

APHPN NEWSLETTER

Quarterly Newsletter of the Association of Public Health Physicians of Nigeria

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From the President

PROF. ALPHONSUS ISARA

Dear colleagues, once again, I am very delighted to write to you in this last quarter of the year of our Lord 2023. This last quarter, to say the least, has been very eventful. We witness the demise of the foremost Ceremonial President and Chairman of the Board of Trustees (BOT) of APHPN Prof. Umaru Shehu, and the incumbent BOT Chairman, Prof. Kamil Olanipekun Alausa. The passing of these great pillars of APHPN who have left their footprints on the sand of time was a big blow to the APHPN family. This was evident in the avalanche of tributes that poured in during the periods. APHPN was fully represented when these leaders were laid to rest. I sincerely thank the Chairmen and members of Borno and Ogun States APHPN for the active role they played during the funeral ceremonies of the fathers of our Association. In a related development, APHPN also lost two members in Ebonyi State, Dr. Patience Ndidiamaka Chuks-Ezeali and Dr. Alfred Una. The demise of two members within one week is very difficult to comprehend. Our condolences to their respective families and members of APHPN Ebonyi State Branch. May the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.

The 40th Annual General Meeting and Scientific Conference tagged Ondo 2024 and the golden jubilee celebration of our Association is few weeks away. Both events will take place at the Cultural and Events Centre (The Dome), Akure, the capital of Ondo State. For the first time we are having a double ceremony. The Local Organizing Committee (LOC) of the Scientific Conference is working tirelessly to organize a memorable conference. Similarly, the EXCO has constituted a golden jubilee committee to focus solely on the jubilee celebration. The jubilee celebration is an opportunity to tell the story of APHPN over the past half a century.

We shall celebrate ourselves; we shall honour and celebrate past leaders of APHPN, we shall recognize members who have contributed immensely to vision of APHPN over the years, and we shall appreciate state branches that have done wonderfully well in the public



Therefore, I urge all State Chairmen to respond to the call for the submission of their respective state profile, and also mobilize their members for the Scientific Conference and golden jubilee celebration.

On behalf of the BOT, Executive Council, and members of APHPN. I congratulate two of our members who made us proud recently. They include: Dr. Akindele Adebiyi who has assumed duties as the President of International Epidemiological Association (IEA), and Prof. Michael Asuzu, a past chairman of APHPN, who was elected as the President of African Federation of Public Health Association (AFPHA). I can confirm that they will represent us well in the global public health space.

As always, I encourage APHPN members to contribute to the newsletter and give feedback to the publicity committee. I wish you all a very prosperous New Year.

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UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARIAT

Dr Alphonsus Aigbiremolen

Here are some important updates from the National Secretariat for the last quarter of 2023:

Preparations for the 40th Annual General Meeting and Scientific Conference and Golden Jubilee of APHPN, which will be held from 10th to 15th March 2024 in Ondo State, are in top gear. The National Secretariat supports the LOC in mobilising APHPN members and partners towards successful AGM and Jubilee celebrations.

In November 2023, the Policy Innovation Centre (PIC) of the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG) had a meeting with the President and the Secretary-General to introduce the Women and Children's Health Advocacy (WACHA) Project. WACHA is a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation-supported advocacy programme to promote women's and children's health. APHPN is participating in the initial scoping assessment in FCT, Lagos, Kaduna and Kano states

The 9th APHPN/WCEA Capacity Building Webinar was held in November 2023. The theme of the webinar was How to get published in High Impact Journal and was facilitated by Dr. John Ford of Queen Mary University, London. APHPN/WCEA webinars are held bi-monthly with participants drawn from across many countries of the world.



Official launching of the National Mental Health Policy and National Suicide Prevention Strategic Framework by the Coordinating Minister of Health Dr. Muhammed Ali Pate and Partners and Professional Bodies.



The IEA President, Dr. Akindele Adebiyi (2nd from Left), Prof. Ololade Wright (3rd from Left), and Dr. Yahya Disu (1st from Right), were APHPN members who attended the 3rd International Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA) where Prof. M. C. Asuzu was elected as President of AFPHA

NECROLOGY



Dr. Patience Ndidiamaka Chuks-Ezeali APHPN Ebonyi State Branch



Dr. Alfred Una APHPN Ebonyi State Branch

PUBLIC HEALTH SPOTLIGHT THE RUDIMENTS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

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Introduction

Qualitative research (QR) involves subjective information about what people think, how they feel, or what and how they say they feel, rather than numbers 1,2. QR approach is iterative and embraces developing questions, collecting data in natural situations, inductive data analysis for themes, and meaningful interpretation of data3. However, research methodologies include a spectrum of chronological activities4 including assumptions, data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The basis for this process is the philosophical assumptions, study designs and the methods of data collection informing the processes5 mentioned above. Considering that the research approaches are engrained in the experiences of the researcher and the audience of the study, the philosophical stance of the researcher includes the beliefs and values that inform the approach that the researcher employs6. Referring to Figure 1, the interconnection between philosophical viewpoints, or worldviews, research approaches, designs and methods becomes more explicit. It is important to make this distinction early because philosophical assumptions have remained hidden in the research world, despite the invaluable contributions to the justifications of research approaches that this phenomenon supports7.

Essentially, postpositivist viewpoints align with scientific method in quantitative research8. Constructivist ideologies are applicable to qualitative research, and often combined with interpretivism, which focuses on subjective meanings, multiple perspectives, social interactions, historical context, and acknowledges the researcher's influence9. The transformative ideology materialized in the 1980s-1990s due to dissatisfaction with postpositivist assumptions not addressing marginalized individuals, power dynamics, social justice, discrimination, and oppression10.Pragmatism pools both quantitative and qualitative assumptions without obligation to a specific philosophical ideology and is associated with the mixed methods approach11.

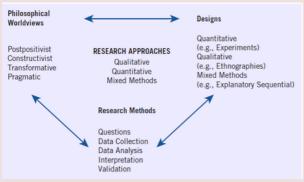
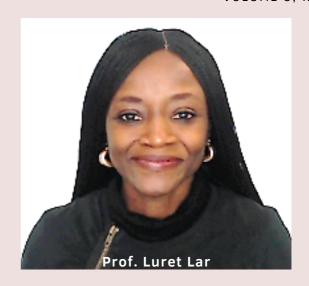


Figure 1. A Framework for Research The Interconnection of worldviews, designs and research methods3



Qualitative research designs

Research design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data. A choice of research design reflects decisions about the priority given to a range of dimensions in the research process. These include the importance attached to expressing causal connections between variables, generalising to a larger group of individuals, having a temporal appreciation of social phenomena and their interconnections and understanding behavioural meanings in specific social context12. Six qualitative study designs are discussed in this paper.

- 1. Case studies are concerned with comprehensive and thorough analysis of a single case13. They focus on the specific situation and could include complexities14. The aim is to understand entities as a functioning whole15. The unit of analysis is a bounded entity, such as a place, object, set of relationships, events, etc., and can be single or multiple cases that provide intensive in-depth and potentially generalizable theoretical insights into cases16.
- 2. **Ethnography**: Ethnographic studies involve the collection and analysis of data about cultural groups from key informants. Ethnography has been the principal method used by anthropologists to study people all over the world. In ethnographic research, the researcher answers the question, "what's it like to be this person?" Ethnographers need to make explicit their own personal biases and beliefs, set them aside, and then try to understand the daily lives of individuals as they live them. The end purpose of ethnography is the development of cultural theories.

The pictures below (Figure 2) illustrate my first ethnographic experience around 2017 in northwest Nigeria. I was part of a multicountry, multidisciplinary research team, working on the countdown project, which had the aim of decreasing morbidity, mortality and poverty associated with neglected tropical diseases. The picture on the left involved following the community drug distributors on their daily routine in the rural community as they administered medicines. The picture in the middle was observations at the health facility, where the CDDs collect medicines for distribution and submit their reports to the facility heads, who train them, depicting the linkage between the community and health facility. To the right is the accommodation that became my temporary home for weeks.



Figure 2. Ethnography in action (Photo credit: Author)

3. **Grounded theory** was developed by two sociologists, Glaser and Strauss in 1967. Data are collected and analyzed and then a theory is developed that is grounded in the data20. The grounded theory method uses both an inductive and a deductive approach to theory development21. The inductive approach starts with a question (classical grounded theory can even begin simply with data collection)22. Concepts and theory then 'emerge' from the data and the theory is 'grounded' in empirical enquiry23. This is different from the traditional deductive approach to social theory24.

Constant comparison is used, in which data are continually likened to data that have already been gathered.

- 4. **Historical/Narrative Studies** involve the identification, location, evaluation, and synthesis of data from the past25. These past happenings are related to the present and to the future. Leininger26 wrote, "Without a past, there is no meaning to the present, nor can we develop a sense of ourselves as individuals and as members of groups". This qualitative research design may be more difficult to conduct than some of the other types of research. Christy27 wrote that the historical researchers must develop the "curiosity, perseverance, tenacity and skepticism of the detective".
- 5.Phenomenology includes eliciting people's lived experiences, usually, around rare topics. Parse, Coyne, and Smith28 wrote that the analysis of data from these types of studies requires that the researcher "dwell with the subjects' descriptions in quiet contemplation". Furthermore, Sokolwski29 stated that "Phenomenological statements, like philosophical statements, state the obvious and the necessary. They tell us what we already know, but are still important and illuminating, because we often are very confused about just such trivialities and necessities."
- 6. Action research (Figure 3)became popular in the 1940s. Kurt Lewin was influential in spreading action research30. He was interested in helping social workers improve their practice. Action is sought to improve practice and study the effects of the proceedings that were taken. Solutions are sought to practice problems in various settings31.



Figure 3. Action research illustrated using a health related example

The implementation of solutions occurs as an actual part of the research process. A special kind of action research in which there is collaboration between the study participants and the researcher in all steps of the study is referred to as participatory action research (PAR) 32. An example of a PAR method, transect walks and community mapping can be read for further information. Two-Publications from the findings of PAR methods of transect walks and community mapping are available for further reading.

Conducting qualitative research

Data collection techniques include systematic information gathering, which mitigates haphazard data collection. The diagram below summarises the key components involved in conducting qualitative research. However, this process is iterative.



Figure 4. Steps in conducting qualitative research (Created by author)

Research questions must be clearly defined and a thorough literature review highlights gaps that could be filled. This process is useful in refining the research questions. However, some schools of thought prefer the literature review conducted after data collection to avoid biasing the process. Various research designs described earlier could be chosen in combination or in isolation to appropriately address the research questions like the research methods and data analysis.

Coherence is important in making meaningful explanations of the findings and implications of the broader field of inquiry. Findings can be presented using quotations in publications, case studies, blogs, policy briefs, toolkits, etc while reflecting on the researchers' biases, positionality, and viewpoints during the entire research process. Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research does not depend on statistical measures of validity. Consequently, trustworthiness and rigor can be realised through triangulation (using multiple data sources or methods), peer review, and member checking33.

Highlights of qualitative research methods and the current paradigm shifts

Qualitative methods involve non numerical approaches to data collection like **interviews and observations** and focus group discussions. This <u>toolkit</u> provides additional details. However, there are shifts to utilizing <u>multimodal methods</u> including sensory dimensions and geonarrative approach to qualitative research34.

Highlights of qualitative research methods and the current paradigm shifts

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Analysing and reporting qualitative data

Qualitative data analysis is an iterative process, involving organizing, coding, and categorizing data to identify patterns, themes, and key findings.35 Common techniques include thematic analysis (highlights identifying, analysing, and interpreting qualitative data patterns), content analysis (analyse meanings, themes and patterns manifesting or latent in a text, permitting the scientific and subjective understanding of social reality), grounded theory, as explained above, and narrative analysis(understanding individualistic experiences)36. Rigour and reliability are maintained by coding and using computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) such as NVivo, ATLAS. TI, HyperRESEARCH, MAXqda, QDA Miner, Qualrus and Transana37. The consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ) is a useful checklist for ensuring quality writeups.

Conclusion

I emphasise that it is impossible to condense specific details about qualitative research in such a document. However, I hope the illustrations, hyperlinks, and the initial "gist" of this topic will stimulate a hunger and thirst for more personal inquiry and development regarding this topic. Therefore, like anything in life, the beginning may not be rough, and challenges may emerge, but keep your eyes fixed on the goalpost and keep going! The support of excellent mentors and believing in myself boosted my confidence more today than when I started! I will continue to portray the unheard voices of how? and why?? in the experiences of individuals and populations, supported by numerical data for evidence-based policy.

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APPOINTMENTS & PROMOTIONS

APHPN celebrates its members who have risen to enviable heights in academics and service to mankind,



Prof. Michael C. Asuzu - President, African Federation of Public Health Associations (AFPHA)



Dr. Hafsat A. Ameen - Associate Professor, Dept. of Community Health and Epidemiology, University of



Dr. Chinomnso C. Nnebue - Associate Professor, Dept. of Community Medicine. Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

NEWS IN BRIEF

APHPN PRESIDENT VISITS NASARAWA STATE

The National President of APHPN, Prof. Alphonsus Isara, paid a working to Nasarawa State APHPN, on Thursday 14th of December 2023. During this visit, the President had a robust interaction with the EXCO and members of the Nasarawa State Branch who expressed commitment to be more active in the public health space.

The highlights of the visit were the presentation of a copy of the APHPN constitution to the Chairman of APHPN Nasarawa State, Dr. Mary Matthew by the President, and in return, the Chairman presented a plaque to the President.



The National President of APHPN, Prof. Alphonsus Isara and members of APHPN Nasarawa State Branch



The National President Prof. Alphonsus Isara presenting the APHPN constitution to the Chairman of APHPN Nasarawa State, Dr. Mary Matthew



The Chairman of APHPN Nasarawa State Branch, Dr. Mary Matthew presenting a plaque to the National President



L - R Front: Dr. Fatima Idris Muhammad, Dr. Mary Matthew, Prof. Alphonsus Isara, Deputy CMAC, DASH Dr. Alex Angbalagba, Prof. Ishaku Bako, and Director of Administration DASH, Mr. Ahmed Mohammed Wada

L - R Back: Dr. Joel Bulus, Dr. Grace Amos Tsakpa, Dr. Jerry Reuben Chuma, and Dr. Nseabasi Akpan

APHPN ANAMBRA STATE ELECTS NEW EXECUTIVES

Anambra State branch of APHPN had its AGM on 19/12/2023 to elect a new executive to pilot the affairs of the association for the 2023 – 2025 EXCO year.



From L to R: Dr Irene Okeke (Chairman), Dr Obiora Egbue (Vice Chairman), Dr. Chijioke Okaro (Secretary), Dr. Chuma Emembolu (Asst Secretary/Publicity), Dr. Henry Okafor (Treasurer), Dr. Nonye Ezeonyejiaku (Welfare Officer), Dr. Kanayo Onalu (Internal Auditor), Dr. Ahoma Mbanuzuru (Ex-Officio 1), and Dr. Uzoma Okereke (Ex-Officio 2)

TRIBUTES: PROF. UMARU SHEHU



Ah!!!! I will sorely miss Prof. Umaru Shehu. It was a privilege working with him on the Expert Review Committee on Poliomyelitis and Routine Immunization in Nigeria for 6 years. Even in his frail state, he will make time to send or reply to my SMS. May his soul rest in peace.

-Prof. T. M. Akande

Prof Umaru Shehu contributed immensely to the development and completion of the College Building Project, with several other assisted capital projects. May the soul of Prof Umaru Shehu. Rest in peace. - Prof. K. O. Alausa

A very nice gentleman and a dedicated teacher and administrator. May God comfort all his loved ones. -Prof. Yinka Abosede

Prof Emeritus Umaru Shehu, one of the pillars of Public Health, was an epitome of humility and a man of few words...! My privileged encounter with him started when I was invited as external examiner by the Dept some years ago. The HOD led us to go and pay homage to Baba (as he was lovingly called) and when Baba learnt I came from Zaria; the relationship became blossomed...! He will ask about the university and the Dept in particular (for which he was the founding father)..!! Baba was full of stories from Ibadan to UK and Zaria...!!! He had his well-kept lecture notes inside a file together with oral exam questions in his British style hand writing...!!! In 2017, after the exams was over., I had a tea break with him (Baba was a lover of coffee), after which he gave me a copy of his Biography signed by him and then the photograph...!!! May Allah grant him rahma and forgive his short comings., amin. -Prof. Alhaji Aliyu

A good and strong Man, I am privileged to have met Prof at one of his presentations in LUTH, not too long ago, I think it was during a Faculty Day Lecture. He was able to stand throughout the period of lecture refusing to sit down. May God console and strengthen his family. May his soul rest in peace. - Prof. Elizabeth Nwonwu

Prof Umaru Shehu was a role model and my mentor. He lived a full life of achievements and contributions to national development. He was an icon in public health. I had the privilege of joining his entourage to some of his public engagements in Lagos. He will be sadly missed. May the Almighty grant him Aljanah Firdaus. -Prof. Akin Osibogun

May God comfort his family and the medical community at large. He's truly left great footprints on the sands of time. **Prof.**Mathilda Banwat

Inna lillahi wa inna ilehi rojeun.

Allah SWT in His infinite mercy grants him Jannatul-fridaus and give the family and close ones the fortitude to bear the loss. Amin.- Dr. Ibraheem Abdulraheem

May God comfort the family that the Legend, Professor Umaru Shehu left behind, APHPN, and everyone his life touched. May his soul rest in peace.- Dr. Terkaa Bitto

Deeply and emotionally touched by Prof UMARU's transition. He was one of the great founders of the Ahmadu Bello University, Medical School, Zaria. I was privileged to have been a student during his leadership in the institution. His name is certainly in the hall of fame in this country and in the global health community. He will remain a legend as Nigeria shall miss him greatly. May his soul find favour, as he rests peacefully in the abode of Almighty Allah. The family he left behind will continue to be proud descendants of this great hero. May Allah give them the fortitude to bear this quintessential legend.-Dr. Ibrahim Ozovehe

It's difficult to say goodbye despite the long and good life of the departed. Prof will surely be missed all and sundry. May his precious soul rest in perfect peace. -Prof. Daprim Ogaji

I, Maj. Gen (RTD) Dr. B. E. Abang, hereby join all Members of the Association of Public Health Physicians of Nigeria and especially the members of the Board of Trustees, Past & Present in wishing Late Emeritus Professor Umaru Shehu's SOUL, Eternal & Peaceful REST with GOD and His Family, Strength to bear the huge loss. Amen. - Gen (Dr.) B. E. Abang

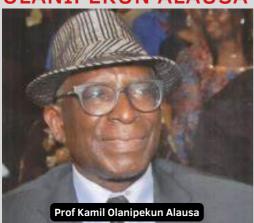
May the Soul of Our Medical Legend Rest on. May the almighty condole the family He left behind. He was a great man and we will miss Him a lot. Adieu to a Medical Legend that represented the Medical Profession so well, and with a great aura too. **Prof.** Olusola Odu

An icon of our profession. We celebrate his life and trail blazing efforts. Rest in peace Prof. Umaru Shehu. - Dr. Akindele Adebiyi

He was the foundation HOD, Community Medicine Dept, ABU and the foundation Director of the then Institute of Health ABU. I had the opportunity of serving on the Board of NACA with him. A very down-to-earth, gentle fellow. He has lived a very fulfilled life, making an impact at local, national and international levels. He has indeed left his footprints in the sands of time. Rest in peace.

- Prof. Clara Ejembi

TRIBUTES: PROF. KAMIL OLANIPEKUN ALAUSA



What a great loss. Our dear Prof Alausa, you were really a father to many of us, and we will miss you dearly. I recall now when our college president, Prof Akin Osibogun, called me to welcome our newly promoted colleagues to the rank of professor, I quickly reminded everyone present that that was a role that we exclusively reserved for you. Dear Prof, you lived a great life, and honestly, one shouldn't begrudge those who would celebrate a life actively well lived. Nonetheless, we will mourn you, albeit, "not like the unbelievers ..." For when it is time to give charge to our elevated associate and full professors, and you will no longer be with us to give inspiring and insightful words of advice, we will remember and mourn this loss. A time would come when we must resolve some difficult specialty and faculty-related dilemma, and you will not be with us to lead us through with tact and humor. We will remember your times, and we will mourn you. Rest in perfect peace, Professor Olanipekun Alausa. You lived well, and no doubt you will also rest well with Allah. We will remember and cherish the times you were with us. -Prof. Adedeji Onayade

Patriarch, Doyen, Colossus, Juggernaut, Scion, Gem, Institution, Father, Teacher, Mentor, Examiner, General, Admiral, Field Marshall ----- in fact, there is neither a permutation nor a combination of superlative accolades that can suffice to eulogize this rare renowned male Homo sapiens, known, called and addressed as Professor Olanipekun Alausa. We painfully mourn your exit; we will ever recall your wonderful and fulfilled life and ever build on your legacy. Adieu Papa, Professor of Professors. - Prof. Wilfred Okey Ndifon

Shocking news! Prof Alausa was my mentor and a dependable senior colleague and brother. He was a committed medical educator who participated in pioneering several medical schools across the country. As the Registrar of the National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria, he firmly established the College's presence at its Ijanikin site and introduced several innovations into the residency examination process including the introduction of multiple examination centres. I had the privilege of starting off the Enugu Centre under him, with the support of Late Dr Onabowale who was then the MD of the Federal Orthopaedic Hospital in Enugu. Professor Alausa lived a life full of legacies and indelible marks not only in the medical profession, but also in community development as he contributed immensely to the administration of youth employment programmes in Ijebuland under the auspices of His Royal Majesty, the Awujale of Ijebuland. He will be sadly missed. -Prof. Akin Osibogun

I first met Pekun at a workshop in Addis Ababa in 1980 We got on very well and when he was involved in setting up the medical school in Kano he invited me for the interview of lecturers When I was head of department of Community Health, LASUCOM, I invited him as my external examiner and he served for 4years When I came to Babcock University to start the Department of Community Medicine I needed Pekun to help me develop the undergraduate programme

He played a big role in the department getting accreditation and was also instrumental in the accreditation of our postgraduate programmes When I was no longer the head of the department I moved from the HOD office to an office both of us shared and shared each other personal problems He gave me beautiful present for my 80th birthday and sent me words of consolation when my wife died Goodbye Pekun,my friend. May Allah grant you Aljanoh firdaous. - Prof. Wole Alakija

Prof. Alausa's will be greatly missed. He gets along well with everyone notwithstanding the gap in age or status. I asked of him just this last Friday when he was conspicuously absent at the Part II NPMCN Faculty exams. I pray Allah grant him eternal rest. -Prof. James Bamidele

A great loss indeed. Despite his big Public Health Stature, he was down to earth, caring and kind with a genuine love for students' welfare and an interest in people. Always, willing to offer advice. He will be greatly missed. May God comfort and strengthen his family and us all. -Dr. Pearl Agu

What a great loss to the APHPN Family, the Faculty of Public Health and Community Medicine, NPMC and the numerous professional organizations where he played pivotal role. We shall in deed miss his gentle and friendly demeanor. May the LORD comfort us all in Jesus name, Amen. Prof. Chikaike Ogbonna

What can one say of Prof Alausa? So much, one can go on and on till daybreak. You welcomed me to your home in Ijebu ode even as a younger consultant several years ago. U walked me round your farm and your office inside Awujale's palace in Ijebu ode. You are so humble despite being our mentor, father and grand trainer. May your gentle soul rest in peace. Adieu Prof Pekun Alausa. An Iroko has indeed fallen. -Dr. Olusegun Elegbede

A big loss to Public Health in Nigeria. We have lost a father, a mentor, a lover of progress.

May his soul rest in peace. Amen. God will comfort the family. -Prof. Tanimola Akande

Prof. Alausa was our young teacher of medical microbiology here at the Ibadan medical school in the mid-1970s as a very young lecturer, before his departure from here to do MPH in the US of A; & then unto UniLorin "Epidemiology & Community Health" & be be looo! He never lost the medical microbiology, even while he trailed in public & community health; even for his greener pasture years in the Middle East where he again practiced in it!

He had remained someone that we went to when we needed advise on healthy "tricks" concerning life & public administration. We did not have ANY difficulty in selecting him to be Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Society for Public Health Professionals of Nigeria (SPHPN) as a sure bridge between all the vertical public health professionals, disciplinary &/or otherwise! So, this his "going" is a surely great human loss! But God surely knows what he is doing; & we must never cease in blessing His name for what He does & how He does it!

May God grant him eternal rest with Himself & let go of any of his limitations as a sure human being! May God send us some more people of his good type & grant his biological family, nuclear & extended in ANY ways; and the rest of us who surely are part of those his other families, the graces that we need for a time like this! Adieu Prof. "OK" & God bless your soul, eternally! -Prof. M.C. Asuzu