent increase. Drug manufacturers are struggling to keep prices steady. Without government intervention, things will remain expensive for a long time."

The General Secretary of the Indian Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Importers in Nigeria (IPMIN), Prasenjit Banerji, highlighted forex as the main reason for soaring drug prices in Nigeria. He suggested that the best option would be to have zero duty on finished pharmaceutical goods and to accept direct trading in Indian Rupees.

Pharm. Ade Popoola, managing director of Real Pharmaceuticals Limited, pointed out that the rising cost of drugs in Nigeria is primarily due to the exchange rate rather than tariffs and duties, which are 5 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively.

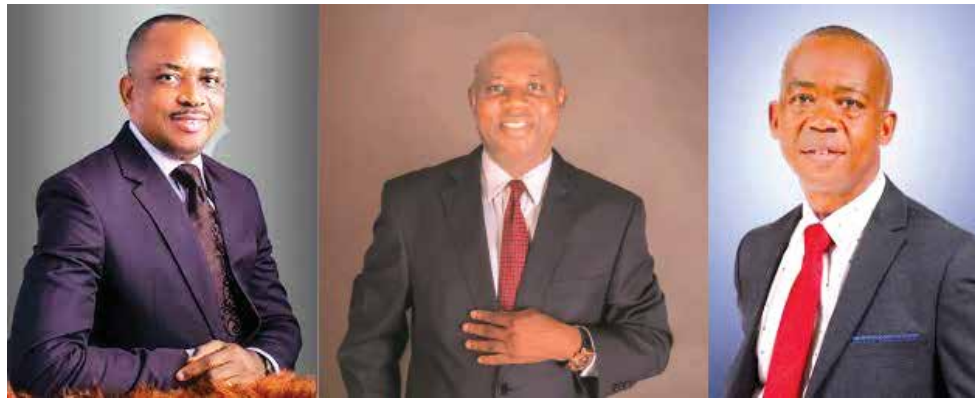
"The removal of 10 per cent duty or tariff may not have a significant impact if the exchange rate remains at N1,600-N1,700 to \$1. To truly reduce drug costs, the government should provide a special exchange rate for pharmaceutical transactions," he stated.

Dr Lolu Ojo, managing director of Merit Healthcare Limited, echoed these sentiments, emphasising that the devaluation of the naira is a major driver of rising drug costs. He noted that Nigeria's economy is heavily import-dependent, and foreign exchange plays a crucial role in international trade. With the naira losing much of its value, prices of imported products, including medicines, have inevitably risen.

Ojo recommended addressing systemic inefficiencies to revitalise the economy and suggested bulk purchases backed by forex for essential items like medicines.

The Chairman of the Association of Industrial Pharmacists of Nigeria (NAIP), Pharm. Ken Onuegbu, also commended the removal of tariffs and duties, noting its potential to boost local production capacity. However, he stressed that the forex crisis, alongside the cost of APIs, machinery, and regulatory fees, significantly impacts drug prices.

"There are multiple factors contributing to the rising cost of drugs. To achieve affordable prices, all these challenges must be addressed. For instance, NAFDAC's Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP)



Pharm. Patrick Ajah

Dr Lolu Ojo

Pharm. Ken Onuegbu

inspection fee is calculated at prevailing forex rates, which adds millions of naira to production costs," he explained.

NAFDAC's GMP inspection fee, currently about \$11,000, was cited as a significant burden on manufacturers and importers, who often pass this cost onto consumers. Onuegbu called for special forex legislation and considerations for medicines.

Prof. Lere Baale, President of the Nigeria Academy of Pharmacists,

described the forex crisis as having a profound impact on the pharmaceutical industry. He highlighted the rising costs of importing raw materials, APIs, and finished products, which has made healthcare less affordable for Nigerians.

To address the forex issue, Baale proposed promoting local manufacturing by reducing dependency on imported raw materials and finished products. He

suggested investing in infrastructure and technology to support local production and encouraging public-private partnerships to establish local API manufacturing capabilities, which would reduce reliance on imported ingredients.

Baale also advocated for a dedicated forex window for pharmaceutical companies prioritising essential drug production. He suggested that the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) could provide such companies with access to foreign currency at favourable rates, alleviating the financial strain caused by exchange rate fluctuations.

He further recommended the establishment of a Forex Stabilisation Fund to support firms affected by forex volatility. By stabilising the forex supply to critical industries like pharmaceuticals, the fund could help reduce the impact of currency devaluation on medicine costs.

"Addressing the forex challenge in Nigeria's pharmaceutical industry requires policy interventions, investments in local capacity, and strategic partnerships. By promoting local production, establishing dedicated forex windows, and strengthening the supply chain, Nigeria can mitigate forex volatility and ensure affordable medicines for all," Baale concluded.

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# Inquest

with  
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## Bob Marley's discography and mental health impact

**B**ob Marley, the legendary reggae artist, is known not only for his infectious rhythms and soulful melodies but also for the profound messages embedded within his music. Throughout his discography, Marley explores themes that resonate deeply with mental health, promoting positivity, resilience, and community. This article delves into how his songs address various aspects of mental well-being, offering listeners a source of comfort and encouragement in challenging times.

### The healing power of music

Music has long been recognised as a powerful tool for emotional healing. It can lift spirits, evoke memories, and provide solace in times of distress. For Marley, music was not merely entertainment; it was a means of communicating important social messages and personal experiences. His ability to connect with listeners on a deep emotional level made his songs anthems of hope and resilience.

### Early influences and themes

Marley's early work in the 1960s laid the foundation for his exploration of mental health themes. Songs like "Soul Rebel" reflect a sense of defiance and self-affirmation, encouraging listeners to embrace their identities and fight against

oppression. The message is clear: mental strength arises from self-awareness and acceptance.

### "Catch a Fire" (1973)

In his ground-breaking album *Catch a Fire*, Marley begins to weave messages of resilience and hope into his music. Tracks like "Concrete Jungle" depict struggles faced by individuals in a harsh environment, while "Stir It Up" brings a sense of warmth and comfort. This duality illustrates the importance of balancing life's challenges with moments of joy, a crucial aspect of maintaining mental health.

### "Natty Dread" (1974)

Marley's *Natty Dread* album further explores these themes. "No Woman, No Cry" is particularly poignant, offering reassurance in the face of adversity. The song serves as a reminder that despite hardships, memories of love and community can provide strength. The refrain emphasises the importance of leaning on others for support, a vital element of emotional well-being.

### Empowerment and resistance

Marley's music often acts as a call to action, urging listeners to rise above their circumstances. The album *Rastaman Vibration* features "War," a powerful commentary on social injustice and its mental

toll on individuals and communities. By highlighting the struggles faced by marginalised groups, Marley emphasises the collective trauma experienced and the need for unity to combat it. This message resonates with mental health awareness, reminding us that societal issues can deeply impact individual well-being.

### "Exodus" (1977)

In *Exodus*, Marley further develops his themes of unity and hope. The iconic track "One Love" calls for harmony among all people, emphasising that togetherness is essential for mental health. The repeated refrain of "Let's get together and feel all right" serves as a mantra for those seeking solace in community. Similarly, "Three Little Birds" reassures listeners that "every little thing is gonna be alright," promoting a sense of peace and optimism that is crucial for mental resilience.

### "Kaya" (1978)

The album *Kaya* dives into the theme of contentment and self-care. "Is This Love" and "Satisfy My Soul" celebrate love and emotional fulfillment, highlighting the importance of nurturing relationships for mental well-being. Marley's exploration of love as a healing force illustrates how connection can alleviate feelings of loneliness and despair.

### Resilience in adversity

Marley's music acknowledges the realities of suffering and loss while promoting a message of resilience.

In *Survival* (1979), tracks like "Africa Unite" call for empowerment and unity among African nations, highlighting the strength found in collective identity. This theme extends to individual mental health, suggesting that embracing one's roots and heritage can provide a strong foundation for overcoming personal challenges.

### "Uprising" (1980)

Marley's final studio album, *Uprising*, contains "Redemption Song," a poignant reflection on freedom and self-liberation. The lyrics encourage listeners to "emancipate yourselves from mental slavery," emphasising that mental health begins with self-awareness and the courage to confront one's struggles. This powerful message resonates with many who feel trapped by their circumstances, urging them to seek liberation through introspection and resilience.

### The legacy of Bob Marley's messages

Bob Marley's impact on mental health awareness extends far beyond his lifetime. His music continues to inspire generations, encouraging listeners to embrace hope and community in their journeys. The messages of love, unity, and resilience remain timeless, offering comfort to those grappling with mental health challenges.

In today's world, where mental health issues are increasingly recognised and discussed, Marley's music serves as a reminder of the importance of connection and positivity. His songs encourage us to seek support, practise self-love, and foster a sense of belonging.

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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, 1998 Dec.

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# Sleep better with right textiles

By Gloria Obikili

The importance of sleep for human development and overall well-being cannot be overstated. However, many people today struggle with poor sleep quality, affecting their vitality. Insomnia, a common condition that disrupts sleep, affects various groups, including children, adults, pregnant women, and the elderly.

Textiles, such as sleepwear and bedding, can significantly impact sleep quality by influencing thermal comfort and breathability. Using breathable fabrics like cotton, wool, linen, and silk can help regulate body temperature, making sleep more comfortable.

Health practitioners increasingly recommend these textiles as part of a holistic approach to treating insomnia. From infants who may cry due to irritation from uncomfortable fabrics to older adults and pregnant women facing temperature regulation challenges, choosing the right textiles can improve sleep quality across different age groups.

## Benefits of choosing right textiles

Selecting appropriate textiles—such as breathable cotton sheets, hypoallergenic pillowcases, and weighted blankets—can play a crucial role in managing insomnia. These materials can improve sleep quality and overall comfort significantly.

## Babies and toddlers: Comfort and skin health

According to the American Academy of Paediatrics, infants sleeping in natural, breathable fabrics like cotton or bamboo have reduced skin irritation and fewer sleep disruptions. Babies' discomfort often stems from the type of clothing they wear. Natural fabrics help regulate body temperature and reduce irritation, making them ideal for infant sleepwear and bedding.

## Pregnant women: Support and comfort

Pregnancy introduces unique sleep challenges, including hormonal changes, night sweats, and discomfort in finding a suitable sleeping position. A study published in the *Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* found that pregnant women who used lightweight, breathable sleep fabrics made from natural fibres like cotton experienced better sleep quality. These fabrics enhance airflow, reducing the risk of overheating.

Additionally, using a well-padded pillow can improve sleep posture, alleviate aches, and provide extra support. Hypoallergenic mattresses can also contribute to better sleep.

## Older adults: Enhancing sleep quality

Older adults often experience sleep difficulties. Research from the National Institute on Ageing, involving over 9,000 individuals aged 65 and above, revealed that more than half reported sleep issues, including trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, early-morning awakenings, and excessive daytime sleepiness. A study in *Sleep Medicine* found that older adults using weighted blankets reported reduced anxiety and improved sleep patterns. These blankets offer adjustable

temperature control and are gentle on sensitive skin, enhancing comfort.

## Hospitalised patients: Hygienic and hypoallergenic comfort

Patients in hospitals often face sleep disturbances due to unfamiliar environments, health issues, and discomfort. Research in *Sleep Health* indicates that using hypoallergenic, moisture-wicking, and antimicrobial bedding can improve sleep quality for hospitalised patients. A study conducted at the Cleveland Clinic showed that patients who replaced standard hospital linens with soft cotton or bamboo pillowcases reported significant improvements in comfort and sleep quality. These textiles can aid quicker recovery and enhance restfulness, demonstrating their essential role in healthcare settings.

**Practical tips for better Sleep**  
Improving sleep quality doesn't have to be expensive. Affordable changes can make a big difference. Consider using cotton sheets and sleepwear for enhanced breathability.

You can also create a calming atmosphere by making a DIY pillow spray: add a few drops of lavender essential oil to a spray bottle filled with water. Research from *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* shows that lavender significantly improves sleep quality by providing a calming effect. Additionally, layering lightweight blankets is an easy, budget-friendly way to regulate temperature.

**Conclusion**  
Achieving quality sleep involves more than just medical interventions; incorporating the right textile materials is essential. By carefully selecting textiles,



insomnia across all age groups—from infants to older adults—can be effectively managed. Sleep is crucial for overall well-being, and choosing the right fabrics plays a vital role in fostering a healthy lifestyle. Textiles work synergistically with other doctor-recommended measures to improve sleep quality and enhance wellness.



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# Pharma industry prioritised, positioned for exponential growth, says F'G

continued from front page

within and outside the country. The Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate, disclosed this in his keynote address at the opening ceremony of the 97th Annual National Conference of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), held in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The theme of the conference was "Transforming Pharmaceutical Innovation to Facilitate Equitable Healthcare in Emerging Economies".

Prof. Pate, who was represented by the Director-General/CEO of the National Institute for Pharmaceutical Research and Development (NIPRD), Dr Obi Peter Adigwe, called on all stakeholders in the pharmaceutical industry to collaborate with the government to actualise the prioritisation agenda. This, he said, will help to increase access to safe and high-quality healthcare in the country.

Discussing recent innovations introduced to transform the nation's healthcare delivery system, the minister emphasised that there is empirical evidence demonstrating that the pharmaceutical industry has been prioritised and is now set for growth that will revolutionise the entire healthcare sector.

He noted that when the present administration began, the Federal Government, through the Ministry of Health, initiated various programmes and interventions aimed at enhancing medicine security and repositioning the health sector. According to him, the reforms focus on four thematic areas: Governance, Population Health Outcomes, Unlocking the Healthcare Value Chain, and Health Security. He added that within the first two months, one of these categories was conceptualised, leading to the establishment of a national coordination mechanism and the appointment of a national coordinator.

Pate disclosed that one of the four areas has already resulted in numerous innovations and interventions, including the recent presidential executive orders to boost local production of healthcare products and reduce the cost of healthcare equipment and consumables.

According to him, "Only one of these thematic categories has secured a presidential executive order. This includes enhancing pharmacy's role not just in medicine production but also in areas like clinical trials and consumable production. The thematic area 'Unlocking the Healthcare Value Chain', also known as the Presidential Value Chain Progress, has led to significant policy reforms."

The minister commended the collaborative efforts of policy formulators, including the President, the Ministry of Health, and the National Assembly, as well as those implementing these policies. He stated that Nigeria now has a remarkable team of health sector policymakers like never before.

He further revealed that the government is planning to establish



Immediate past PSN President, Prof. Cyril Usifoh and Director-General/Chief Executive Officer, National Institute for Pharmaceutical Research and Development (NIPRD), Dr Obi Peter Adigwe, representing the Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate, shortly after receiving award from Prof. Usifoh on behalf of the minister at the opening ceremony of the 97th PSN National Annual Conference in Uyo.

clinical trial centres across the country and has secured an €18 million vaccine research grant from the European Union (EU). This initiative is part of efforts to transform the nation's health sector. Earlier this year, the National Plan for Vaccine Research and Development and Local Production (2024-2034) was presented in Abuja, with more interventions expected to follow.

The minister highlighted the presence of a robust policy framework to unlock the value chain, supported by capable implementation partners such as the PSN, the Nigerian Association of Pharmacists & Pharmaceutical Scientists in the Americas (NAPPSA), the Association of Industrial Pharmacists of Nigeria (NAIP), and the Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN), among others.

"These implementation partners are crucial to unlocking value chain initiatives, which will grow the sector, boost the economy, improve access to medicine security, and positively impact lives," the minister stated.

Under the value chain initiatives, there are about 15 key focus areas, one of which is medicine security. According to Pate, medicine security involves ensuring sufficient local control over drug production to guarantee sustainable access to affordable, high-quality pharmaceuticals.

He cited the enactment of Executive Order No. 3, which mandates public institutions to procure locally manufactured drugs. Although some scepticism exists regarding its full implementation, the minister assured that a high-level stakeholder meeting in Lagos would address this, involving the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Chairman of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), and the Comptroller General of Customs, among others.

Africa could dominate the market.

Highlighting a critical gap, the minister stated that Nigeria has only 170 pharma manufacturers serving a population of 210 million, a ratio of 1 manufacturer to 1.3 million people. In contrast, India has 5,000 pharma manufacturers for a population of 1.311 billion, a ratio of 1 manufacturer to 260,000 people. He, however, assured that the health ministry is working diligently to address this gap and aims to position Nigeria as the "India of Africa" in drug production.

Prof. Pate reiterated that the Nigerian pharma sector is well-positioned for exponential growth, which will increase access to medicines, stimulate socio-economic development, and improve healthcare access for citizens. The ministry's interventions are expected to drive employment, assure medicine security, boost GDP, facilitate export of pharmaceuticals, and promote technology transfer.

In her virtual address, the Director-General of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Prof. Moji Adeyeye, commended the theme of the conference, noting its alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 3, which aims for quality healthcare for all by 2030. She reaffirmed NAFDAC's commitment to collaborating with PSN and the pharma industry to achieve this goal.

Meanwhile, the Chairman of the Pharmacy Council of Nigeria (PCN), Hajia Wasilatu Giwa, emphasised the need to address rising medicine costs and the impact of the 'japa' syndrome. She urged stakeholders to focus on Nigeria's healthcare renewal agenda and called on PSN to partner with relevant agencies to eradicate fake drugs in the country, stressing that only qualified pharmacists should handle pharmaceuticals.

The 97th PSN conference featured several plenary sessions, the election of new executive members, and concluded with a closing banquet where various award winners were announced. The high point of the event was the announcement of the newly elected president of the Society, Pharm. Ibrahim Tanko Ayuba, and the swearing-in of other executive members.

## PCNNews

### PCN leadership shines at 97th PSN Annual National Conference

By Ifeoluwa D. Afolayan

At the recently concluded 97th Annual National Conference of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), held from 4-9 November, 2024, in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, the PCN's leadership was fully represented. The Chairperson of the Governing Council, Pharm. Hajiya Wosilat Giwa, FPSN, and the Registrar, Pharm. Ibrahim Babashehu Ahmed, FPSN, were in attendance, alongside other management and staff.

Pharm. Giwa had the honour of chairing the Opening Ceremony, setting the tone for the high-profile event. Pharm. I. B. Ahmed, the registrar, played several pivotal roles throughout the conference, serving as a panelist at the Town Hall Meeting and chairing the PSN Electoral Committee for the 2024 election.

In recognition of his exceptional contributions to the pharmacy profession, Pharm. Ahmed was honoured with several awards, among which were the awards by the PSN Imo State Chapter, PSN Cross River State Chapter, and the PSN Foundation (Project Team).

During the conference, the PCN also took the opportunity to engage with key stakeholders, hosting the Deans Forum with deans of Faculties of Pharmacy/Pharmaceutical Sciences on 5 November, and the Directors of Pharmaceutical Services (DPS) Forum on 6 November. These engagements fostered discussions on enhancing pharmacy education, regulation, as well as service delivery across the country. The Deans Forum also provided updates on the full implementation of the PharmD programme in all colleges and faculties accredited by the PCN in all Nigerian universities.

The registrar's leadership on the PSN Electoral Committee contributed to the smooth, free, and orderly election process at this year's conference, marking his third successful chairmanship of a PSN presidential election. His role in ensuring transparency and order was widely praised, further solidifying his reputation as a result-oriented leader in the pharmacy sector.

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## Social marketing in public health

(Plus holiday healthcare tips)

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

As a healthcare professional, whether you specialise in public health or not, you have likely applied social marketing hundreds of times in your practice without even realising it. I first encountered social marketing six years ago while exploring an intersection between my passion for marketing and communications and my enthusiasm for public health. My interest deepened during my postgraduate studies in Public Health, where the curriculum included mandatory credits in Mass Communication and Social Medicine. It was during this time that I learned about communication theories and behaviour change models—and I have been hooked ever since.

**So, the question is: what is social marketing?**

*"To achieve anything, change the behaviour of the stakeholders."*  
– Onyinye Chiekwe, 2024

The concept of social marketing is far from new. It has been part of public health practice since 1969 but is now gaining traction at an unprecedented rate, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, as countries grapple with worsening health indices. An example of such challenges is Nigeria's double burden of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

Efforts to promote healthcare have shifted from simply proclaiming "health is wealth" to actively ensuring behaviour change. This

is where social marketing steps in. Social marketing applies marketing principles to create, communicate, and deliver value to influence target audience behaviour for the benefit of both society (public health, safety, the environment, and communities) and the audience itself.

For instance, a campaign to discourage smoking benefits both the environment (reducing the harms of secondary smoke) and the smokers themselves. At its core, social marketing uses marketing strategies to design and implement programmes that promote socially beneficial behaviour changes.

### Targets of behaviour change in social marketing

Social marketing focuses on influencing behaviours. Just as commercial marketers sell products and services, social marketers sell behaviours.

Unlike commercial marketing, which persuades the audience to buy a product or subscribe to a service, social marketing aims to change the behaviour of individuals or communities. These changes can be categorised into five key goals:

1. **Accept a new behaviour:** For example, adopting vaccination, practising handwashing, wearing masks, or adhering to medication.
2. **Reject a potentially undesirable behaviour:** For example, avoiding binge drinking or the misuse of antibiotics.
3. **Modify an existing behaviour:** For example, increasing

physical activity levels.

4. **Abandon an undesirable behaviour:** For example, drinking and driving or leading a sedentary lifestyle.
5. **Maintain an existing behaviour:** For example, staying active, drinking adequate water, or consuming alcohol in moderation.

By targeting these changes, social marketing demonstrates its remarkable benefits in public health.

### Behavioural Issues Addressed by Social Marketing

Social marketing finds applications in numerous public health contexts, including:

- **Health promotion:** Addressing issues like teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, binge drinking, high cholesterol, breastfeeding, hypertension, and diabetes.
- **Injury prevention:** Promoting the use of seatbelts, discouraging drinking and driving, and tackling suicide and domestic violence.
- **Environmental protection:** Reducing waste, promoting proper waste management, curbing air pollution, and encouraging energy conservation.
- **Community mobilisation:** Encouraging blood and organ donation and teaching first aid skills.

Social marketing is integral to public health practice. In future editions, we will explore what social marketing is not, its key elements and principles, its relationship with and differences from social media marketing, how to plan social marketing campaigns, and much more!



### Holiday health tips: Ending the year healthy and starting 2025 with vigour

The year is drawing to a close. Celebrations are in the air, and many of us are already diving into the excitement of the festive season. However, it is essential to prioritise your health. As a healthcare provider, you should continuously counsel your clients and patients to make health-conscious decisions.

Here are some holiday healthcare tips:

Renew and refill prescription medications, especially if you are travelling.

Do not drink and drive.

Get adequate sleep.

Stay active.

Stay hydrated.

Pack a first aid kit if you are travelling.

Avoid overeating, no matter how tempting.

Limit alcohol intake.

Be mindful of your environment.

And once again: do not drink and drive!

Let us make this December one to remember. See you in January!

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# Advances in managing HIV/AIDS and STDs

One of the most dreaded and deadliest diseases worldwide is the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). This virus attacks the body's immune system, specifically targeting the cells that help combat infections, thereby making an individual more vulnerable to other illnesses. By attacking the white blood cells known as CD4 cells, HIV ultimately weakens and damages the immune system.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) states that HIV attacks the body's white blood cells, leading to a compromised immune system, which increases susceptibility to diseases like tuberculosis, various infections, and certain cancers. According to the WHO, HIV remains a significant global public health issue. As of July 2024, the virus has claimed an estimated 42.3 million lives, with ongoing transmission in all countries worldwide. Alarmingly, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) reported that in 2023, at least one person died of HIV every minute.

### Global statistics on HIV

According to the WHO, by the end of 2023, an estimated 39.9

million people were living with HIV, with 65 per cent of these cases occurring in the African Region. It is particularly disheartening to note that in 2023 alone, an estimated 630,000 individuals died from HIV-related causes, and approximately 1.3 million people acquired the virus. WHO data also reveals that 86 per cent of all people living with HIV were aware of their status in 2023.

Statistics from UNAIDS further show that, of the 39.9 million people living with HIV in 2023, around 38.6 million were adults aged 15 years or older, while 1.4 million were children aged 0 to 14 years. Additionally, 53 per cent of all people living with HIV were women and girls. However, despite the high awareness level, about 5.4 million people were still unaware that they were living with HIV.

### New HIV infections

According to UNAIDS, new HIV infections have decreased by 60 per cent since the peak in 1995. In 2023, there were 1.3 million new HIV infections, down from 3.3 million in 1995. Notably, women and girls accounted for forty-four per cent of all new infections in 2023.

### Global funding and investment

At the end of 2023, UNAIDS reported that approximately US\$ 19.8 billion was available for the AIDS response in low- and middle-income countries, with around fifty-nine per cent coming from domestic sources. However, funding for HIV dropped by five per cent from 2022 to 2023, and by 7.9 per cent between 2020 and 2023. The funding remains significantly below the required US\$ 29.3 billion needed by 2025 to keep efforts on track to end AIDS as a public health threat.

### HIV in Nigeria

UNAIDS statistics reveal that by the end of 2023, an estimated 1.9 to 2.3 million people were living with HIV in Nigeria. Among this population, approximately 1.7 to 2.1 million were adults aged 15 years and above. The data also shows that between 1.1 to 1.4 million of these individuals were women aged 15 years and above, while between 620,000 to 760,000 were men in the same age range. Furthermore, UNAIDS data indicates that between 140,000 to 180,000 children aged 0 to 14 years were living with HIV in

Nigeria by the end of 2023.

### Origin of HIV

HIV's origins have been traced to certain species of monkeys and chimpanzees. Scientists widely agree that HIV infection in humans originated from chimpanzees in Central Africa. Research suggests that HIV may have jumped from chimpanzees to humans as early as the late 1800s, likely due to hunting these animals for meat and coming into contact with their infected blood. The chimpanzee version of HIV, known as simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV), likely mutated into HIV within the human population.


It is believed that HIV has been present in the United States since at least the mid-to-late 1970s. The earliest confirmed case of HIV was identified from a blood sample taken in 1959 from a man in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, which was later analysed retrospectively.

### Symptoms of HIV

According to the WHO, HIV symptoms vary depending on the stage of infection. HIV spreads most easily during the initial months following infection, though many individuals remain unaware of their status until much later. In the early weeks after infection, some people may not exhibit any symptoms, while others might experience flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache, rash, and sore throat.


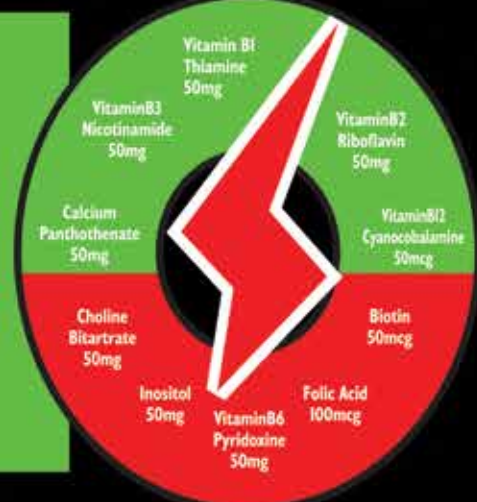
As the virus continues to weaken the immune system, additional symptoms such as swollen lymph nodes, weight loss, fever, diarrhoea, and a persistent cough may occur.


*continued on page 13*



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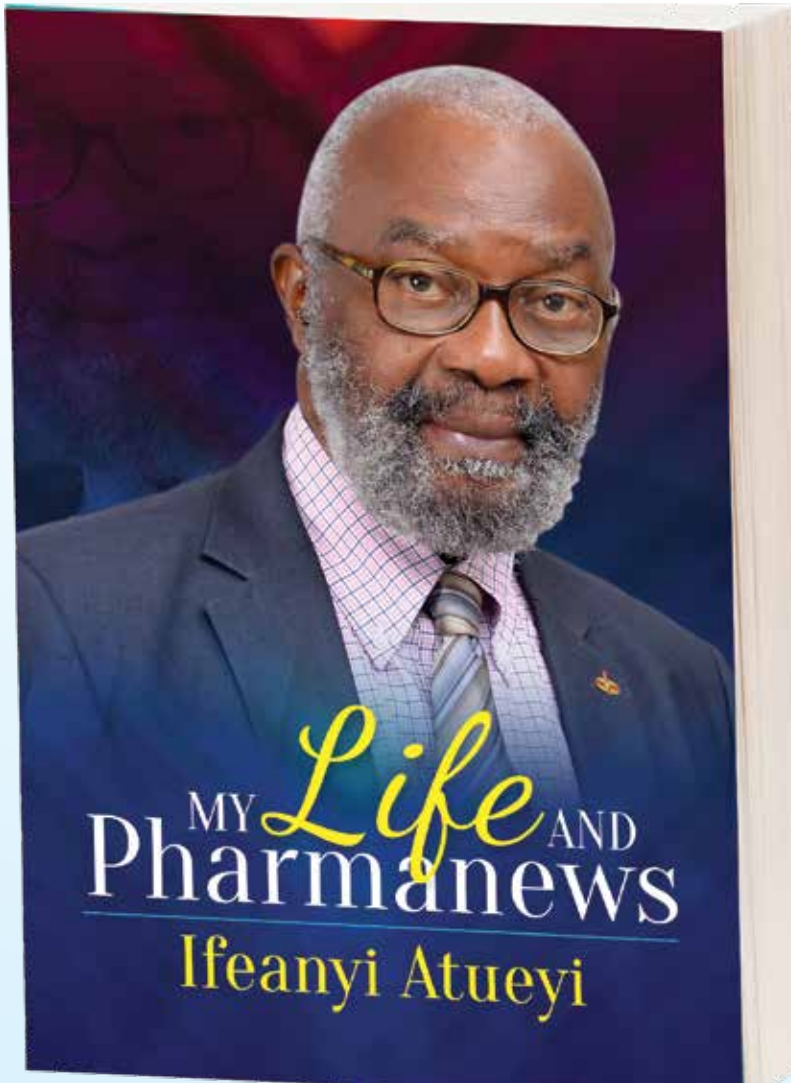


## REBIRTH AND REPOSITIONING

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

Since those foundational years that I described in the previous chapter, so much has happened within Pharmanews as an organisation and **Pharmanews** as a publication. These happenings, if they were to be recounted one by one, would definitely leave me with no space for any other narration in this book. This shouldn't come as a surprise since we're talking about a journey of 40 years! What I have decided, therefore, is to simply highlight some of the milestones and trajectories that we have covered over the years.

However, in recounting these memorable feats, I must begin by alluding to the transformations that have occurred in my own life, especially in relation to the business of Pharmanews. As I stated from the very first chapter, my story and that of **Pharmanews** are intertwined. Therefore, in recounting the evolution and achievements of **Pharmanews** over the years, it is expedient that I recall some



When a reporter asked Prince Julius Adelus-Adeluyi to describe me in a recent interview that was published in the June 2019 edition of **Pharmanews**, he said:

*"Ifeanyi is a quiet person. I should start with the fact that now that he is nearing 80 years, the first thing you will notice about him is that he has become more spiritual. So you can describe him as a spiritual person. However, anybody nearing 80 years will become more spiritual..."*

In a way, this observation by Juli is apt. People often become

people must have observed in my lifestyle, business transactions and, most conspicuously, my writings, was not triggered by the onset of old age. Rather, it was the outcome of a remarkable chain of events that began sometime in 1989, ten years after starting **Pharmanews**.

Before recounting this experience, however, I must say that, despite the disciplined upbringing that I had and the moral principles that had been instilled in me by my mother and my uncle, I was like every natural person in terms of propensity for vices. As the reader must have deduced from some incidents I have earlier narrated, especially concerning my life at the University of Ife and at the inception of **Pharmanews**, I still had some undesirable tendencies in me, regardless of how much I tried to be upright.

For instance, even though the humiliating experience I had with the fraudulent company manager at the beginning of the business made me vow never to transact a shady business deal with anyone again, it did not make me become the person I should be. In fact, until that 1989 incident, which I will be recounting shortly, going to church was more or less like a social activity to me.

of my life-changing encounters that have either initiated or influenced these corresponding progressions in **Pharmanews**.  
**Spiritual Rebirth**

more thoughtful, philosophical and, in certain instances, more spiritual in the twilight years of their lives. However, in my case, the spiritual zeal that many

*Continues next edition*



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## Advances in managing HIV/AIDS and STDs

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Without treatment, individuals living with HIV can develop severe illnesses, including tuberculosis, cryptococcal meningitis, severe bacterial infections, and cancers like lymphomas and Kaposi's sarcoma.

### Transmission of HIV

The majority of HIV transmissions occur through anal or vaginal sex or the sharing of needles and other drug injection equipment. The American Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that HIV can only be transmitted through specific body fluids such as blood, semen, vaginal fluids, rectal fluids, and breast milk. These fluids must come into contact with a mucous membrane or damaged tissue, or be directly injected into the bloodstream for transmission to occur.

### Diagnosis of HIV

The WHO recommends rapid diagnostic tests that provide same-day results to facilitate early diagnosis and linkage to treatment and prevention services. People can also self-test for HIV, although confirmatory testing by a qualified health worker is necessary for a definitive diagnosis.

Most widely used HIV tests detect antibodies produced by the immune system in response to the virus, typically within twenty-eight days of infection. Antigen/antibody tests, which detect both HIV antibodies and antigens, are commonly used, while nucleic acid tests (NATs) are primarily utilised to monitor treatment rather than for routine screening due to their higher cost.

For children under 18 months born to HIV-positive mothers, rapid antibody testing is insufficient; instead, virological testing must be performed, ideally at birth or within six weeks.

### How HIV attacks the body

HIV primarily attacks the body's CD4 cells (a type of white blood cell), which are crucial for immune function. A normal CD4 count ranges between 500 and 1,200 cells per cubic millimetre of blood. HIV invades CD4 cells, replicates within them, and then destroys the cell, releasing new virus particles to infect more CD4 cells. This cycle gradually depletes the immune system's capacity, leaving the individual vulnerable to infections.

This is why UNAIDS estimates that out of the 39.9 million people living with HIV, no less than a quarter are unaware of their infection, underscoring the need for widespread testing and early diagnosis.

### Advanced HIV disease

The WHO has defined advanced HIV disease (ADHD) as CD4 cell count that is less than 200 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> or the WHO stage 3 or 4 in adults and adolescents. All children younger than five years of age are considered to have advanced HIV disease. CD4 cell count testing, while no longer needed to initiate treatment, remains an essential tool for identifying people with ADHD. All children younger than five years are considered to have ADHD, given their heightened risk of disease progression and mortality. People with ADHD are at high risk of death, even after starting ART; this risk increases

with decreasing CD4 cell count. The most common causes of severe illness and death are tuberculosis, severe bacterial infections, and cryptococcal meningitis.

**Treatment**  
HIV has no cure. However, HIV treatment (antiretroviral therapy or ART) involves taking medicine as prescribed by a healthcare provider. You should start HIV treatment as soon as possible after diagnosis. HIV treatment reduces the amount of HIV in the blood (viral load). HIV treatment can make the viral load so low that a test can't detect it (undetectable viral load). If you have an undetectable viral load, you will not transmit HIV to others through sex. Having an undetectable viral load also reduces the risk of HIV transmission through sharing drug injection equipment, and during pregnancy, labour, and delivery.

### Prevention

HIV is a preventable disease. The U.S. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention specifically said more tools than ever are available today to prevent HIV. "You can use strategies such as abstinence (not having sex), never sharing needles, and using condoms the right way every time you have sex. You may also be able to take advantage of HIV prevention medicines such as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). If you have HIV, there are many actions you can take to prevent transmitting HIV to others," the centre said.

### Stages of HIV

Generally, there are three stages of HIV:

**Stage 1 - Acute infection:** This is when people have large amounts of HIV in the blood and the body begins producing antibodies to try and kill the virus. People typically develop flu-like symptoms after contracting HIV, which may last a

few weeks. This stage is when HIV is the most transmissible to other people. The American Centre for Disease Control (CDC) said at this stage, people have a large amount of HIV in their blood and are very contagious.

**Stage 2 - Chronic infection:** In this stage, HIV is still active and reproducing in the body but at a slower rate. Some people may not have symptoms, but the virus is still transmissible. This stage may last ten years or more without treatment. If treatment begins, the virus may never progress to stage 3. The American CDC described this stage as asymptomatic HIV infection or clinical latency. "At this stage, HIV is still active and continues to reproduce in the body. People may not have any symptoms or get sick during this phase but can transmit HIV. People who take HIV treatment as prescribed may never move into Stage 3 (AIDS). Without HIV treatment, this stage may last a decade or longer or may progress faster. At the end of this stage, the

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# Advances in managing HIV/AIDS and STDs

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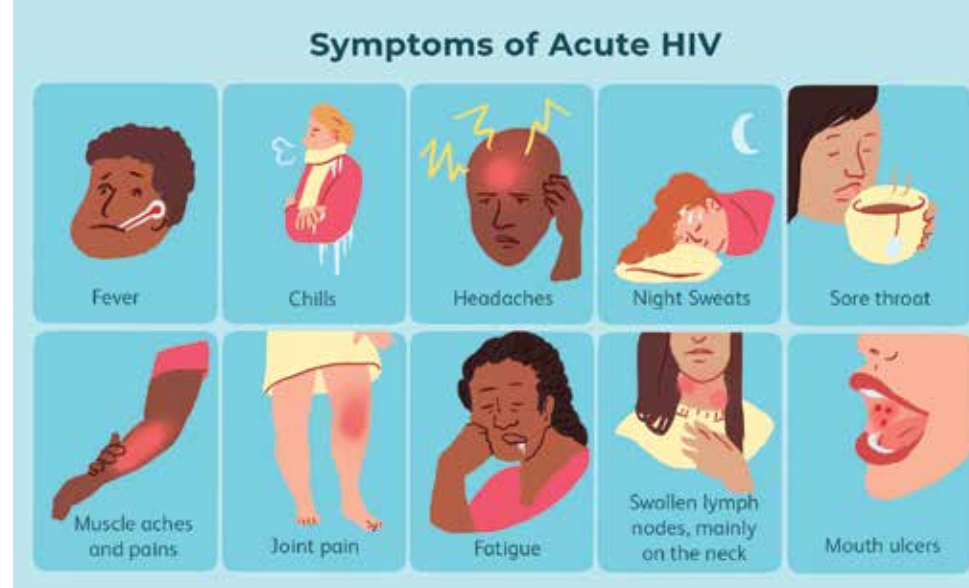
amount of HIV in the blood (viral load) goes up, and the person may move into Stage 3 (AIDS)," the American CDC said.

**Stage 3 - Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS):** This is the most advanced stage of HIV, also known as AIDS. It is the most severe stage of HIV infection.

**A I D S**  
AIDS stands for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. AIDS is the most advanced stage of HIV infection. It happens when the body can no longer fight off the infection. The survival rate is around three years without treatment. People receive an AIDS diagnosis when their CD4 cell count drops below 200 cells per milliliter of blood, or they develop certain illnesses (sometimes called opportunistic infections). People with AIDS can have a high viral load and may easily transmit HIV to others. People with AIDS have damaged immune systems and can get an increasing number of other serious illnesses. According to WHO, AIDS may have occurred in the body usually when your CD4 T-cell number drops below 200, and the body's immune system is badly damaged; whereas, a normal CD4 count in the human body ranges from 500 to 1,200 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> in adults and teens.

**AIDS-related deaths**

According to UNAIDS, AIDS-related deaths have been reduced by sixty-nine per cent since the peak in 2004 and by fifty-one per cent since 2010. In 2023, around 630,000 people died from AIDS-related



illnesses worldwide, compared to 2.1 million people in 2004 and 1.3 million people in 2010. The target for 2025 is fewer than 250,000. UNAIDS also disclosed that AIDS-related mortality has declined by fifty-six per cent among women and girls and by forty-seven per cent among men and boys since 2010.

**Diagnosis for AIDS**

As earlier stated, AIDS is the last and most severe stage of HIV infection. It is diagnosed if the results of your test show that you have a CD4+ cell count of less than 200 cells per microliter (mcL) of blood and a certain kind of infection called an opportunistic infection that is common in people who have weakened immune systems.

**Prevalence of STDs**

There are many STDs across the

globe. In fact, WHO said more than one million sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are acquired every day worldwide. Although current statistics on STDs are not readily available for this report, WHO estimated 376 million new infections in 2016 alone. According to the statistics, about 127 million people contracted an STD called Chlamydia, 87 million contracted Gonorrhoea, 6.3 million people contracted Syphilis, and 156 million people contracted Trichomoniasis all in 2016.

**STDs in Nigeria**

Sexually transmitted diseases have constituted great medical, social, and economic problems in Nigeria. Researchers have also said that apart from the heavy affliction of urban dwellers, there is a rapid

excursion of these diseases to the rural areas as well. A survey in Southern Nigeria found that the prevalence of STIs among a sexually active population is 27.7 per cent. Another survey conducted in Benin City, Southern Nigeria, found that the prevalence of STIs among a population of sexually active female undergraduate students is 27.7 per cent.

**Types of STDs**

As earlier stated, HIV/AIDS is one of the most deadly sexually transmitted diseases. Other common STDs include Gonorrhoea, Herpes, Syphilis, and Chlamydia, among others.

**Gonorrhoea**

This is a common bacterial STD also known as "the clap." According to a report titled *Sexually Transmitted Disease Surveillance 2021* by the American Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2021, a total of 710,151 cases of gonorrhoea were reported, making it the second most common notifiable sexually transmitted infection in the United States for that year. The report noted that gonorrhoea cases have increased by one hundred and eighteen per cent since their historic low in 2009. From 2020 to 2021, the overall rate of reported gonorrhoea increased by four point six per cent. Increases were observed among both males and females, in three regions of the United States (West, Northeast, and South), across most age groups, and among most racial/Hispanic ethnicity groups.

In Nigeria, Gonorrhoea is also highly prevalent. In fact, in 1963, the World Health Organization found

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# Iyalla Peterside: The Opobo man who became America's best physician

By Ola Aboderin



**Prof. Iyalla Peterside**

**T**he greatest thing about a man," observed Tully C. Knoles, "is his ability to transcend himself, his environment, and to be what he dreams of being." This perfectly captures the success story of Prof. Iyalla Elvis Peterside, the illustrious paediatrician and neonatologist from Opobo, Rivers State, who was recently honoured by the USA's National Consumer Advisory Board as one of America's best physicians.

According to the prestigious organisation, known for spotlighting outstanding professionals, the award was based on a rigorous evaluation of Peterside's superior training, extensive experience, dedication to continuous education, and commitment to excellence in advancing patient care. By that recognition, Peterside's name now stands alongside the most distinguished healthcare professionals around the world.

### Global authority in neonatology

Prof. Peterside is renowned for his stellar expertise and contributions to paediatric and neonatal medicine, particularly in the management of complex perinatal and neonatal cases. He has served as the medical director of the Intensive Care Unit at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, and as a professor

of clinical paediatrics at the Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania. Additionally, he is a long-standing attending neonatologist at the renowned Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), a facility consistently ranked among the best children's hospitals globally.

His clinical interests encompass managing chronic lung disease, caring for surgical neonates, and treating infants with persistent pulmonary hypertension (PPHN). He is also recognised for his pioneering work with Extra Corporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO), a life-saving intervention for neonates with severe respiratory and cardiac failure.

Furthermore, his efforts in developing vascular access programmes have significantly reduced bloodstream infections among newborns, showcasing his dedication to patient safety and quality improvement.

### Lifelong dedication to medical excellence

Born in the culturally and historically rich town of Opobo in the Niger Delta in 1959, Peterside's early life was worlds away from the cutting-edge medical environments he now navigates. His journey from a modest Nigerian background to becoming a leading neonatologist

in America highlights his resilience and expertise.

Peterside earned his medical degree from the University of Ibadan, in 1985. Driven by a quest for knowledge and a commitment to excellence, he embarked on further training in the United Kingdom. He honed his skills in paediatrics, paediatric surgery, and neonatology at reputable institutions such as the Booth Hall Children's Hospital in Manchester and The Bolton General Hospital in Bolton. His time in the UK not only broadened his clinical acumen but also provided him with a global perspective on healthcare delivery, which would become instrumental in his later work.

However, his journey did not stop there. Recognising the need for advanced specialisation, he relocated to the United States, where he underwent rigorous training at The Brooklyn Hospital Centre and completed a fellowship in neonatal-perinatal medicine at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP). CHOP is renowned for its advanced research and comprehensive care, and it was here that Prof. Peterside solidified his reputation as a leading neonatologist. His expertise in managing high-risk neonatal conditions, especially those requiring innovative interventions, positioned him as a key figure in the field.

### Uncommon leadership in neonatal care

As previously noted, Prof. Peterside's career has been garlanded by a series of prestigious appointments and accomplishments. In his role as the medical director of the Intensive Care Unit at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. He was instrumental in developing protocols and clinical pathways that improved outcomes for critically ill newborns. His focus on evidence-based medicine and patient-centred care has led to groundbreaking work in the management of chronic lung disease, persistent pulmonary hypertension (PPHN), and the surgical neonate.

One of his notable contributions to neonatology is his expertise in Extra Corporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO), a life-saving technique used to treat infants with severe respiratory and cardiac failure. His work in this area has been pivotal in enhancing survival rates for neonates with life-threatening conditions. Additionally, he has championed infection control measures, particularly in reducing catheter-related bloodstream infections, which are a significant risk for newborns in intensive care settings.

Peterside's commitment to advancing neonatal care extends beyond clinical practice. As a

professor of clinical paediatrics at the Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, he is dedicated to training the next generation of physicians. His role as an educator is complemented by his research initiatives, which focus on innovative treatments and improving healthcare delivery for neonatal patients. His efforts in clinical programme development have led to the establishment of the therapeutic hypothermia programme, which is used to prevent brain injury in newborns with hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy, and the donor breast milk programme, which supports the nutritional needs of preterm infants.

### Champion of professional development

Prof. Peterside's dedication to his craft is evident in his commitment to continuous education. He is a member of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, underscoring his prominence in the global medical community. His peers recognise him not only for his clinical expertise but also for his unwavering dedication to patient care and professional excellence.

In addition to his clinical and academic roles, Prof. Peterside serves as the President of the Philadelphia Perinatal Society, where he plays a crucial role in advancing perinatal and neonatal care through research, education, and policy advocacy. His leadership has helped shape the future of neonatal medicine, ensuring that the most vulnerable patients receive the highest standard of care.

### A legacy rooted in service and compassion

In 2022, Philadelphia Magazine named Prof. Peterside one of the Top Doctors in Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine, further solidifying his status as a leading figure in healthcare. However, beyond his professional accolades, what truly sets Peterside apart is his deep compassion for his patients and their families. Colleagues and parents alike speak of his kindness, his willingness to go the extra mile, and his ability to offer hope in the direst of circumstances.

For the distinguished expert, Medicine is not just a profession but a calling—a way to make a tangible difference in the lives of those he serves. His work, particularly in infection control and neonatal intensive care, continues to save countless lives, proving that true success is measured not just by accolades but by the impact one makes.

As he looks to the future, Prof. Peterside remains committed to his mission of advancing neonatal care, mentoring young physicians, and improving patient outcomes.



# Advances in managing HIV/AIDS and STDs

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Lagos to have the highest gonorrhoea rate in the world. According to a survey in Benin City, Southern Nigeria conducted by Nzopotam et al. (2022), the most prevalent positive STI test was gonorrhoea, accounting for forty-one point nine percent.

Symptoms of gonorrhoea may include a white, yellow, beige, or green-colored discharge from the penis or vagina, pain or discomfort during sex or urination, itching around the genitals, and a sore throat. Untreated gonorrhoea can lead to infections of the urethra, prostate gland, or testicles, pelvic inflammatory disease, and infertility. It's possible for a mother to pass gonorrhoea to a newborn during childbirth, which can cause serious health issues for the baby. Gonorrhoea can usually be treated with antibiotics.

### Herpes

Herpes is another serious STD caused by the herpes simplex virus (HSV). There are two main strains: HSV-1 and HSV-2, both of which can be transmitted sexually. Genital herpes sores develop on or around the genitals, while oral herpes sores develop around the mouth. These sores usually crust over and heal within a few weeks. The first outbreak is often the most painful, but outbreaks typically become less severe over time.

Although there's no cure for herpes, medications can help control outbreaks and reduce the pain of sores. These medications can also lower the risk of transmitting herpes to a sexual partner. The American Urology Care Foundation notes that HSV-1 is mostly spread



through nonsexual contact but can also be transmitted via oral sex.

### Syphilis

Syphilis is a common bacterial STD. According to a survey in Benin City, Southern Nigeria conducted by Nzopotam et al. (2022), syphilis is the second most prevalent STI, accounting for twenty-nine percent of positive tests. The first symptom is usually a small, painless sore known as a chancre, which can appear on the genitals, anus, or mouth. Later symptoms may include a rash, fatigue, fever, headaches, joint pain, weight loss, and hair loss. If left untreated, late-stage syphilis can cause serious complications like vision and hearing loss, infections of the brain or spinal cord, heart disease, and even death.

Syphilis can be treated effectively with antibiotics,

especially penicillin. However, untreated syphilis can remain in the body for years, leading to severe damage to organs and potentially causing paralysis, mental disorders, and death.

### Chlamydia

Chlamydia is caused by bacteria and is one of the most common bacterial STIs in the United States, with an estimated 1.6 million new cases diagnosed annually according to the American Urological Care Foundation. Symptoms are often absent in the early

stages, with approximately ninety percent of women and seventy percent of men showing no symptoms. When symptoms do occur, they may include pain during sex or urination, green or yellow discharge, and lower abdominal pain. Chlamydia can be treated with antibiotics. Regular screenings are crucial to prevent serious complications, including pelvic inflammatory disease and infertility.

### Trichomoniasis

Also known as "trich," trichomoniasis is caused by a tiny protozoan organism that spreads through genital contact. Most people with this infection, according to the American Centers for Disease Control, do not develop symptoms. When symptoms do occur, they may include discharge

with an unpleasant odor, genital itching, and pain during urination or sex. Untreated trichomoniasis can lead to infections of the urethra and pelvic inflammatory disease. Antibiotics are effective in treating this condition.

### Genital Warts

Genital warts are caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV), which is the most common viral STI in the United States. HPV can be transmitted through vaginal or anal sex, even if the infected person shows no symptoms. The warts are usually painless and appear as fleshy, cauliflower-like bumps around the genitals or anus. HPV can lead to cervical cancer, but vaccines are available to prevent both HPV infections and genital warts. The HPV vaccine is recommended for children aged eleven or twelve and for people up to age twenty-six. There is no cure for genital warts, but they can be managed with topical ointments or minor surgical procedures.

**Report compiled by Ranmilowo Ojalumo with additional information from the World Health Organisation, American Urological Care Foundation, American National Institutes of Health, UNAIDS, the Global Fund, Lancet, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, UCSF Health, WebMD, Healthline, Avert, Mayo Clinic, Medical News Today, American Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Everyday Health, National Agency for the Control of AIDS, and Nzopotam et al. (2022).**

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



# Odeku wins May & Baker Professional Service Award

## - As organisers increase cash reward to N1.5 Million

By Ranmilowo Ojalumo

Former Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Ibadan (UI), Professor Oluwatoyin Odeku, has been awarded the prestigious 2024 May & Baker Professional Service Award in Pharmacy. She was announced as the recipient of this honour during the closing banquet of the 97th Annual National Conference of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), held from 4 to 9 November 2024, in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Pharmacists in academia have dominated this award for the past four consecutive years, with winners emerging from academic institutions each year since 2021. In 2021, Professor Martins Emeje, former national chairman of the Association of Pharmacists in Academia (NAPA), received the award in Port Harcourt. The 2022 award was clinched by Professor Ray Ozolua, deputy vice-chancellor (Academic) of the University of Benin; and, in 2023, Professor Emmanuel Chinedum Ibezim from the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, won the accolade.

While announcing Odeku as winner of this year's edition, the Chairman of the award committee, Pharm. Anthony Oyawole, likened the May & Baker Professional Service Award to the "Nobel Prize" in the pharmacy profession. He highlighted that the award was established in 2005 by May & Baker Nigeria Plc to recognise outstanding achievements and contributions by individual practitioners, public servants, industry operators, and academicians/researchers in the study and practice of pharmacy in Nigeria.

Oyawole expressed deep appreciation to the management of May & Baker for their unwavering commitment to sustaining the award since its inception. While commending academics for their consistent wins, he encouraged pharmacists in other areas of practice to innovate, aiming to secure future editions of the award.

In his remarks, the Managing Director of May & Baker Plc, Pharm. Patrick Ajah, commended the award committee for their diligence over the years and praised past winners for their indelible contributions to Nigeria's pharmaceutical industry.

Ajah announced an increase in the cash value of the award, which will rise from ₦1 million to ₦1.5 million starting from the next edition. He noted that the award's cash prize was initially ₦500,000 before being increased to ₦1 million, and the current adjustment is in response to the inflation rate in the country.

Additionally, the MD revealed that May & Baker will henceforth collaborate with award recipients, particularly those in academia, by sponsoring their research projects. The aim is to ensure that the outcomes of these research efforts are transformed into commercially viable products available in the market.

Speaking to *Pharmanews* about the award, Professor Odeku expressed her gratitude to May & Baker for continuously recognising valuable contributions to the pharmaceutical sector.

She said, "I count it a great honour to be the recipient of the 2024 May & Baker Professional Service Award. I am grateful to God and my family

for their support. I appreciate May & Baker for consistently recognising contributions to the pharmacy profession over the years. I wish May & Baker continuous success."

The May & Baker Professional Service Award in Pharmacy is regarded as one of the most significant accolades within the pharmacy profession in Nigeria. Over the years, it has been awarded to prominent pharmacists, including Pharm. (Lady) Adaeze Omaliko, managing Director of Malix Pharmacy, Onitsha; Professor (Mrs.) Mbang Femi-Oyewo, former deputy vice-chancellor of Olabisi Onabanjo University; Pharm. Ifeanyi Atueyi, managing director of *Pharmanews* Limited; Pharm. (Mrs.) Margaret Obono, a Fellow of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN); and Pharm. Folashade Lawal, a renowned community pharmacist, among others.

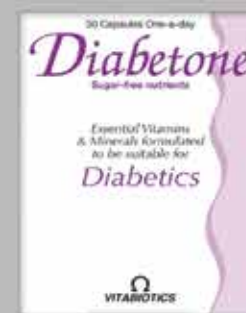


Immediate past PSN President, Prof. Cyril Usifoh; May & Baker Professional Service Award Committee members and management staff of May & Baker PLC during the presentation of the award at the closing banquet of the 97th PSN Annual National Conference in Uyo.

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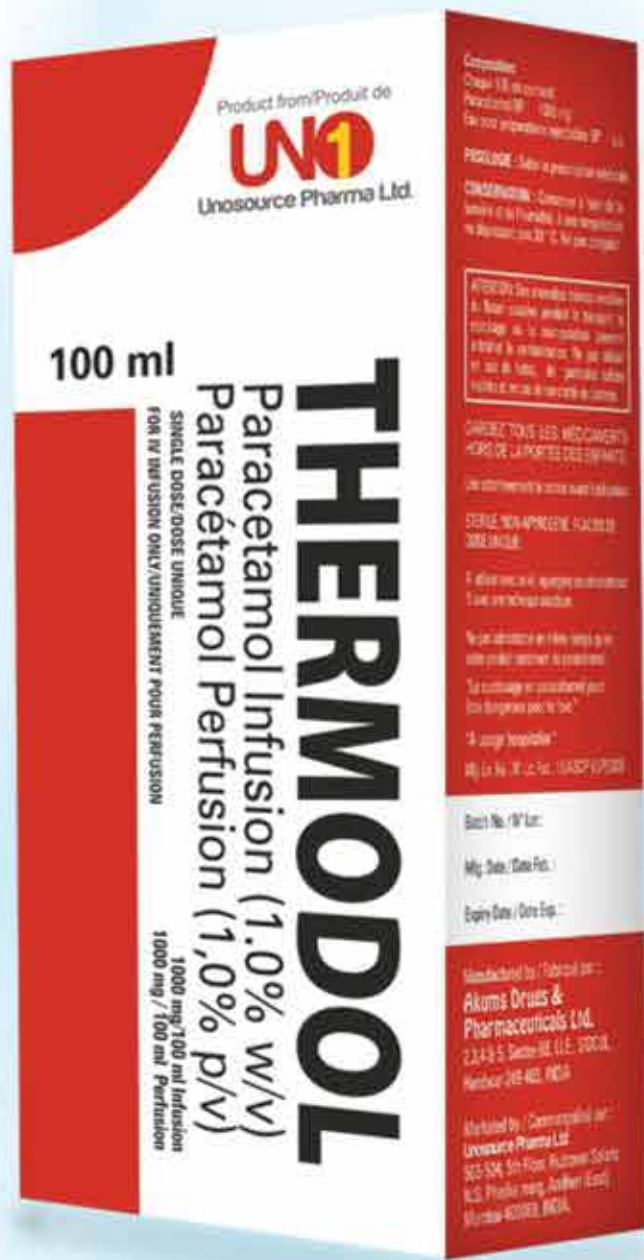
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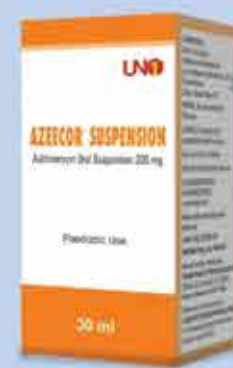
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# Genital herpes: History, important facts and treatment

By Patrick Iwelunmor

**G**enital herpes is a common sexually transmitted infection (STI) that affects millions of people worldwide. Although it is often misunderstood or stigmatised, herpes simplex virus (HSV) infections are a significant health issue. This article explores the history, important facts, and current treatment options for genital herpes.

Genital herpes has been a known disease for centuries, but the understanding of its causes and transmission has evolved significantly over time. The term “herpes” comes from the Greek word *herpein*, meaning “to creep,” which refers to the characteristic pattern of skin lesions that appear during outbreaks. Early references to herpes can be traced back to ancient civilizations, where the disease was likely present but not fully understood. The symptoms—painful sores and blisters—were described in the writings of Hippocrates around 400 BCE, though the viral nature of the disease wasn’t known at the time.

In the 19th century, scientists began to make connections between herpes and its viral origins. By the 20th century, with the advent of modern virology, the herpes simplex virus (HSV) was identified as the causative agent of genital herpes. Today, two types of HSV are recognised: HSV-1 and HSV-2.

HSV-1 is primarily associated with oral herpes (cold sores), but it can also cause genital herpes through oral-genital contact. HSV-2 is more commonly associated with genital herpes, especially through vaginal, anal, or genital-to-genital contact. Despite these distinctions, both types can cause infections in either area of the body.

Genital herpes is one of the most prevalent STIs worldwide. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that over 500 million people aged 15–49 are living with HSV-2 globally. HSV-1, though more commonly associated with oral infections, is responsible for a growing number of genital herpes cases.

The virus is transmitted through skin-to-skin contact, and outbreaks typically occur when an infected person sheds the virus, often without symptoms. While condoms can reduce the risk of transmission, they do not offer complete protection since the virus can spread through areas not covered by a condom.

Many people infected with HSV-2 may never experience symptoms, or may have very mild symptoms that go unnoticed. When symptoms do appear, they typically include painful blisters or sores in the genital, anal, or surrounding areas. These outbreaks may be accompanied



by itching, burning, or flu-like symptoms such as fever and swollen lymph nodes. The first outbreak tends to be the most severe and may last longer than subsequent outbreaks.

After the initial infection, the virus remains dormant in the body’s nerve cells. It can reactivate later, often triggered by factors such as stress, illness, hormonal changes, or a weakened immune system. Recurring outbreaks are common but tend to be less severe and shorter in duration than the first episode.

While genital herpes is rarely life-threatening, it can lead to complications in certain cases. In people with weakened immune systems, such as those with HIV/AIDS, herpes

outbreaks may be more frequent and severe. Neonatal herpes, a rare but serious condition, can occur if a woman with genital herpes transmits the virus to her baby during childbirth. This can cause severe neurological damage or even be fatal, which is why pregnant women with herpes are often closely monitored.

### Treatment for genital herpes

While there is currently no cure for genital herpes, antiviral medications can help manage the infection and reduce the frequency and severity of outbreaks. These medications work by inhibiting the ability of the herpes virus to replicate, thereby reducing symptoms and the risk of transmission. The most commonly prescribed antiviral drugs for genital herpes are acyclovir, valacyclovir, and famciclovir. These drugs can be taken in two ways:

**Episodic treatment:** This approach is used during an outbreak to shorten the duration and reduce the severity of symptoms. It is typically started as soon as the first signs of an outbreak appear.

**Suppressive treatment:** For people who experience frequent outbreaks, daily use of antiviral medication can help prevent recurrences and reduce the likelihood of transmitting the virus to others.

These treatments are highly effective at managing genital herpes, and they can significantly reduce the occurrence of outbreaks, though they do not eliminate the virus from the body. In addition to oral antiviral medications, topical treatments may be recommended for symptom relief. These may include creams or ointments that help soothe the painful sores. However, they do not address the underlying viral infection and are less effective than oral medications.

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# Wellness

with

**Dr Patrick Ijewere;** B.Sc. Chem, B.Pharm, MD, MBA  
 (Specialty: Internal Medicine, from John Hopkins University)  
 Tel: 0809 771 4455  
 Email: thenutritionhospital@gmail.com

## High blood pressure: disease or dis-ease? (2)

(Continued from last edition)

**Case 2:**

The next case involved an elderly woman in her late 70s. She had diabetes, high blood pressure, and was on three medications for blood pressure and two medications for diabetes. Her doctor had recently decided to start her on insulin due to difficulty controlling her blood sugar.

She was brought to my attention by her son and daughter-in-law, both of whom are medical doctors. They wanted to explore alternative options, including unconventional approaches, to avoid starting insulin injections for her.

From her history, it was clear she had been experiencing chronic constipation for over 40 years. She believed it might have started during her university years, as her bowel movements were often limited to once or twice a week.

Other relevant aspects of her history included arthritis and gastritis, for which she was taking additional medications. We

Over the next two weeks, we implemented a series of treatment protocols to normalise gut function. Our nutritionists designed a meal plan to support improved gut health, which included a Gut Cleanse protocol, as well as prebiotics and probiotics to restore a healthy gut flora.

By the end of the first month, her bowel movements had improved to a daily frequency. After six weeks, her blood pressure showed noticeable improvements, allowing us to wean her off one blood pressure medications. By eight weeks, we had weaned her off a second blood pressure medication, and her readings were now in the 130-140 range. By the end of the third month, following the nutritional guidelines, she was down to just half the dose of a single blood pressure medication, with her systolic pressure between 120 and 130. During this time, she noted improvements in her sleep quality, a reduction in arthritis pain, and a boost in her energy levels.

Her blood sugar also

showed significant improvement, allowing her to reduce her diabetes medication to just one. She admitted to having a sweet tooth, which made certain changes difficult, but

she was in a much better place.

In cases where chronic gut imbalance or dysfunction exists, such as chronic constipation, inflammation in the gut can often trigger a bodily response, including elevated blood pressure. The body functions as a holistic system, and if the underlying cause is truly addressed and the client maintains the nutritional measures in place, overall health improves.

**Case 3:**

The third case was a woman in her 60s. She had multiple issues, including arthritis, recurrent headaches, chronic constipation, insomnia, stiff joints, and a sedentary lifestyle.

After evaluating her with a comprehensive wellness assessment, we first implemented a gut cleanse to improve her bowel movements. We then initiated movement therapy with the goal of restoring joint flexibility and encouraging daily activity to help her resume a more normal lifestyle.

By the third month, these improvements had taken effect. Initially, her blood pressure had ranged from 150 to 160 systolic, but

by the third month, it had lowered to 110 to 120, allowing us to reduce her medications. We encouraged her to maintain regular physical activity, which included walking around her home daily, attending movement therapy twice a week, and having reflexology sessions once a week. She stopped being sedentary and now walks unaided, without her cane. She also reported that her mental clarity had greatly improved.

Of note in this case was the involvement of her daughters, who, concerned about her arthritis pain, had encouraged her sedentary lifestyle. Unbeknownst to them, this contributed to her physical and metabolic decline. When they first brought her to the clinic, they even asked if we could visit her at home, as they felt she could not walk. However, we insisted they bring her to the clinic.

**Bottom line**

These three cases illustrate that high blood pressure is not a disease in itself but rather the body's response to a loss of its natural balance or "ease."

As holistic and wellness practitioners, our focus is on returning the body to its state of ease and restoring it to its baseline of health—what it is designed to do in the perfection with which God created it. Today, we often drift away from the body's natural state, but the path forward is to realign and come back to that perfection.

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# Amino Pep Forte returns to Nigerian market through Seagreen Pharma

By Adebayo Oladejo

Seagreen Pharmaceuticals, a sister company of Greenlife Pharmaceuticals, has officially reintroduced Amino Pep Forte, the widely recognised amino acid and multivitamin supplement, at the recent 97th Annual National Conference of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN) in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

The relaunch, which took place during the first plenary session of the PSN event, underscores Seagreen's strategic commitment to enhancing access to essential health supplements across Nigeria.

During the unveiling, **Mrs Evelyn Okorie**, Marketing Manager of Seagreen Pharmaceuticals, expressed her excitement about re-establishing Amino Pep Forte in the Nigerian market. She highlighted the product's advanced formulation, which combines ten essential amino acids, multivitamins, and zinc, tailored to boost immune function, support post-surgical recovery, facilitate growth, and promote overall wellness for all age groups.

"Amino Pep Forte is truly a product for everyone—mama, papa, and *pikin*," Okorie remarked, emphasising the supplement's versatility in supporting immune health, cell regeneration, and quicker recovery. "With amino acids critical for protein synthesis and zinc aiding wound healing and reducing oxidative stress, Amino Pep Forte meets a variety of health needs, including managing chronic conditions like diabetes and hypertension."

Okorie assured PSN members



**Hajia Wosilatu Giwa, chairman, PCN Board, and Pharm. (Alh) Yaro Budah, former president, PSN, in a group photograph with Seagreen Pharma staff during the unveiling of Amino Pep.**

that Seagreen Pharmaceuticals is dedicated to addressing previous distribution challenges, ensuring that Amino Pep Forte becomes widely available nationwide. "Seagreen is committed to upholding the highest standards of quality and ensuring Amino Pep Forte is the first choice for amino acid and multivitamin supplementation in Nigeria," she added.

The relaunch received a strong endorsement from **Pharm. Hajia Wosilatu Giwa**, Chairman of the Pharmacy Council of Nigeria

(PCN), who praised the product's return and commended Seagreen Pharmaceuticals for its unwavering commitment to accessible, high-quality healthcare solutions.

"Today, I am delighted to reintroduce Amino Pep Forte, a brand trusted by Nigerian households and healthcare professionals alike," Giwa declared. "While it may have temporarily left the market, its legacy of quality and reliability endures. With Seagreen at the helm, Amino Pep Forte has not only been rebranded and repackaged but is now backed by

a company resolutely focused on meeting the healthcare needs of Nigerians."

Representing the PSN's vision, Giwa reiterated the Society's support for pharmaceuticals that advance public health, affirming that Amino Pep Forte aligns with this mission. "I am confident that Seagreen's dedication will ensure Amino Pep Forte reaches more homes, clinics, and pharmacies across Nigeria, contributing to a healthier population," she said.

To mark the relaunch, Giwa invited past and present PSN leaders to join in unveiling the product, as attendees enthusiastically chanted, "Amino Pep 10 over 10," celebrating its comprehensive amino acid profile and revitalised presence in the Nigerian market.

**Mr Wasiu Adelodun**, national sales manager of Seagreen Pharmaceuticals, also spoke during the event, affirming that Amino Pep Forte is ready to reclaim its position as a trusted supplement. "With this reintroduction, Amino Pep Forte will once again deliver essential nutrients to support immunity, recovery, and overall health for Nigerians of all ages," Adelodun stated.

The unveiling ceremony included a group photograph featuring **Pharm. Hajia Wosilatu Giwa**, chairman of PCN, **Pharm. (Alh) Yaro Budah**, former PSN president, and members of the Seagreen Pharmaceuticals team.

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## Usifoh, Ohuabunwa, others applaud Geneith's unveiling of seven new products

By Adebayo Oladejo

Prominent figures in Nigeria's pharmaceutical industry, including Prof. Cyril Usifoh, the immediate past president of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), and Mazi Sam Ohuabunwa, a former PSN president, have commended Geneith Pharmaceuticals for the launch of seven new products. The unveiling took place during the 97th Annual PSN Conference held in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, and was lauded as a significant step forward in addressing Nigeria's healthcare challenges.

The newly introduced products—Sitanom-50/1000, Larykul-Plus, Boneflex Forte, Celoxigen-200, Klinfast Forte, Vildamet-50/1000, and Ceflonac ER 200—were described as innovative solutions to meet diverse therapeutic needs. Attendees celebrated Geneith's commitment to improving health outcomes through quality pharmaceuticals.

Speaking at the event, Prof. Usifoh praised Geneith for its unwavering dedication to producing high-quality medications. He remarked that the company's consistent efforts to enhance healthcare through innovative products reflect the type of progress needed to elevate the industry. He noted that the introduction of these products demonstrates Geneith's commitment to improving lives and setting higher industry standards, calling it a vital contribution to the well-being of Nigerians.

Mazi Ohuabunwa, a former Chairman and CEO of Pfizer Nigeria and Neimeth Pharmaceuticals, also commended Geneith's focus on quality and innovation. He highlighted the company's impressive track record, recalling its early successes, such as the introduction of one of the first malaria test kits in the Nigerian market and the widely trusted Camosunate.

He further noted Geneith's evolution from food importation to pharmaceutical franchise operations, contract manufacturing, and now local production. Ohuabunwa stressed the importance of maintaining quality and reputation in the pharmaceutical industry, urging other companies to follow Geneith's example in prioritising integrity and product efficacy.

Other industry leaders also shared their perspectives on Geneith's contributions. Pharm. Bede Aguocha Anyanwu, deputy director of pharmaceutical services and head of paediatric outpatient/emergency pharmacy at the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital (UUTH), highlighted the proven effectiveness of Geneith's products in clinical settings. He affirmed that the positive outcomes observed in patients are proof of the company's commitment to delivering reliable and high-



L-R: Pharm. Judith Udeh, principal manager (marketing) and head of Hospital and Institutional Business for Geneith Pharmaceuticals; Mazi Sam Ohuabunwa, former president, PSN, and Pharm. Abimbola Bowoto, assistant general manager of Sales and Marketing at Geneith Pharma, at the unveiling ceremony.



L-R: Pharm. Bede Aguocha Anyanwu, deputy director of pharmaceutical services and head, paediatric outpatient/emergency pharmacy, UUTH; Pharm. Judith Udeh, principal manager (marketing) and head of Hospital and Institutional Business for Geneith; Pharm. (Mrs) Emem N. Edet, dep director of Pharmaceutical Services, General Hospital, Etim Ekpo; Pharm. Nsikak Edet Effiong, deputy director, UUTH; Pharm. Abimbola Bowoto, assistant general manager of Sales and Marketing, Geneith, and Joseph Udeme, medical rep, Geneith, at the unveiling ceremony.

quality medicines.

Similarly, Pharm. Nsikak Edet Effiong, Local Organising Committee chairman for the Ibom 2024 PSN Conference and deputy director of pharmaceutical services at UUTH, praised Geneith for its adherence to the principles of quality, affordability, and accessibility, aligning with Nigeria's national drug policy.

Effiong also announced that the Akwa Ibom State PSN had honoured Geneith Pharmaceuticals with an award for being the "Most Innovative Pharmaceutical Company." This recognition was based on

Geneith's dedication to creating products that balance cost-effectiveness with efficacy.

Expressing her pride in the company's achievements, Pharm. Judith Udeh, principal manager (Marketing) and head of hospital and institutional business for Geneith, described the seven new products as milestones that reaffirm Geneith's reputation for innovation. She noted that the validation from industry leaders underscores the company's commitment to quality and affordability.

Adding to this, Pharm. Abimbola Bowoto, assistant

general manager of sales and marketing at Geneith, explained that the strategic unveiling of these products during the PSN Conference aimed to showcase Geneith's leadership in the industry.

Bowoto emphasised Geneith's unique approach to balancing quality, affordability, and availability, which she said strengthens the company's standing as a trusted provider of essential medicines. The launch follows the company's earlier success with Coatal Forte Soft Gelatin Capsules, a formulation of artemether and lumefantrine introduced just months ago.

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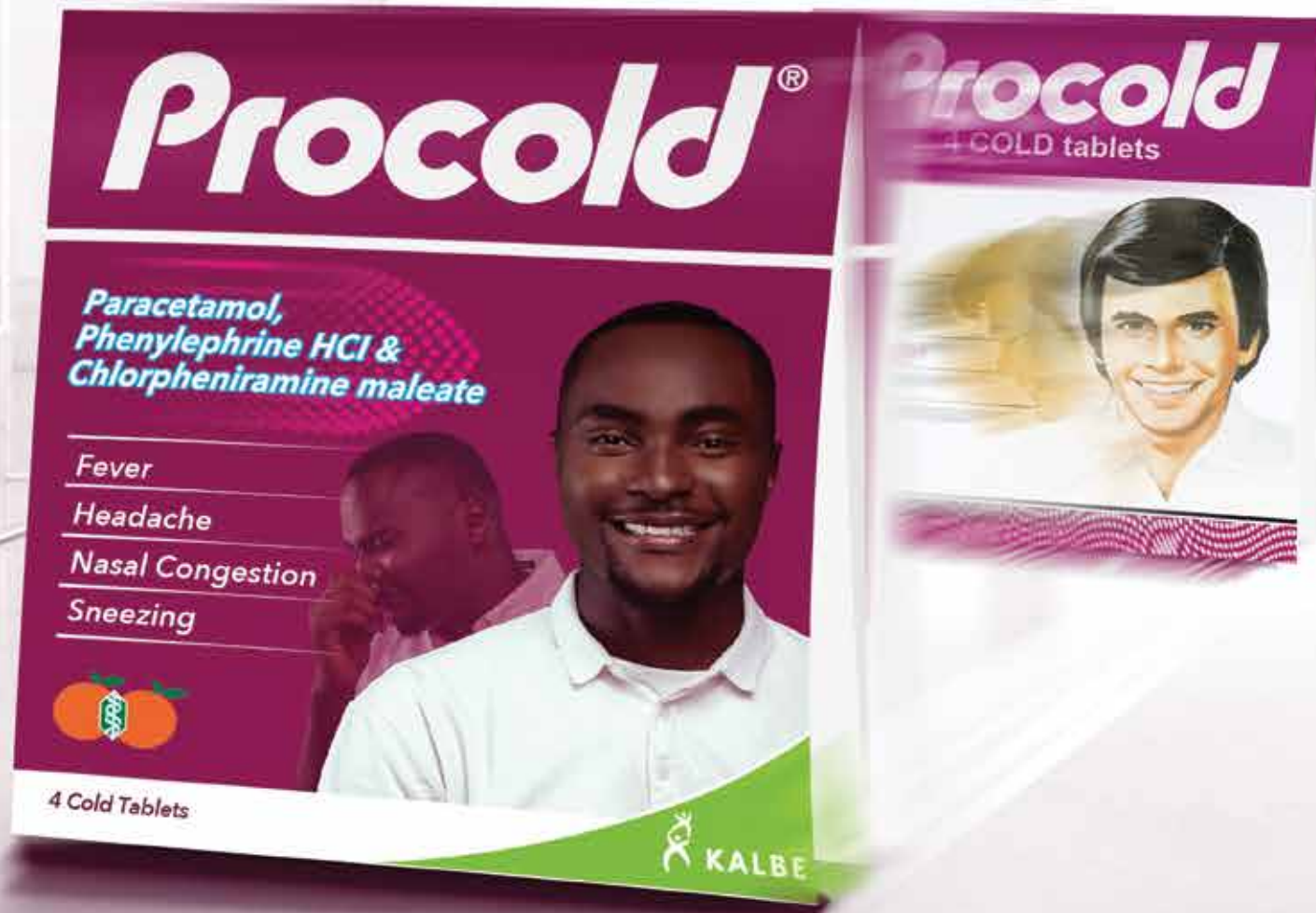




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# EVA Pharma will make diabetes medications available and affordable to Nigerians – Country Manager

The management of diabetes and its complications has been made easier with the launch of three cutting-edge products by EVA Pharma Nigeria. The official launch of the products took place at Radisson Blu, Ikeja, Lagos, on 15 November, 2024. The highly attended event witnessed presentations by renowned experts in endocrine medicine such as Professor Femi Fasanmade, Dr Bolanle Okunowo, Dr Israel Akinmokun, and Dr Yunde Oloyede, among others. In this exclusive interview with **PATRICK IWELUNMOR**, Country Manager of EVA Pharma Nigeria, Pharm. David Otokpa, sheds more light on the event, EVA Pharma's mission in Nigeria, and salient issues in the management of diabetes.

## Please give us an overview of what is happening here today

Eva Pharma has existed for several years. Of course, we have a heritage dating back to 1917—over a hundred years ago. We only became incorporated in Nigeria as recently as 2022 because the company's management decided to focus on sub-Saharan Africa. The major challenge people in sub-Saharan Africa are grappling with is the lack of access to quality medicines and one of the reasons for this is the cost problem. If you want to help patients in Africa, you have to tackle the cost problem. There are quality medicines in the pharmacies in this part of the world but the problem is the cost. Most people in the region cannot afford these medicines so Eva Pharma is concerned about this and is working to stop the trend.

Eva Pharma is present in up to 10 therapeutic areas. We intend to be present in Nigeria in these therapeutic areas but right now, with NAFDAC registration, we are only present in endocrinology – diabetes, metabolic diseases, and virology. We intend to be in a lot more areas. Our presence is felt in many continents and over 70 countries. The quality of our products shows that we operate with the highest standards. We are replicating the same standard in Africa and this is why we want to try as much as possible to address the cost problem so that patients here can afford our products. Thinking about affordability has become our primary goal, especially knowing that we are among the low-income countries of the world. As a pharmaceutical company, we have to work with partners like doctors, nurses, distributors (Asene Laborex and Chi Pharma), etc. For this reason, we are assembling here today to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the unveiling of our diabetes management products. We want to ensure that Nigerian patients get the same quality of medicine that is obtainable in the developed countries of the world. With this launch, we are announcing to the world that our quality pharmaceutical products can be accessed at very affordable prices in Nigeria.

## From where did Eva Pharma originate?

Eva Pharma originated from Africa, Egypt to be precise. It did not spread into sub-Saharan Africa immediately. Of course, with continuous investments since the time of its formation, different entities began to be established over the years, Eva Pharma spread to Europe, North America, etc., before landing in sub-Saharan Africa. When you are out there in other parts of the world, you must always remember that this is our home – this is Africa. The spirit is to ensure that our quality medicines that are being used in developed



Pharm. David Otokpa

countries are made affordable back home in Africa because as they say, charity begins at home.

## Are you manufacturing locally and don't you think local manufacturing should be considered a matter of national emergency?

We are looking forward to manufacturing locally. In fact, we are discussing with a state government in that regard. As of today, we have three factories in Egypt and one in Saudi Arabia which manufacture for Europe and other parts of the world. We are also in talks with the regulatory

agencies and all the relevant bodies. But you know that the type of factories we are talking about are very massive. I am talking of factories that can produce one million pharmaceutical products every day. With such a capacity in mind, we cannot establish our factories overnight in Nigeria. If you wait until you can complete setting up such a massive factory before wanting to help the Nigerian patients then you would be out of order. Land acquisition coupled with the legal documentation/procedures in Nigeria will require a great deal of time. We have started the process but before it comes to fruition, let the Nigerian patient benefit from our products

## The diabetes segment in Nigeria is highly competitive. I know a couple of pharmaceutical companies manufacturing products along this line. How do you hope to navigate the competition in this segment?

Whenever we come into any market, we do so with the intention to dominate. We are not coming with the mindset that there are giants in the market because we know what we have. The reality is that we acknowledge the fact that other companies are doing well even before we came into

sub-Saharan Africa but you will be surprised that we collaborate with some of them. We are currently manufacturing for some of the big names you cannot even imagine. We believe in synergy with existing entities because we see competition differently by leveraging what others have done to make the patient benefit. Competition for us is not to pursue those we met out of the market. They should be there because they are helping the market. They can even help us too. Competition creates flexibility in pricing, quality and affordability and these are some of our targets towards ensuring that the patient benefits from our product offerings. There are big names we are going to be working with side-by-side. However, the interesting thing is that we are all working towards the same goal – patient care and satisfaction.

## In a nutshell, tell us about the products you are unveiling today.

The three products we are launching today are primarily for the management and treatment of different forms of metabolic diseases and their complications. The Gliptus Plus (Vildagliptine 50 mg + Chlorhydrate de Metformine 1000 mg) is mainly for the management of hyperglycemia – high blood sugar. Hyperglycemia leads to certain complications. For the majority of the people you see who have diabetes, it is not high blood sugar that kills them but the complications. People complain of numbness, and tingling sensation in their legs and before you know it, their legs are to be amputated. Even after amputation, there can be other problems. You remember the popular Nollywood actor who died after he was amputated. We are not only here to treat the condition but to also treat the complications. Diabetic neuropathy is a very serious issue that can cause a lot of problems. Neuropathy affects other vital organs like the kidney. It can also lead to irreversible blindness. When someone is treating diabetes and also trying to prevent the possible complications, you have a holistic approach. Diabetic neuropathy has no treatment option in Nigeria. What you have is a combination of painkillers or supplements. To manage this condition, we have developed a product known as Thiotacid (Acide thioctique 600 mg). For Hyperuricemia, we have a product known as Donifoxate (Febuxosol 40 mg). These drugs are very effective and we have decided to make them accessible to Nigerians at affordable prices.

## What is the message of hope for sufferers of diabetes?

We want them to know that even though diabetes is considered a very expensive disease to manage, they should not worry as we are making it affordable even in this harsh economy. There is hope for them to live their normal lives without fear. Even though insulin is very expensive, they should not worry because very soon, our insulin will arrive at very affordable prices.

**We believe in synergy with existing entities because we see competition differently by leveraging what others have done to make the patient benefit. Competition for us is not to pursue those we met out of the market. They should be there because they are helping the market. They can even help us too. Competition creates flexibility in pricing, quality and affordability and these are some of our targets towards ensuring that the patient benefits from our product offerings.**





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# NAFDAC, Customs sign MoU to combat illicit drugs, foods, healthcare products

By Ranmilowo Ojalumo

The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) have formalised a strategic partnership by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at safeguarding Nigeria's public health and national security.

The MoU was signed on 14 November 2024, during the second day of the Comptroller-General of Customs' 2024 Conference, held at the Congress Hall of the Transcorp Hilton, Abuja.

The Comptroller-General of Customs, Bashir Adewale Adeniyi, described the agreement as the culmination of years of dedicated dialogue and coordination between the two agencies. He highlighted that this historic partnership is designed to enhance collaboration in tackling the influx of illicit pharmaceutical products and other harmful substances into Nigeria.

Emphasising the critical role of the Customs Service in protecting national security, public health, and safety, Adeniyi remarked, "What we have witnessed today is the result of several months, indeed years, of regular consultation between our two agencies. This partnership is a response to a significant challenge we are facing in the country."

Discussing the specific provisions of the MoU, Adeniyi noted that Article 2 of the document outlines a comprehensive scope of collaboration, particularly in intelligence sharing. He explained, "We'll be focusing on the exchange of intelligence between our agencies."

Adeniyi further elaborated,



NAFDAC's DG, Prof. Mojisola Adeyeye and Comptroller-General of Customs, Bashir Adewale Adeniyi during the signing of the MoU recently.

"There are times when, even at midnight, NAFDAC's Director-General sends intelligence to me, alerting us that a suspicious container may be arriving in the morning. This kind of real-time information flow is crucial to our joint efforts."

Reflecting on the strengthened collaborative bond between NAFDAC and Customs personnel, Adeniyi praised the hands-on commitment of officers at the nation's ports and border stations.

He stated, "When we declared a state of emergency at one of our ports, it was misunderstood

by some, but the reports we have received indicate that we are only scratching the surface of the issue of illicit pharmaceutical products entering our markets. It is time for all of us to collectively declare that this marks the beginning of the end. We are committed to protecting Nigeria and the future of our children from these dangerous products."

In her remarks, NAFDAC's Director-General, Professor Moji Adeyeye, described the signing of the MoU as a "significant milestone," highlighting the daily impact of the products regulated

by her agency on Nigerians.

She stated, "This partnership is crucial for all of us because we consume at least two of our regulated products every day—food and healthcare items. The goal is to ensure that the food, drugs, and healthcare products we consume are safe and of the highest quality."

Adeyeye expressed concern over the threats posed by unregulated and illicit products to national security, noting that certain approved chemicals can be misused by criminals and terrorists. She stressed that this development is of

national importance.

She also lamented the existence of ghost companies that are not listed in the agency's records but assured that the MoU marks the beginning of the end for such practices.

The NAFDAC DG expressed her appreciation for the close partnership with Customs officers, underscoring that the initiative goes beyond individual interests and agencies. She emphasised, "This is not about NAFDAC, nor is it about Adeyeye or Adeniyi. It is about safeguarding the future of our country."

## Odukoya urges FG action on rising drug costs, counterfeiting, chronic disease management

By Adebayo Oladejo

Pharm. Taofik Odukoya, a leading Nigerian pharmacist and founder of Vanguard Pharmacy—a prominent chain of retail pharmacies with 11 branches nationwide—has called on the Federal Government to address critical challenges affecting community pharmacies. These include escalating drug costs, the menace of counterfeit medicines, and the increasing burden of chronic disease management.

Speaking during the opening ceremony of the 97th Annual National Conference of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN) in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Odukoya highlighted the pressing need for government intervention to ensure the sustainability of community pharmacies and enhance healthcare delivery across the country.

The Vanguard Pharmacy founder identified the rising cost of healthcare, particularly medications, as a significant barrier to accessing essential treatments for many Nigerians, especially those from low-income backgrounds. He urged the Federal Government to implement affordable pricing policies and provide support to local pharmacies to ensure equitable access to essential medicines.

"We need the government to facilitate the creation of a more cost-effective healthcare system. Only through strategic intervention can we ensure that essential medicines are affordable for everyone," Odukoya



Pharm. Taofik Odukoya  
Founder, Vanguard Pharmacy

stated.

Odukoya also bemoaned the proliferation of counterfeit drugs, which jeopardise patient safety and erode trust in the pharmacy profession. He called on the government to bolster regulatory frameworks and enforcement mechanisms to curb the circulation of fake medicines in Nigeria.

"The issue of counterfeit drugs is rampant and remains a major safety concern. We need more robust laws and better enforcement to protect Nigerians from the dangers of fake medicines," he noted.

Odukoya disclosed that, to combat this issue, Vanguard

Pharmacy has taken proactive measures, such as sourcing directly from authorised distributors and employing drug verification processes. Odukoya, however, stressed that systemic change requires greater government involvement, including the creation of a national database and improved drug traceability systems.

"At Vanguard, we're committed to the fight against counterfeit drugs. Ensuring patient safety is central to our mission," he affirmed.

Odukoya further addressed the increasing burden of chronic diseases like diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular conditions on Nigeria's healthcare system.

While community pharmacies, including Vanguard, play a vital role in managing these conditions through services like Medication Therapy Management (MTM) and Disease Management Programmes (DMPs), he emphasised the need for government intervention to scale these efforts.

"Chronic diseases are on the rise, and while community pharmacies can offer critical care, the government must take a leading role in expanding these services and ensuring that all Nigerians have access to them," Odukoya stated.

He also highlighted the importance of addressing the root causes of chronic diseases through

public health campaigns focused on prevention, education, and early detection.

Odukoya equally pointed out other challenges, including limited access to financing, a shortage of skilled workers, and regulatory hurdles, all of which impede the growth and effectiveness of community pharmacies.

"We need more government support to boost funding and create an environment that allows pharmacies to thrive," he urged. He also called for reforms to the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) to ensure better coverage for community pharmacy services.

"There is a need for reforms to ensure that community pharmacy services are better covered under NHIS," he argued, stressing that such changes would significantly improve healthcare delivery in Nigeria, particularly in underserved and rural areas.

Reiterating the vital role of community pharmacies in Nigeria's healthcare system, Odukoya called on the government to actively support these pharmacies in delivering essential services. He emphasised that with adequate support, community pharmacies could drive transformative change in the country's healthcare sector.

"The government must play a more active role in supporting community pharmacies to ensure they can deliver essential healthcare services," he said.

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

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CVD: Cardiovascular disease | LDL-C: Low-density lipoprotein cholesterol  
 1. Clin Med Insights Cardiol. 2012; 6: 17-33.; 2. JAMA 2007 Mar 28;297(12):1344-53.;  
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 4. ACC/AHA CLINICAL PRACTICE GUIDELINE; Circulation 2019; 140(11): e596-e646.



# Implementing women's sexual and reproductive health rights

By Temitope Obayendo

Decades ago, in most African settings, conversations around women's sexuality and reproductive health rights were primarily controlled by men. The patriarchal nature of these societies denied women access to information and the ability to make informed decisions about their reproductive health. Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, is not exempt from this deeply entrenched culture, which subjects women's health rights to male validation rather than recognising them as fundamental human rights.

However, at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994, a paradigm shift occurred. It highlighted the need to address the reproductive health needs of individuals and couples as a key approach to improving quality of life and stabilising the global population.

The ICPD's conclusions align with the World Health Organisation (WHO)'s concept of reproductive health rights, defined as legal rights and freedoms related to reproduction and reproductive health. These rights include access to safe, effective, and affordable reproductive healthcare; the freedom to make informed reproductive choices; the right to express sexuality safely and with dignity; the ability to decide if, how, and when to have children; protection from coerced sterilisation or contraception; and the right to equality and non-discrimination.

While reproductive rights are critical for achieving population, health, and development goals, they are a subset of sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR), which encompass the physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being related to sexuality. SRHR are an integral aspect of universal health coverage.

## The Nigerian situation

Interestingly, the Nigerian Constitution also recognises maternal health rights as a fundamental aspect of reproductive rights. Although there is no specific legislation, Section 17 of the 1999 Constitution mandates the government to ensure adequate medical and health facilities for all and safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of all persons. The Constitution also protects the right to life.

Despite these legal provisions, cultural practices and belief systems in some Nigerian communities continue to violate women's health rights with impunity. While practices like female genital mutilation (FGM) are gradually declining due to widespread campaigns, many aspects of reproductive



Mrs Iremidayo Yusuf



Mrs Pamilerin Fatai



Mrs Oluwaseun Ogunseyi



Mrs Celestina Potan

health—such as safe motherhood and family planning—are still not widely regarded as fundamental rights in many Nigerian households.

## Even with sixth pregnancy, my husband refuses family planning – Ogunseyi

Interviews with nursing mothers in Makoko, an informal settlement in Lagos State, confirmed the findings of a recent Statista report that highlighted a poor contraceptive prevalence rate of 18 per cent among Nigerian women. Many women disclosed their inability to use any form of contraception due to their husbands' refusal.

One particularly troubling story came from Mrs Oluwaseun Ogunseyi, a mother of five and heavily pregnant with her sixth child. She expressed frustration at her husband's insistence on having more children and his rejection of family planning (FP). "This is my sixth pregnancy," she said. "I tried family planning once, but my husband was not happy about it because he wants more children. Most of my friends are in the same situation—they cannot

adopt family planning because their husbands disapprove. We've been informed about the benefits, but we need doctors to address the men directly to help them understand the importance of giving their wives time to recover fully before the next pregnancy."

## I desire a three-year gap for my children, but my husband won't agree – Fatai

Mrs Pamilerin Fatai shared her wish to have at least three years between her children but doubted her husband would support this decision. "This is my first child, who is just a month old," she said. "I've heard about family planning and know people who use it. I would like to wait three years before having another baby, but convincing my husband will be difficult. I think health centres and the government should organise seminars for men to educate them about why family planning is necessary."

## Women's negligence and complaints about family planning

For some women, personal

experiences and health issues have influenced their decision to avoid family planning. Mrs Mariam Adeniyi, who had her second child after 21 years of delay, explained, "I don't think I need family planning anymore. My first child is already 21 years old, and this baby came by accident. At 44, I don't think I'll conceive again."

Similarly, Mrs Iremidayo Yusuf, a mother of four, recounted adverse effects from her previous use of family planning methods. "I experienced bloating and prolonged menstrual bleeding. Although the clinic gave me medication to address these issues, I'm hesitant to try it again."

## I don't know about family planning, and my spouse won't allow it – Potan

Ignorance and fear of marital conflict are also significant barriers to family planning. Mrs Celestina Potan, a new mother, expressed her desire to have a five-year gap before her next child but admitted she lacked sufficient information about family planning. "My baby will be one year old by January 2025. I've been advised against family planning by some of my neighbours, and I'm scared to discuss it with my husband because he won't support it. If I go for it without his knowledge, it might lead to problems in my marriage."

## Experts advocate gender parity in advancing reproductive rights

Medical sociologists argue that family planning is an essential component of public health, as reflected in its inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3.7 and 5.6 on sexual and reproductive health. However, gender inequality remains a significant barrier to its adoption.

Researchers Amiesimaka Obreniokibo Ibifubara and Shahin Payam, in their study "Family Planning Policy and Gender in Nigeria: A Thematic Analysis of the Government's Health Policy Perspective", emphasise the importance of empowering women financially, socially, and educationally. They argue that empowered women are more likely to make informed health decisions, including the use of family planning methods.

Despite several initiatives to promote gender equality, Nigeria ranked 130th out of 146 countries in the Global Gender Gap Report 2023. This ranking highlights the urgent need for governments at all levels to intensify gender equality campaigns and ensure women can exercise their reproductive health rights without societal or cultural constraints.

Addressing these challenges is essential for advancing women's sexual and reproductive health rights in Nigeria and safeguarding the lives of countless women and children.

**Medical sociologists argue that family planning is an essential component of public health, as reflected in its inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3.7 and 5.6 on sexual and reproductive health. However, gender inequality remains a significant barrier to its adoption**



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## Ayóo, nuts for fever and more

By Pharm. Ngozika Okoye MSc, MPH, FPCPharm  
(Nigeria Natural Medicine Development Agency)  
Email: ngozikaokoye@yahoo.com



### Fam. Caesalpiniaeae)

**C**aesalpinia bonduc (Fam. Caesalpiniaeae) is a prickly shrub with grey, hard, globular seeds and a smooth, shiny surface. It is commonly known as Bonduc nut, physic nut, yellow nicker nut, grey nicker nut, grey marble nuts, or fever nut in English. It is called *yan yan dara* in Hausa, *ayóo* or *ruwo* in Yoruba, *nnamake* or *atak ake* in Togo, and *huka* or *eze-ogu* among the Igbo in southeast Nigeria.

### Constituents

The seeds contain significant chemical constituents, including triterpenoids, flavonoids, glycosides, saponins, amino acids, tannins, and alkaloids. Some amino acids in the seed kernel include

aspartic acid, lysine, glycine, leucine, histidine, isoleucine, serine, butyric acid, tyrosine, and citrulline. The primary glycoside in fever nut is bonducin. The fatty oil from the kernel consists of stearic, palmitic, oleic, linolenic, and linocerac acids.

### Preparations

*Caesalpinia bonduc* is available in the form of roots, leaves, fruits, and seeds, which may be used dried or as powders or pastes. The powder can be mixed with warm water, blended into a smoothie, or sprinkled over a salad.

### Pharmacological actions and medicinal uses

Studies reveal that *Caesalpinia*

*bonduc* has antipyretic, antibacterial, antidiarrheal, antihelminthic, antiasthma, anticancer, immunomodulatory, diuretic, antifungal, antifilarial, adaptogenic, and anxiolytic properties. Traditionally, fever nut powder mixed with pepper is used to treat indigestion and abdominal pain, while the seed paste is applied for skin ailments, particularly for hydrocele. In some medicinal practices, it is also used to treat leprosy.

The seed powder is traditionally used to expel worms, treat fever (especially malaria), relieve gum issues including boils and inflammation, alleviate cough and cold, ease indigestion, and address skin problems. It is also taken to promote liver health and treat liver disorders.

In gynaecology, fever nut serves as a uterine stimulant and is traditionally used to ease painful periods, manage polycystic ovarian syndrome, and cleanse the uterus after childbirth. Fever nut reduces oestrogen levels by inhibiting oestrogen secretion, which aids in managing polycystic ovarian syndrome.

Research shows that fever nut can inhibit mechanisms leading to asthma, block glucose absorption to reduce blood sugar spikes, and help relieve fever and inflammation, making it widely used in malaria treatment. It is also employed for skin diseases, boils, and wound care.

The water extract of the leaves

effectively expels worms and treats diarrhoea. Studies on leaf extracts have shown reductions in tumour size, tumour cell volume, and cell count in rats with carcinoma. The leaves and juice or paste are used to treat smallpox, elephantiasis, liver diseases, and to reduce body odour. Fever nut is also beneficial in easing toothache.

Topically, fever nut paste helps relieve abdominal flatulence and testicular swelling from hydrocele and trauma.

### Adverse effects

Due to its uterine contraction properties, fever nut is best avoided during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

### Economic uses and potentials

Fever nuts are used in jewellery and various board games. The plant can also be cultivated as a live fence. Fifty grams of *Caesalpinia bonduc* or approximately 25 unpierced seeds cost \$14.75. The oil extracted from the seeds is used in cooking and cosmetics. Fever nuts have commercial potential for cultivation, distribution, processing, and sales in the pharmaceutical, food, and cosmetics industries.

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Wild Turmeric (2019). 7 top medicinal uses and side effects of kalarchikai (fever nut). Available at: <https://wildturmeric.net/kalarchikai-medicinal-uses-side-effects-health-benefits/>.



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NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	STATE
1. Adebowale Adekunle	28/02/41	Lagos
2. Adeeko Luke Bolade	18/10/43	Ogun
3. Adefarasin Hebert Ade	1/04/37	Oyo
4. Adegoke Ayoola (Mrs)	7/01/39	Ondo
5. Adeleke Ebenezer	23/09/42	Kwara
6. Adelus-Adeluyi Julius (Prince)OFR	2/08/40	Ekiti
7. Adetona Samuel Olalekan	20/01/40	Oyo
8. Adeyemi Adekemi Olu (Mrs)	28/06/42	Ogun
9. Adimekwe Cyprian	20/04/44	Imo
10. Agbakwuru Evans O. P. (Prof.)	27/08/37	Imo
11. Aguwa Cletus Nze (Prof.)	24/11/42	Imo
12. Aina Obafunmi Claudius	26/07/44	Ogun
13. Ajisegiri Michael	23/04/44	Ondo
14. Akinfolajimi Moboluwaji	7/04/44	Edo
15. Akinkugbe Oludolapo Ibukun, CFR,	5/12/28	Ondo
16. Akubue Paul Iwegbunam (Prof.)	25/02/34	Anambra
17. Aluko Abiodun (Mrs)	29/12/43	Ogun
18. Amanerimi Alfred	11/05/42	Plateau
19. Amole Tunji (Chief)	12/10/43	Oyo
20. Amorha Kenneth Ezikeanyi	15/03/41	Enugu
21. Anohu Matthias C. (Dr)	30/06/40	Anambra
22. Anyafulu Lawrence Okwu	30/06/31	Anambra
23. Atasi Michael Chijioke (Sir, Dr)	12/05/31	Abia
24. Atueyi Ifeanyi (Sir)	1/10/39	Anambra
25. Ayeni Aderemilekun (Mrs)	19/08/44	Ogun
26. Ayodele Joko (Chief, Mrs)	3/10/35	Oyo
27. Azuiké Moses Chiedozi	21/08/38	Imo
28. Bankole Gabriel	24/08/41	Ogun
29. Basse Sebastian	25/06/41	Akwa Ibom
30. Brown Albert A.	28/03/38	Oyo
31. Chugbo Cyril Okwudi	22/12/35	Anambra
32. Daromosu Abdul Yekini (Alh.)	10/06/40	Kaduna
33. Egbuonu Douglas	30/01/39	Anambra
34. Ekpo Benjamin (Dr)	28/08/34	Akwa Ibom
35. Emafo Philip Onagwele OFR (Dr)	15/03/36	Edo
36. Emelifonwu Christopher	1/12/31	Delta
37. Enemmo Ben	9/08/37	Anambra
38. Enemmuo Ralph	29/04/42	Anambra
39. Eradiri Lambert ( Sir,Dr)	25/11/34	Bayelsa
40. Essien Etienne E. (Prof.)	18/01/33	Akwa Ibom
41. Ezegbo Albert	30/03/30	Anambra
42. Ezenwa George	22/11/42	Anambra
43. Falabi Olatunde (HRH)	20/01/35	Osun
44. Hugbo Peter Gbewa (Prof.)	15/09/39	Delta
45. Hunponu-Wusu Babatunde (Chief)	11/03/37	Lagos
46. Ibitoye David	30/12/38	Kwara
47. Imam Mustafa (Alh.)	15/06/37	Katsina
48. Inga, Atondo Tim	5/05/41	Benue
49. Jackson SDP	12/05/40	Bayelsa
50. Lahan Dotun (Dr)	7/11/43	Oyo
51. Lawal Oladele Karim	26/04/38	Kwara
52. Lawore Ronke Mrs	2/03/44	Ogun
53. Madueke Anthony	4/09/42	Anambra
54. Makinde Bayo (Chief)	14/01/35	Oyo
55. Morakinyo Olusegun	17/11/34	Oyo
56. Mustapha Bola Fatimah (Mrs)	13/07/44	Kwara
57. Nduka E. N.	10/11/43	Imo
58. Nwabunike Emmanuel S. C.	23/11/30	Anambra
59. Nwachukwu Cyprian	12/08/43	Anambra
60. Nwankwo Bruno Nnaemeka	15/09/39	Anambra
61. Nwoke Dick	15/11/33	Abia
62. Obasi John	15/09/39	Abia
63. Obianwu Hope (Prof.)	6/10/37	Anambra
64. Obiorah Bona (Prof.)	21/02/41	Anambra
65. Odujobi Francis FineBoy	18/10/41	Ogun
66. Ogunbona Festus Adio (Prof)	30/10/44	Ogun
67. Ogundana Olu Oluropo (Mrs)	27/10/44	Ekiti
68. Ogundare Jacob Bamidele	23/07/40	Oyo
69. Ogunyemi Babatunde Adegoke	15/11/34	Ogun
70. Okeke Cornelius	17/09/40	Imo
71. Okoli, Stella (Dr) OON	30/07/44	Anambra
72. Okolo Dennis	13/03/34	Anambra
73. Okonkwo Eugene	20/03/39	Anambra
74. Okoye Ebenezer Ifeanyi	21/11/38	Anambra
75. Okunoren Patience (Dame)	21/06/39	Ogun
76. Olaniyi A. A. (Prof.)	25/08/40	Ekiti
77. Olarogun Joe Oyewole (Asiwaju)	18/05/38	Kwara
78. Olawore Josiah Olafaju	8/07/44	Oyo
79. Olawoye Babatunde	27/11/41	Ondo
80. Olayinka Olu (Chief)	17/11/34	Ondo
81. Olukunle Bola G.	23/08/44	Ogun
82. Oluremekun Ezekiel Adeyinka	23/07/38	Ogun
83. Olurinola Philip (Prof.)	6/10/39	Kwara
84. Oluwadiya James Olabisi (Prof.)	2/10/42	Ekiti
85. Oluwasanmi Florence	29/06/43	Edo
86. Omokpo William	12/12/41	Edo
87. Omotosho Adebowale (Dr, Sir)	29/07/36	Oyo
88. Onuigbo Dick Obichereihe	31/12/24	Abia
89. Osadolor E. A. (Sir)	8/07/36	Edo
90. Osinoki Deji (Sir)	6/03/41	Ogun
91. Osioma Ngozi Dorah (Mrs)	15/03/34	Anambra
92. Osuide Gabriel Ediale (Prof.)	15/03/35	Edo
93. Osundeko Olaide	5/06/40	Ogun
94. Otiko Adedayo Francis	4/06/43	Ondo
95. Oyedele Yetunde (Mrs)	3/04/42	?
96. Soyawo, Oluwemimo	8/12/43	Ogun
97. Sunmonu Kike (Alhaja)	4/12/43	Lagos
98. Talabi Abimbola	4/07/39	Ogun
99. Tayo Fola (Prof.)	29/02/44	Lagos
100. Udeala Oleka (Prof.)	28/09/40	Abia
101. Udeoye Emma ( Dr)	6/11/44	Anambra
102. Ugbaga Osu Ugbaga	1/09/43	Abia
103. Unigwe Felix (Dr)	19/05/34	Anambra
104. Uwakwe Charles	20/10/26	Imo
105. Williams, Alao Olaleye	25/12/40	Ogun
106. Yisa Barnabas	2/07/41	Niger
107. Yusuf Mufuatu	12/12/37	Ogun

## Pounds, Oladigbolu, Adebakin urge pharmacists to adopt value-driven care

By Adebayo Oladejo



Pharm. Wale Oladigbolu, immediate past chairman, ACPN, and Pharm. (Mrs) Abimbola Adebakin, chief executive officer, Advantage Health Africa, at the first plenary session of the 97th PSN national conference in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

In a bid to address the persistent challenges affecting healthcare in Nigeria, prominent pharmacists and stakeholders at the recent 97th Annual Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN) Conference in Uyo have urged their peers to embrace a value-based approach to healthcare, particularly in chronic disease management and preventive care.

During the first plenary session of the conference, chaired by Hajia Wosilat Giwa, chairman of the Pharmacy Council of Nigeria (PCN) Board, distinguished speakers emphasised the urgent need for a transformative shift in pharmacy practice across the country. The speakers included Dr Teresa Pounds, chairman of the West African Society of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (WASPEN); Pharm. Wale Oladigbolu, immediate past national chairman of the Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACP); and Pharm. Abimbola Adebakin, CEO of Advantage Health Africa.

Setting the tone for the session, Hajia Giwa highlighted the transformative potential of digital innovation in reshaping Nigeria's healthcare landscape. She advocated for the adoption of tools such as electronic health records, telemedicine, and artificial intelligence to enhance healthcare access and efficiency, particularly in underserved communities. "Digital transformation can drive operational efficiency, reduce costs, and foster economic growth, ultimately leading to a healthier and more prosperous society," she stated.

As the lead speaker, Dr Pounds presented a comprehensive model for value-based care, urging a departure from the traditional fee-for-service model in favour of a system centred on patient outcomes. She explained how value-based care could enable pharmacists, especially those in community settings, to offer medication therapy management, personalised wellness consultations, and patient-centred care, ultimately lowering costs while increasing patient satisfaction.

Pounds introduced the Management Service Organisation (MSO) model, which separates administrative functions from clinical services, allowing pharmacists to focus more on direct patient care.

She further elaborated on the success of a pilot programme involving pharmacists using Trust Rx technology, a system that facilitates patient assessments and continuous health monitoring, especially for managing chronic conditions like hypertension and diabetes. She encouraged Nigerian pharmacists to consider adopting similar value-based models to enhance healthcare delivery nationwide.

Pharm. Oladigbolu, in his remarks, underscored the pivotal role of community pharmacies in Nigeria, where over 70 per cent of citizens rely on the private sector for healthcare. He argued that community pharmacies are uniquely positioned to fill the gaps left by underfunded primary healthcare facilities, particularly in terms of accessibility and affordability. He highlighted recent policy developments, such as the federal government's endorsement of pharmacy-administered vaccination services, which have empowered community pharmacies to provide essential healthcare services.

Oladigbolu further emphasised the need for pharmacists to evolve from mere dispensers of medication to proactive healthcare providers. He advocated for pharmacists to acquire new skills in areas such as point-of-care testing and chronic disease management. "This transformation will not only benefit patients but also enable pharmacists to advance in their careers through continuous upskilling and stakeholder engagement," he noted.

Pharm. Adebakin, in her contribution, urged pharmacists to embrace their roles as influential healthcare providers, describing them as "princes" within the sector. She encouraged pharmacists to leverage their unique advantage of direct patient access to deliver personalised, value-based care.

Adebakin also highlighted the growing influence of social media as an untapped resource for pharmacists to share valuable health insights and engage with wider audiences, especially in the realm of chronic disease management.

"We must move beyond competing on price alone," Adebakin advised, stressing the potential for pharmacists to implement subscription models for ongoing care, thereby fostering deeper, long-lasting relationships with their patients. Her message was clear: "Tell yourself, I am valuable," she concluded, urging pharmacists to fully embrace their roles as vital healthcare influencers in Nigeria.

In a unified call to action, the speakers urged Nigerian pharmacists to collectively adopt value-based care practices, embrace digital integration, and commit to continuous professional development, all aimed at delivering high-quality care to communities and meeting the country's evolving healthcare needs.





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## PharmacyPlus launches DUOSTAM to fight prostate enlargement in Nigeria

By Adebayo Oladejo

In a strategic move to provide effective relief for Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH), PharmacyPlus Limited has launched DUOSTAM, a dual-action medication combining Tamsulosin (0.4mg) and Dutasteride (0.5mg). The event held during the opening ceremony of the 97th Annual Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN) Conference in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

DUOSTAM, designed to manage BPH symptoms and reduce the likelihood of surgical intervention, received strong endorsements from medical experts and industry leaders present at the event.

Prof. Ikenna Nnabugwu, a consultant urologist at the University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital, Enugu, led the product introduction, emphasising DUOSTAM's clinical importance in treating prostate enlargement—a condition that becomes increasingly common as men age.

“Benign prostatic hyperplasia is a natural aspect of ageing but can significantly impair quality of life by obstructing urinary flow. DUOSTAM offers a safe, effective approach to relieve these symptoms, delay surgical intervention, and improve overall well-being,” Nnabugwu stated.

The medication combines an alpha-1 blocker and a 5-alpha



A cross-section of dignitaries displaying the unveiled DUOSTAM at the Opening Ceremony of the 97th PSN Conference in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

reductase inhibitor to target BPH symptoms, including bladder outlet obstruction, urinary retention, and discomfort. “By merging Tamsulosin and Dutasteride, DUOSTAM offers a comprehensive treatment option, slowing disease progression while mitigating the need for surgery,” he explained.

Addressing common misconceptions about BPH, the consultant urologist noted that

many Nigerians confuse the terms “prostate” and “prostrate” and often associate the prostate with illness. “The prostate is a vital organ essential for fertility. Its benign enlargement is a common consequence of ageing. DUOSTAM provides a clinically validated, non-surgical solution for managing these symptoms,” he clarified.

Pharm. Iyke Aneke, head of marketing at PharmacyPlus,

highlighted the company's commitment to improving health outcomes in Nigeria. He explained that DUOSTAM was developed to provide accessible and affordable relief for patients with BPH.

“DUOSTAM fills a critical gap by offering a medically approved treatment for BPH symptoms,” Aneke stated, adding that its formulation was the result of extensive research to ensure its efficacy in diverse healthcare settings.

Prof. Cyril Usifoh, President of PSN, commended PharmacyPlus for its dedication to healthcare advancement, affirming that DUOSTAM aligns with PSN's mission to promote accessible and evidence-based treatments.

“This product is a welcome addition that we hope will serve as a vital resource for pharmacists and patients across the country,” Usifoh remarked.

The ceremony concluded with the formal unveiling of DUOSTAM, led by Dr Teresa Pounds and Pharm. Yaro Budah, amidst applause from attendees.

## Macdiptoy Consulting inducts first set of graphopharmacists

- Honours Atueyi with Distinguished Personality Award

By Nneoma Kalu

The evolution of graphopharmacy in Nigeria reached a significant milestone as Macdiptoy Consulting Limited inducted its inaugural batch of graphopharmacists. The event, held on 14 November at the Pharmanews office in Maryland, Lagos, combined a graduation ceremony with an induction, celebrating the integration of graphology into pharmacy practice to enhance healthcare delivery.

Graphopharmacy, a concept originated by Pharm. Oladipupo Macjob, uses handwriting analysis to identify and address health concerns, introducing a transformative approach to preventive healthcare in Nigeria.

During his presentation at the event, Macjob highlighted the revolutionary potential of graphopharmacy in community pharmacy practice, emphasising its therapeutic applications in improving conditions such as stroke recovery and mental health.

Explaining the concept of graphopharmacotherapy, Macjob described how specific handwriting exercises, termed “tools,” can benefit patients.

“You can write certain things—what we call tools in graphopharmacy—that can assist patients recovering from a stroke. For instance, encouraging stroke patients to write more can lead to visible improvements as their handwriting becomes smoother,” he said.

Macjob further elaborated on the brain-stimulating effects of writing, particularly for the elderly, stating, “We have discovered that elderly



L-R: Pharm. Mercy Adeolupo, Pharm. Eseosa Osemwegie, and Pharm. Olusegun Sanusi reading their oath of allegiance to graphopharmacy practice during the induction ceremony at Pharmanews Head Office, Lagos.

individuals have higher chances of living longer if they are encouraged to write regularly. Writing stimulates certain areas of the brain, promoting cognitive longevity.”

The event also honoured Pharm. (Sir) Ifeanyi Atueyi, the chairman of the occasion and publisher of *Pharmanews*, with the Distinguished Personality Award, in recognition of his lifelong contributions to Pharmacy and journalism. Atueyi, an octogenarian, praised the initiative as a historical achievement, commending Macjob for leveraging his God-given talent to create an innovative practice.

“No one has ever done this before in Nigeria,” Atueyi remarked. “Your determination and resilience have made this possible.”

Speaking on the special recognition given to him, the *Pharmanews* publisher said, “I am grateful to God for who I am today, and I thank you for honouring me.” Reflecting on his journey to success, he underscored the importance of excellent service as the foundation of achievement.

The ceremony witnessed the induction of Nigeria's first three graphopharmacists: Pharm. Mercy Adeolupo, Pharm. Eseosa Osemwegie, and Pharm. Olusegun Sanusi

Speaking on behalf of the inductees, Musbau highlighted the programme's role in equipping pharmacists to tackle health challenges with greater precision. Adeolupo expressed her pride in

being a pioneer and her commitment to advancing healthcare outcomes.

Pharm. Tolulope Ajayi, chairman of the Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN), Lagos Chapter, who was the guest speaker, lauded the graphopharmacy initiative as a ground-breaking advancement in pharmacy practice.

“Congratulations on being the first set of graphopharmacists in our country. This is a unique achievement,” he said.

Ajayi urged the inductees to maintain their enthusiasm and strive for continuous personal and professional growth. “Do not rest on your laurels. Keep the fire burning. Learning is lifelong, and every opportunity to grow must be embraced. We must keep learning until we leave this world.”

Representing the ACPN National Chairman, Pharm. (Mrs) Mary Omokhafa Ashore commended the programme for its alignment with global trends in holistic, preventive healthcare.

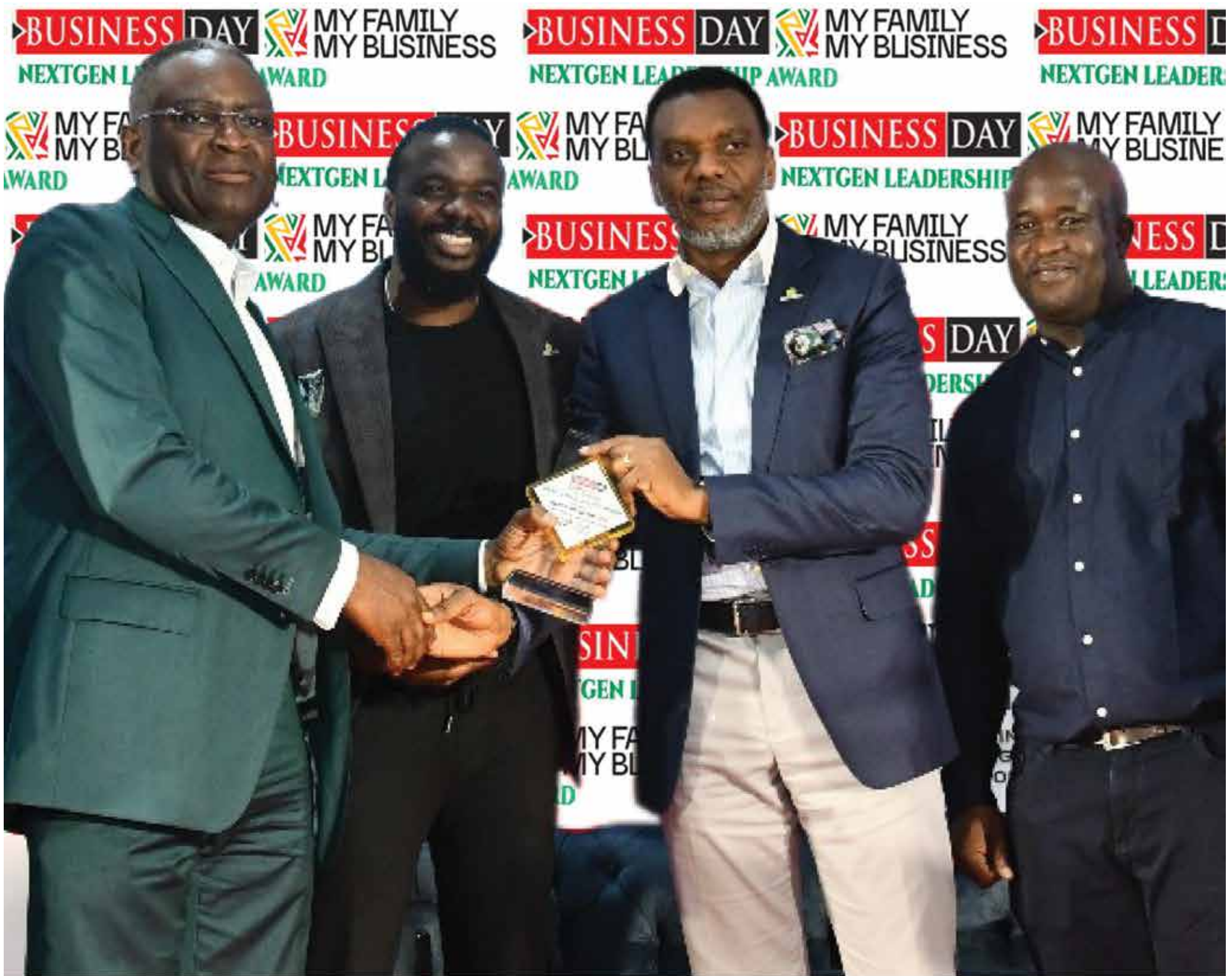
She noted, “This proactive approach demonstrates how we can manage healthcare holistically, identifying potential health challenges through the energy patterns manifested in handwriting. This early detection method has the potential to transform diagnosis and treatment, promoting wellness beyond conventional methods.”

The subsequent oath-taking ceremony highlighted the ethical standards of precision, care, and confidentiality integral to graphopharmacy. The inductees pledged to uphold these principles as they advance this innovative practice.

Oladipupo concluded the event by announcing plans for the next training session, scheduled for March 2025, while emphasising the need to raise awareness about graphopharmacy's benefits.

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## DAILY-NEED GROUP WINS THE NEXTGEN LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Daily-Need Group has been awarded the NEXTGEN LEADERSHIP AWARD, presented by the Business Day Newspaper in conjunction with the PWC during the Family Business Leadership Awards 2024 ceremony held at the Wheatbaker Hotels in Ikoyi on 17th October 2024.

This Award is another recognition of Daily-Need leadership strides, from generation to generation, in managing the health and wellbeing of Nigerians through trusted quality pharma and consumer products that have stood the test of times.



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# Unlocking your transformative leadership potential (3)

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

(Contd from last edition)

## 3.1. Understanding self-awareness

In a recent YouTube video, Brian G. Johnson, a renowned leadership expert, emphatically proclaimed self-awareness as the quintessential skill required for effective leadership. Roy Menig, another well-respected figure in the field, reinforced this belief by explaining how self-awareness plays a central role in personal and professional growth. Undoubtedly, it is clear that self-awareness holds immense significance in various realms. However, what does self-awareness truly entail? And why is it crucial to understand its profound impact?

Self-awareness refers to the ability to introspectively understand oneself by diligently monitoring and analysing one's inner thought processes, emotions, and behaviours. With heightened self-awareness, individuals gain the invaluable capacity to delve deep into their cognitive workings, achieving a comprehensive understanding of their strengths, weaknesses, and limitations. This insight is not confined to a surface-level comprehension; it extends to cultivating an intimate awareness of one's cognitive processes.

One of self-awareness's most widely acknowledged benefits is its role in creating a clearer perception of oneself. By actively engaging in self-reflection and introspection, individuals with high levels of self-awareness can align their actions and decisions with their deeply held beliefs and values. They possess an acute understanding of their aspirations, principles, and ambitions. Consequently, such individuals are empowered to make choices that align with their true desires, enabling them to seize opportunities they genuinely believe in while minimising the impact of threats that could impede an organisation's financial outcomes.

Scholars and experts have thoroughly examined various aspects of leadership effectiveness within this domain. Time and again, research has demonstrated that self-awareness serves as the bedrock upon which future leaders' talents are built. Individuals possessing heightened self-awareness are more likely to tap into their full potential, leveraging their strengths while acknowledging and addressing their weaknesses. Armed with deep self-understanding, these leaders can navigate complex challenges and inspire those around them.

Furthermore, the allure of neuroscience and its implications for effective leadership cannot be overlooked. Carlzon's groundbreaking concept of "human business" resonates deeply here, highlighting the significance of embracing our humanity in the business landscape. By developing a state of mindfulness rooted in self-awareness, leaders cultivate a deeper understanding of themselves and the people around them. This shift in perspective fosters a more humanistic mindset, promoting empathy, compassion, and inclusivity. The result is a virtuous cycle where organisations flourish, individuals thrive, and the overall business environment experiences sustainable growth.

In closing, the importance of self-awareness transcends mere theoretical discourse; it presents a compelling business case for organisations of all sizes. Leaders who possess a heightened sense of self-awareness not only enhance their personal growth and potential but also contribute immeasurably to the broader success of their companies. Recognising the value of self-awareness and harnessing its power is pivotal in fostering a harmonious and prosperous work environment, propelling businesses towards excellence and long-term success.

## 3.2. Developing emotional intelligence in personal and professional life

Emotional intelligence is an essential aspect of successful leadership and effective communication. It allows

leaders to gain a deeper understanding of their own emotions, as well as the emotions of those around them. This insight enables them to manage their emotions productively and constructively, thereby creating harmonious and efficient work environments. By being self-aware, leaders can accurately assess their strengths and weaknesses, empowering them to make informed decisions and take appropriate actions.

Furthermore, emotional intelligence plays a significant role in self-management. Leaders who possess this skill can regulate their emotions, preventing unnecessary outbursts or impulsive reactions. Rather than being controlled by their emotions, they have the capacity to master them, allowing them to remain calm and composed even in high-pressure situations. This self-control enables leaders to approach challenges and conflicts with a level-headed mindset, focusing on finding solutions rather than exacerbating problems.

Relationship management is another crucial aspect of emotional intelligence in leadership. Leaders who excel in this area possess strong interpersonal skills and are adept at building and maintaining positive relationships with their team members. They understand the importance of effective communication, active listening, and empathy. These leaders create a supportive and inclusive environment where collaboration and cooperation flourish, thereby enhancing productivity and success.

Moreover, emotional intelligence enhances social awareness. Leaders who possess this attribute are attuned to the emotions and needs of others. They can accurately perceive team dynamics and identify potential conflicts or issues. By considering the perspectives and feelings of their team members, these leaders make more informed decisions and implement strategies that support the well-being of the entire workforce.

Emotional intelligence is not only beneficial for leaders but also for the overall success of an organisation. When leaders prioritise emotional intelligence, they cultivate a positive organisational culture where employees feel valued and understood. This, in turn, leads to higher levels of employee engagement, satisfaction, and retention. Emotional intelligence fosters trust, loyalty, and team cohesion, ultimately driving the company towards its goals and objectives.

In conclusion, emotional intelligence is a fundamental aspect of effective leadership. By developing and honing their emotional intelligence skills, leaders can create a positive and productive work environment, build strong relationships with their team members, and make informed decisions that benefit both individuals and the organisation as a whole. In today's fast-paced and interconnected world, emotional intelligence is crucial for leaders to navigate challenges, inspire their teams, and achieve long-term success.

## 4. Communication skills for leaders

Expanding your knowledge and understanding of communication skills is essential for enhancing your effectiveness as a leader and strengthening your relationships with your team members.

This comprehensive section will delve into the intricacies of various communication techniques crucial for leaders. We will explore the power of neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), transactional analysis, and DiSC profiling. These techniques will equip you with the tools to effectively connect with individuals from diverse backgrounds and personalities.

Furthermore, we will take a closer look at specific communication techniques that successful leaders frequently employ. By examining these techniques, you will gain a deeper understanding of their practical

applications in a leadership context. Through this exploration, you can refine your approach and develop a highly effective communication style that resonates with your team.

Each article in this section will provide valuable insights and strategies for mastering the art of leadership communication. You will be guided through a logical sequence of techniques designed to optimise your skills. Applying what you learn will foster a supportive and collaborative environment within your team, paving the way for effective communication and, ultimately, unparalleled success in your leadership role.

## 4.1. Effective listening

Leadership is a complex and multifaceted process whereby an individual exerts their influence over others, inspiring and motivating them to dedicate their efforts towards achieving a shared purpose. While the concept of leadership may appear straightforward, it is far from simplistic. Effective leadership requires a profound level of skill and proficiency, and among the indispensable skills is effective listening — a critical element in functioning adeptly and triumphantly as a leader.

Four fundamental communication skills have been identified within the leadership domain, each of undeniable significance: eloquent speaking, adept writing, confident presenting, and active listening. Mastering the art of communication involves not only the ability to articulate ideas and concepts with clarity and coherence but also the proficiency to express information across various formats and to construct compelling, persuasive arguments. However, the realm of human relations reinforces the notion that effective leadership necessitates more than just being a skilled orator, writer, and presenter. The power of effective listening becomes apparent as it assumes an equally vital role in forging connections, fostering understanding,



and collaborating with others. Thus, the domain of leadership mandates the ability to listen effectively in diverse situations and to respond attentively based on the insights gained from these exchanges.

In the following section, we will delve into the intricate facets that underpin the art of effective listening, highlighting its unparalleled importance in leadership. Furthermore, we shall explore the profound impact that can be achieved through practising effective listening and elucidate why it stands as a cornerstone in one's journey towards leadership excellence. It is essential to recognise that effective listening, as an integral component of communication skills and overall leadership prowess, is a skill that can be continuously enhanced, refined, and perfected. Conversely, ineffective listening carries substantial adverse consequences that can permeate various aspects of organisational dynamics. These repercussions may include suboptimal decision-making, an increase in complaints, errors, and misunderstandings, elevated levels of absenteeism and tardiness, the emergence of cover-ups, heightened stress levels among employees, rising mental health costs, strained relationship dynamics, and increased turnover rates, to name but a few.

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# Atueyi honoured with professional leadership award

By Ranmilowo Ojalumo

The Publisher and Managing Director of Pharmanews Limited, Pharm. (Sir) Ifeanyi Atueyi, has been awarded the Professional Leadership Practitioners' Institute Award, in recognition of his transformational contributions to health and wellness innovation.

The award ceremony took place on 7 November 2024, at the CET Hall, Faculty of Education, University of Lagos, Yaba. It was part of the activities marking the 2024 Annual Conference and Fellowship Investiture of the institute, themed "Leadership and Leadership Development in a Digitally Evolving Contemporary Society."

Accepting the award on behalf of Pharm. (Sir) Ifeanyi Atueyi, the Editor of *Pharmanews*, Mr Patrick Iwelunmor, expressed gratitude to the institute for honouring his boss. He noted that the esteemed pharmacist and octogenarian remains a steadfast figure in Nigeria, dedicated to excellence through innovative leadership.

In his welcome address, the Director-General and CEO of PLPI, Dr Nathan Obasi, highlighted the institute's progress since its inception and its commitment to promoting professionalism in leadership at all levels.

He stated, "The journey of the institute began in 2016, and this outgoing year has been particularly eventful. We have continuously reimagined the concept of leadership



Pharm. (Sir) Ifeanyi Atueyi

as it evolves. Today, leadership is no longer confined to top management positions. Everyone has the potential to lead from where they are. Leadership is now democratised, centred on providing vision and influence to achieve set goals through non-coercive means. At PLPI, our aim is to draw out a person's highest qualities by influence rather than coercion."

The event's Guest Speaker, Professor J.K. Ayantayo of the Faculty of Arts, University of Ibadan, urged leaders to stay current by embracing the digital revolution. He emphasised that the world is advancing rapidly in the digital sphere, and for leaders to remain impactful, they must be open to adopting new digital realities to stay informed, relevant, and innovative.

# PSN-YPG inaugurates Central Executive Council

— As new leadership assumes office



L-R: Pharm. Martin Nwofia, financial secretary, PSN-YPG; Pharm. Obute A. Obute, north-central regional coordinator, PSN-YPG; Pharm. Joy Bathram, national treasurer, PSN-YPG; Pharm. Sani Rapha Tachio, national vice chairman, PSN-YPG; Pharm. Tekena George, national chairman, PSN-YPG; Pharm. Daniel Akpan, national secretary, PSN-YPG; Pharm. Ariwodo Esther, assistant national secretary, PSN-YPG; Pharm. David Friday, national editor-in-chief, PSN-YPG; Pharm. Precious Umoren, national public relations officer, PSN-YPG; Pharm. Adamolekun Tolulope, south-west regional coordinator, PSN-YPG.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria's Young Pharmacists Group (PSN-YPG) has inaugurated its new leadership, following a national election held on 6 November 2024 during the 97th Annual National Conference of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

The event witnessed a significant turnout of young pharmacists from across the

country, culminating in a transparent and well-organised electoral process.

Pharm. Tekena George emerged as the national chairman with 213 votes, defeating Pharm. Life Ebong, who garnered 161 votes, Pharm. Hope Onyemaechi with 52 votes, and Pharm. Lucky Osarenkhoe with 3 votes. Pharm. Sani Rapha Tachio was elected

*continued on page 48*

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## Experts highlight role of pharmacoconomics in boosting drug availability

By Ranmilowo Ojalumo



A professor at the Department of Clinical Pharmacy, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Benin, Prof. Tony Waka Udezi; Dr Emmanuel Omehe; Prof (Mrs) Stella F. Usifoh and PSN past President, Pharm. Azubike Okwor at one of the plenary sessions at the 97th PSN National Annual Conference held in Uyo.

Pharmacoconomics has been identified as a crucial field that can significantly improve the availability of medicines and other essential healthcare supplies in Nigeria, thereby boosting the nation's health sector and overall economy.

This was highlighted by experts during a plenary session at the recent 97th Annual National Conference of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN). According to the speakers, pharmacoconomics offers alternative treatment strategies that are both cost-effective and efficient.

The session, themed "Pharmacoconomics and Global Partnerships to Facilitate Medicines and Healthcare Sundries Availability," was chaired by PSN's former President, Azubike Okwor. The lead speaker, Dr Emmanuel Omehe, explained that pharmacoconomics compares the cost-effectiveness of pharmaceutical products and services. He noted that this field aids policymakers and healthcare providers in making informed decisions by assessing the financial impact of new therapies on the healthcare system, regulating prices, and identifying essential medicines. He also highlighted its significance in the cost analysis of research, development, and innovation.

Omehe further emphasised the need for global partnerships within Nigeria's health sector, which would enable stakeholders to compare costs and treatment outcomes more effectively.

Speaking on the economic value of pharmacoconomics, Prof. Tony Waka Udezi, a professor of Clinical Pharmacy at the University of Benin, noted that the field plays a vital role in improving medicine availability by informing better resource allocation decisions. "Pharmacoconomics assesses the cost-effectiveness and affordability of treatments, thereby optimising the use of medicines," he said.

According to Udezi, the discipline facilitates cost-benefit analysis by comparing healthcare intervention costs against their outcomes, and it also supports budget impact analysis by understanding the economic implications of introducing new drugs into healthcare budgets. He stressed that pharmacoconomics ensures that medicines and devices deliver additional benefits for every penny spent.

Highlighting the importance of global partnerships, the clinical pharmacy professor urged collaboration among stakeholders,

which fosters resource and knowledge sharing. He pointed out that such collaborations lead to increased investment in research and infrastructure, spur innovation for affordable treatments, and enhance disease surveillance and response capabilities.

Prof. (Mrs) Stella F. Usifoh, a professor at the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Benin, and wife of the immediate past president of PSN, underscored the urgent need for pharmacoconomics in Nigeria to improve the availability of medicines and healthcare essentials. According to her, pharmacoconomics not only provides a comprehensive assessment of adverse drug reactions and efficient pharmacovigilance but also reduces negative consequences. It offers valuable insights into the medical and financial implications of drugs and diseases, helping to optimise budget allocation for effective treatments without imposing a heavy financial burden on patients.

Usifoh added that pharmacoconomics can present alternative treatment options that are both cost-effective and therapeutically superior to older, overused drugs. This approach enhances prescription quality and formulary management, thereby supporting informed policy decisions by Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committees.

However, she also identified several barriers to the adoption of pharmacoconomics in Nigeria, such as the lack of a national regulatory body, insufficient awareness of its importance, limited funding for pharmaco-economic evaluations, and inadequate data. She noted that despite these challenges, there are existing guidelines that can facilitate the integration of pharmaco-economic principles into healthcare.

"Integrating pharmacoconomics with global partnerships can significantly improve medicine availability and healthcare quality. We should encourage all stakeholders to collaborate for better healthcare outcomes. Governments need to invest in healthcare infrastructure and adopt pharmaco-economic principles," Usifoh urged.

She also called on the private sector to engage in public-private partnerships and implement affordable pricing strategies, while appealing to global organisations to continue providing technical assistance and funding support.

## PSN-YPG inaugurates Central Executive Council

continued from page 46

unopposed as national vice-chairman, while Pharm. Daniel Akpan also ran unopposed for the position of national secretary.

Pharm. Ariwodo Esther assumed the role of assistant national secretary unopposed, while Pharm. Martin Nwofia became the national financial secretary with 194 votes, beating Pharm. Peter Fieyobo, who received 145 votes, and Pharm. Jubrin Yakubu with 79 votes.

Pharm. Joy Bathram took office as national treasurer, running unopposed, while Pharm. David Friday was chosen as the editor-in-chief. Pharm. Precious Umoren, the newly elected public relations officer (PRO), secured a resounding victory with 340 votes against Bello Bodunrin, who obtained 82 votes.

Regional coordinators were also appointed to spearhead PSN-YPG activities across various zones: Pharm. Kaigama Joseph was elected as the north-east regional coordinator, Pharm. Obute A. Obute as the north-central regional coordinator, and Pharm. Adamolekun Tolulope as the south-west regional coordinator.

Following the election, the newly constituted PSN-YPG Central Executive Council (CEC) held its inaugural meeting on 7 November 2024, under the

leadership of the Pharm. Tekena George. The meeting focused on establishing a robust framework for impactful service and sustainable growth.

During his address, Pharm. George reaffirmed his commitment to ensuring that PSN-YPG remains dedicated to the interests of all its members. He underscored the importance of exemplary leadership and urged the CEC members to perform their duties with diligence and dedication.

The CEC expressed gratitude to all members for their steadfast support and commitment over the years and called for continued collaboration throughout this administration.

The electoral process was lauded for its fairness and efficiency, proving the diligence of the Electoral Committee, chaired by Pharm. Baba E. Endurance with Pharm. Omiko Jonathan C. as secretary. Despite the tight schedule, the committee ensured a seamless and credible process from nominations to vote counting.

As the newly elected executives embark on their tenure, they are set to implement strategic initiatives aimed at advancing the interests of young pharmacists and promoting professional excellence across the nation.

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# Ayuba elected PSN president, as Apakama emerges BOF chairman

*continued from back page*

Adagadzu, who garnered 718 votes, and Pharm. (Mrs) Ejiro Foyibo, who received 144 votes.

Additionally, Pharm. (Prof.) Henry Okeri was elected deputy president (South), with 630 votes, defeating Pharm. Akpabio Akaowa and Pharm. Victoria Ukwu, who had 539 and 533 votes, respectively. Pharm. Aisha Tukur Isyaku, running unopposed, secured the position of deputy president (North).

Meanwhile, Pharm. Lizette Ezenekwe was elected as national publicity secretary, receiving 922 votes, as against Pharm. Charles Ronari and Pharm. (Dr) Ugochinyere Ogudu, who obtained 691 and 131 votes, respectively. Pharm. Abiodun Ajibade and Pharm. Felix Ndukwu were elected to the two unofficial member positions, with vote counts of 788 and 697, respectively.

At a glance, the new executive members of PSN are as follows:

**President:** Pharm. Ibrahim Tanko Ayuba

**Deputy President (North):** Pharm. Aisha Tukur Isyaku

**Deputy President (South):** Pharm. (Prof) Henry Okeri

**Secretary:** Pharm. Gafar Olanrewaju Madehin

**National Treasurer:** Pharm. Jelili Kilani Adewale

**Assistant Secretary:** Pharm. Ehitare Patrick Omoarebu

**Financial Secretary:** Pharm. Wetben Luka Manu

**Internal Auditor:** Pharm. Nafisatu Jumai Mijinyawa

**Editor-in-Chief:** Pharm. (Prof) Moses Atanda Akanmu

**Publicity Secretary:** Pharm. Lizette Njideka Ezenekwe

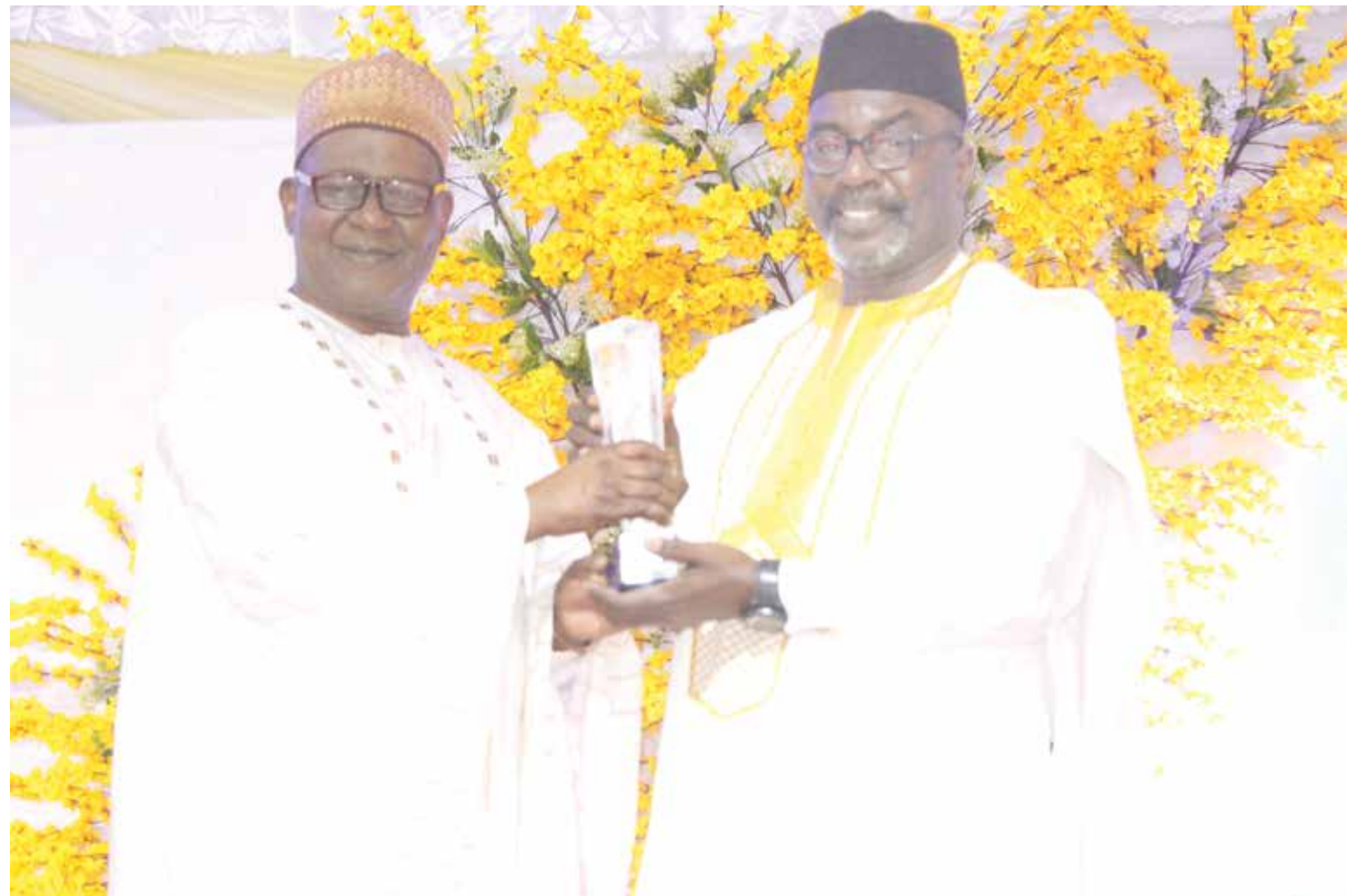
**Unofficial Members:** Pharm. Abiodun Ajibade, Pharm. Felix Ndukwu

**Immediate Past President:** Pharm. (Prof.) Cyril Odianose Usifoh

In a related development, Pharm. Uchenna Apakama, a Fellow of the PSN and the Nigeria Academy of Pharmacy (NAPharm), was elected as the new chairman of the Board of Fellows of the PSN, succeeding Dr Joel Adagadzu, who assumed the role in 2021.

The BOF elections, conducted during the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at Watbridge Hotel, Uyo, saw Pharm. Dr Rametu Momodu elected as vice-chairman, Pharm. Dr Margaret Obono as financial secretary, Pharm. Ngozi Onuorah as assistant secretary, and Pharm. Osaretin Jaiyeola as treasurer.

In addition, Pharm. Prof. Noel Wannang and Pharm. Dr Kingsley Amibor were elected



**Pharm. Ibrahim Tanko Ayuba (left), the newly elected PSN president, presenting a commendation plaque to the immediate past president, Prof. Cyril Usifoh.**



**The new set of PSN executives being sworn in after the declaration of the results.**

as unofficial members, while Pharm. Dr Maria Opara took on the role of internal auditor. Pharm. Chief Dr Joel E.B. Adagadzu, as the Immediate Past Chairman, and Pharm. Damian Izuka, as Secretary, were also part of the newly elected team.

During the swearing-in ceremony for the new PSN officers, the Chief Judge of Akwa Ibom State, Hon. Justice Ekaette Obot, urged the executives to uphold the highest standards of conduct while in office. She emphasised that they must

always strive to embody the profession's core values in good conscience, serving as exemplary leaders for other members of the association.

In his acceptance speech, the newly elected president, Ayuba, expressed his heartfelt appreciation to all members of the PSN for their trust in electing him. He assured them of his commitment to fulfilling his responsibilities diligently and appealed for unity among members, urging them to set aside any pre-election

differences.

Ayuba noted that there were no victors or losers in the election since all contestants were focused on the advancement of the PSN, declaring his emergence as a collective victory for all.

The event also recognised outstanding achievements, with awards of excellence presented to distinguished individuals for their exceptional contributions to the pharmaceutical sector and their unwavering support for PSN's initiatives.



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# Gov. Eno, other dignitaries applaud PSN's 97 years milestones in health sector

*continued from back page*

Pharmaceutical Innovations to Facilitate Equitable Healthcare in an Emerging Economy." The event, held at Ibom Hall on IBB Avenue, attracted numerous health leaders and stakeholders, all of whom affirmed PSN's impact on public health.

Representing the governor, Hon. (Pastor) Anne Abraham, senior special adviser on general duties, conveyed gratitude on behalf of the governor and the late First Lady of Akwa Ibom State, Mrs Patience Umo Eno. She acknowledged PSN's efforts in promoting healthcare equity and expressed appreciation for the Society's symbolic "walk" in memory of the late First Lady, who was deeply committed to the healthcare sector.

"On behalf of the governor, I welcome the PSN and all distinguished guests to Akwa Ibom State. We are inspired by your dedication to uplifting the pharmacy profession," Abraham stated. She also highlighted the Akwa Ibom government's enduring support in maintaining peace, which allowed PSN to hold its conference in a safe and conducive environment. Additionally, Abraham recognised the contributions of Mrs Helen Obareki, the "first daughter" of the state, entrusted with the office of the First Lady to oversee initiatives aligned with PSN's healthcare vision.

Abraham announced the upcoming grassroots health initiative, 'Wheels of Hope', scheduled to run from 11 to 22 November. According to her, the programme aims to combat diseases and bring healthcare services closer to underserved communities, with PSN playing a pivotal role.

"We are delighted to collaborate with PSN for this initiative," she added, welcoming PSN members warmly and reassuring them of the state's hospitality. "Thank you for choosing Akwa Ibom State for your 97th conference. I am confident this event will foster new partnerships, innovations, and relationships that will elevate healthcare in our state and across Nigeria."

Also commending PSN's dedication to advancing pharmaceutical practice and healthcare, Hajia Wasilatu Giwa, chairman of the Pharmacy Council of Nigeria (PCN), praised the leadership for significant strides in the sector. She noted that the conference theme was apt, given the current challenges, such as rising medicine costs and the impact of the *japa* syndrome.

Giwa urged stakeholders to remain focused on Nigeria's healthcare renewal agenda, lauding the commitment of the PCN registrar and announcing financial stability for council



**L-R: Prof. Cyril Usifoh, PSN president; Prof. Stella Usifoh, wife; Hajia Wasilatu Giwa, PCN chairman; and Hon. (Pastor) Anne Abraham, senior special assistant and representative of the Akwa Ibom State governor, at the opening ceremony of the 97th PSN conference in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.**

staff facing unpaid salaries due to recent approvals.

NAFDAC's Director General, Dr Moji Adeyeye, joined the event virtually, expressing regret for her absence but commending PSN for its contributions to healthcare advocacy.

She highlighted NAFDAC's Track and Trace technology, crucial in combating counterfeit medicines, and reaffirmed NAFDAC's goal of achieving WHO Maturity Level 4, positioning it as a World Research Authority. "This year's theme resonates as we strive towards equitable healthcare," she noted, emphasising NAFDAC's alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 3, which targets quality healthcare for all by 2030.

HRM Odidem Bassey Etim Edet, the Royal Father of the Day, urged PSN to remain resolute in the fight against counterfeit drugs. He called for collaboration between PSN and Akwa Ibom to establish a robust pharmaceutical industry, emphasising the need for only qualified individuals to handle pharmaceuticals. "Let us work together to ensure that only the best practices are upheld in our state," he stated, commending PSN's efforts in protecting lives through stringent quality control in the pharmaceutical sector.

Pharm. Yaro Budah, vice-chairman of the College of Past Presidents, reflected on PSN's legacy of leadership and guidance within the pharmacy profession, paying tribute to the late Professor Ebenezer Ogunlana, who passed away



**Prof. Cyril Usifoh  
Immediate past president, PSN**

after last year's conference in Gombe State.

Celebrating the tenure of the outgoing PSN President, Prof. Cyril Usifoh, Budah noted that leadership within PSN is a commitment to inspire and build strong foundations for future generations, recognising the Society's history of steady progress.

Earlier in his welcome address, Usifoh reaffirmed PSN's commitment to championing innovation, collaboration, and dedication to equitable healthcare as it approaches its centenary. He called on the next leadership to build upon the key milestones achieved during his tenure.

The keynote speech, titled "Transforming Pharmaceutical Innovation to Facilitate Equitable

Healthcare in an Emerging Economy," was delivered by the Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Muhammed Ali Pate, represented by Dr Obi Adigwe, Director General of NIPRD.

The event's highlight was the special recognition of pharmacists aged 80 and above, including Pharm. (Elder) Dick Onuigbo, Nigeria's oldest pharmacist, set to celebrate his centenary birthday in December. Others honouree included Pharm. Dick Nwoke, Prof. Oleka Udeala, Pharm. Ben Enemmo, Prof. Bona Obiorah, Pharm. Deji Osinoiki, Prof. Philip Olurinola, Pharm. Ugbaga Ugbaga, Pharm. Claudius Aina, Pharm. Jacob Ogundare, Pharm. (Dr) Benjamin Ekpo, and Pharm. (Sir) Ifeanyi Atueyi.

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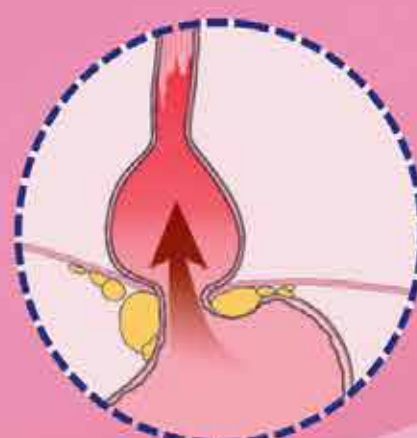
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# Ayuba elected PSN president, as Apakama emerges BOF chairman

By Adebayo Oladejo

The Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN) has elected Pharm. Ibrahim Tanko Ayuba as its new president, at the Society's 97th Annual National Conference, held in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. In addition, Pharm. Uchenna Apakama was elected as the chairman of the Board of Fellows (BOF), further solidifying the conference's impactful leadership outcomes.

The chairman of the Electoral Committee, Pharm. Ahmed Babashe Ahmed, who is also the registrar of the Pharmacy Council of Nigeria (PCN), announced the election results during a grand closing banquet on 9 November 2024, at the Flairmoore Event Centre, Uyo.

Ayuba, a former PSN chairman in Kaduna State, emerged victorious with 852 votes. He surpassed Dr Joel



L-R: Pharm. Judith Udeh, principal manager (marketing) and head of Hospital and Institutional Business for Geneith Pharmaceuticals; Mazi Sam Oluabunwa, former president, PSN; Pharm. Abimbola Bowoto, assistant general manager of Sales and Marketing, Geneith Pharma, and Joseph Udemé, medical rep, at the unveiling ceremony of Geneith's products at the 97th PSN National Conference in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

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# Gov. Eno, other dignitaries applaud PSN's 97 years milestones in health sector

- As CPP, NAFDAC, PCN commend Usifoh's leadership

By Adebayo Oladejo

The Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Pastor Umo Eno, alongside HRM Odidem Bassey Etim Edet, chairman of the Akwa Ibom Traditional Council, and other distinguished Nigerians, have praised the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN) for its

nearly century-long commitment to advancing the pharmacy profession and strengthening the country's health sector.

Governor Eno's commendation was delivered at the opening ceremony of PSN's 97th Annual National Conference in Uyo, themed "Transforming

continued on page 52

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