



EDITORIAL

And The Beat Goes On.....

I cannot believe that 2021 is almost over and COVID-19 is still ravaging the world. Thankfully the overwhelming numbers of deaths globally has reduced but that we are still under the uncertainty of what next, after Delta and Omicron is truly sad and a vexation. The Omicron variant came with so much controversy and global politicking and just as quickly the world settled into the inevitable fact that the variant had travelled much further than they thought and creating a red list to disenfranchise some parts of the world was not going to bring any solutions but further hardships to the people concerned. I know of quite a number of people who had planned to come home to Nigeria for Christmas but who had to cancel their flights in the face of Nigeria being put on the red list and the enormous burden hotel quarantine would place on them when they returned to the UK. Unfortunately, it was not cost effective for them to buy fresh tickets when the red list was abolished.

Though, the world is still watchfully waiting, many aspects of life and living have resumed in a recognizable format. The proverbial beat goes on, as they say. Airlines are flying, with modified arrangements for refreshments during travel; schools have resumed, many employing onsite, online and blended learning/teaching approaches; work-places have resumed; hotels, eateries and restaurants have resumed admitting clients for lodging, eat-in or take-out and cinemas have opened their doors to all the popcorn and drink loving people who come to watch shows within their doors. Finally, many conferences are opening up for physical participation even though the online option is a constant for now. For me, my fingers and toes are crossed that the annual congress of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) will be onsite in 2022 to allow for the usual networking, relaxation and facetime that accompanies the varied learning opportunities presented by the congress.

While the beat re-started for many of the industries listed earlier, community pharmacies where one of the major sources of healthcare for people in the midst of the pandemic, during the various lockdown stages and post-lockdown. Many pharmacies continued to deliver services to their communities as many patients were either too afraid or were unable to access non-emergency care at the hospitals. So, one exciting news item that came out early in November gladdened the heart

of many pharmacists. This was the declaration of the involvement of private facilities as vaccination centres in Nigeria. This move has been ongoing in most parts of the world including South Africa where the Independent Community Pharmacists Association (ICPA) has long been involved in a public-private partnership programme to ensure vaccination of all South Africans whether insured or not. By this move, community pharmacies, private hospitals and other accredited private health facilities will be involved in ensuring no Nigerian is left behind in the COVID-19 vaccination drive. This has been part of the cry of the Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria for quite a while and it is believed that this will be a precursor to full implementation of primary healthcare status to community pharmacies who are recognized as the first port of call for many Nigerians who seek healthcare.

As you would have noticed, all the articles so far published have been assigned the digital object identifiers (DOI) as promised in the last edition. However, because articles have to be uploaded before the identifiers are assigned under the arrangement between the University and Crossref, there will be some lag time between new volumes being published and the doi's being assigned. Once the identifiers are given, we will update the records for the published articles in between editions. We are extremely grateful to the Vice Chancellor of the University of Lagos, Prof. Oluwatoyin Ogundipe, the University Librarian, Prof. Yetunde Zaid and every member of the team that worked assiduously on this.

This call is to remind and mobilize the practice community (community pharmacists, private physicians, physiotherapists, medical laboratory specialists and all those in direct patient facing services in the private sector) to rise up to the research agenda so as to enable us generate useful, empirical data that can be used to guide healthcare policies in this country. I call on all qualified community pharmacists and private physicians to register for the newly approved vaccination effort opened up by the government to ensure that this opportunity does not close up in our faces. I enjoin all researchers to ensure that the beat moves on in the production of credible, reliable data that will contribute to the body of knowledge in the various fields of endeavour. All of this will help in moving our dear country forward into the coming years with hope and purpose.

Permit me to use this opportunity to celebrate the life and times of the founding Head of Department and brain behind this departmental journal. Dr. Olubukola Olusola Oyetunde went

home to her maker on the 1st of August 2021 and the journal, and indeed the whole department feels the weight of her loss daily. She was a most cheerful, ever laughing and very analytical mind who was always willing to contribute an idea or think through a problem with you. She was also very good at identifying the right hands for the various ideas she comes up with or that needs to be done which is why when I succeeded her as Head of Department, I left everyone just where she placed them. We were most hopeful we would hear her boisterous laugh across the car park or in one office or the other after she had recovered from months of ill health but unfortunately, that did not happen. She was an intelligent, hardworking forward thinker. She was very innovative and thorough. Dr. Oyetunde was committed to teaching and research, and she was much loved by her students for her role as a mentor to many of them at undergraduate, Masters and PhD levels. She was not afraid to make students and even we her colleagues to re-think what we are doing and why we are doing it. We are still mourning her loss.

Thank you and have a great day.

SIGNED

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