



APHPN NEWSLETTER

Quarterly Newsletter of the Association of Public Health Physicians
of Nigeria

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From the President

PROFESSOR ALPHONSUS ISARA



I am extremely delighted to present this maiden edition of the Association of Public Health Physicians of Nigeria (APHPN) quarterly newsletter to you. During the swearing-in ceremony of the current APHPN National Executive Council (EXCO) on June 17, 2021; this EXCO made a commitment to regularly disseminate information on national and global public health issues as well as APHPN activities to its members and the general public.

As a result, the APHPN Publicity Committee ably led by the National Publicity Secretary Dr Omosivie Maduka was constituted and inaugurated. To build the capacity of the committee to deliver on the APHPN quarterly newsletter, one-day training on "Fundamentals of news writing and reporting" was held on September 5, 2021; and some senior members of APHPN were also in attendance at the training. Prof. Abigail Ogwezzy-Ndisika of the Department of Mass Communication, University of Lagos, was the resource person at the training.

Immediately after the training, the Committee swung into action and produced this highly informative and educative maiden edition of the APHPN newsletter. My appreciation goes to Prof. Adesegun Fatusi, who set the ball rolling despite his very busy schedule as a Vice-Chancellor, with the paper on gender-based violence in Nigeria. Other highlights of this maiden edition of the APHPN newsletter includes extracts from the Journal of Community Medicine and Primary Health Care (JCMPHC), activities of APHPN State Branches, and notable days of public health importance.

I sincerely thank the Chairman and members of the Committee for their dedication and commitment. I encourage APHPN members to not only read but also contribute to the newsletter and give regular feedback to the Committee. I wish you a happy reading.

Update from the Secretariat

In line with her constitutional duties, the EXCO has carried out some activities since inauguration on June 17, 2021; and below are some of the highlights:

- The Audit Committee (a standing committee) chaired by the Internal Auditor Dr Achunam Nwabueze was constituted.
- Some ad hoc committees were also constituted and inaugurated. They are the Investment Committee, Training and Capacity Building Committee, and Research and Grants Committee; with Prof. Mustapha Jamda, Dr Sunday Aderibigbe and Dr Nyemike Awunor as their chairpersons respectively. All three committees have since commenced work and we expect them to roll out programmes shortly.
- Again, the APHPN Violence against Health Working Group has been created with Prof. G. K. Osagbemi as Coordinator. The members of this working group are charged with the responsibility of promoting research in the area of violence and health care. We have also distributed copies of the "Health Care in Danger Training Module for Medical Students, Healthcare Workers and Teachers" (a product of the collaboration between ICRC and APHPN) to all APHPN State branches.
- We have also maintained collaboration with some of our partners. Notably amongst them are APIN Public Health Initiatives, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Breakthrough ACTION-Nigeria. These agencies/organizations have expressed their commitment to actively support and participate in the 2022 APHPN National Scientific Conference tagged Ilorin 2022.



APHPN President with the Commissioner for Health Bayelsa State, senior staff of the Bayelsa State Ministry of Health and some members of the Bayelsa APHPN State executive

- To mark ninety days in office, the EXCO launched the APHPN website on the 15th of September 2021. The APHPN website address is <https://aphpn-ng.org>. The website which is very active, informative and educative is a veritable tool for APHPN to gain global visibility in the public health space. Therefore, APHPN State Branches are requested to showcase their activities on the website. Members are also encouraged to visit the website and provide feedbacks regularly.
- Similarly, the EXCO created APHPN social media handles. So, kindly follow our social media handles: Facebook: APHPN.National; LinkedIn: APHPN; and Twitter: APHPN_National.

The APHPN Board of Trustees and EXCO thank you all for the confidence reposed in us; and solicit for your continuous support in order to move APHPN to greater heights.

Inaugural Lecture Highlights



Professor James Bamidele calls for improved health and safety for Informal Sector Workers.

The inaugural lecture titled '**Occupational Health Services: The Dilemma of the Unsung and Neglected Informal Sector Workers**' held on the 27th of July 2021, Prof Bamidele stated that although informal sector workers contribute to the economy and life of the communities they serve, they suffer from occupational injuries and illnesses that are directly related to their occupational exposure. He highlighted some risk factors that make informal sector workers vulnerable to occupational hazards and intimated the audience on health and safety programmes that can improve their workplace health and safety and improve various levels of their health status.

Covid-19 and Gender-Based Violence in Nigeria: A Public Health Framework for Action

ADESEGUN FATUSI

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a leading public health challenge globally and Violence Against Women (VAW) is the most common form of GBV. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has further escalated the scale of the problem in Nigeria and worldwide. Defined as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life”

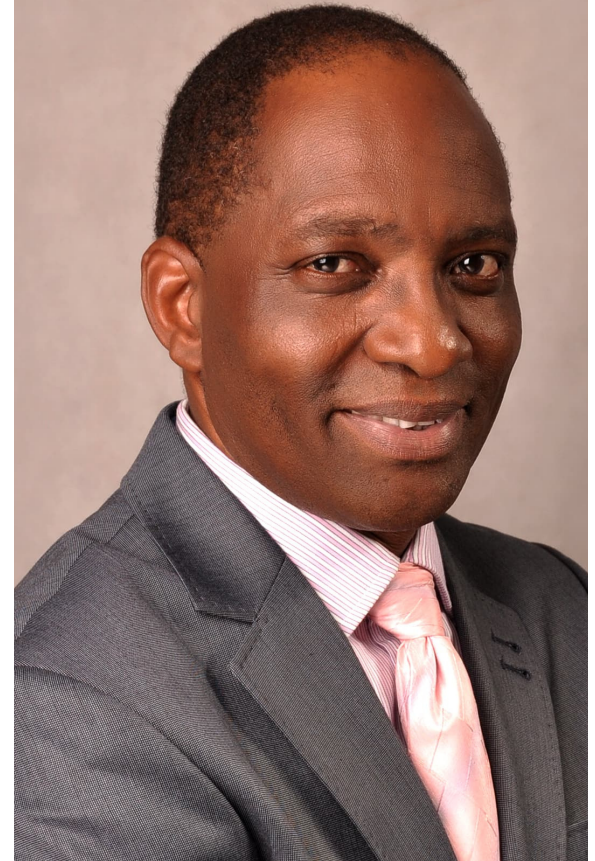
GBV in Nigeria and the COVID-19 dimension

The challenge of VAW, as the analyses of the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey show, has been increasing in Nigeria with time. According to the 2018 NDHS, of the Nigerian women population aged 15-49, 31% has ever experienced physical violence since age 15, 9% has experienced sexual violence, and 6% has experienced physical violence during pregnancy. The prevalence of VAW is highest among divorced and separated women compared with married and never-married women (Figure 1). The prevalence of IPV in Nigeria varies among the states (Figure 2) and by sociodemographic factors (age, urban-rural, location, education, and wealth level).

With the COVID-19 challenge, the incidence of VAW and other forms of GBV has increased in Nigeria, particularly during the COVID-19-associated lockdown period. The lockdown was associated with an increase in the risk factors for VAW, particularly intimate partner violence. These factors include an increased indoor time of women with their abusers, increased tension, and stress due to the prolonged stay-at-home situation, and an increased level of economic-related frustration with the negative impact of the COVID-19 on occupational engagements and income.

"Gender-based violence (GBV) is a leading public health challenge globally and Violence Against Women (VAW) is the most common form of GBV."

Adesegun Fatusi



Adesegun Fatusi
Professor of Community Medicine
and Public Health
Vice-Chancellor, University of Medical Sciences,
Ondo.

Simultaneously, there was also a decrease in protective risk factors due to the lockdown, which also contributed to increased incidence of VAW; these include positive peer support and interactions in school and work environment. Furthermore, with the lockdown, there was also constrained access to essential health services, including essential care and services to GBV survivors.

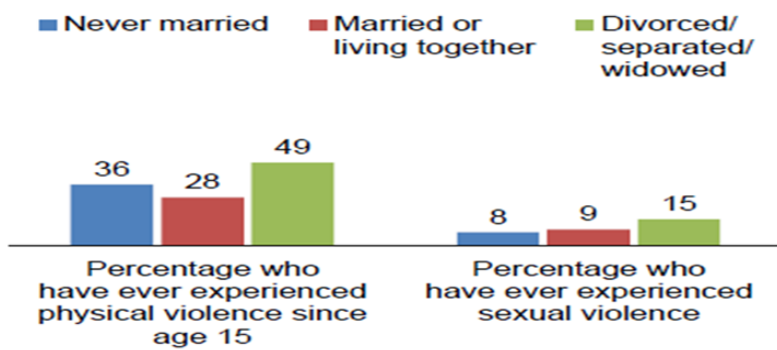


Figure 1: Prevalence of Gender Based Violence in Nigeria

As Fawole et al noted, “The lockdowns in Nigeria may have inadvertently placed women already experiencing partner violence at risk for experiencing more severe violence, new challenges to cope with violent experiences, and other forms of violence, including violence that used the lockdown to threaten women’s security and ability to protect themselves from the virus. Hence, there is a need for innovative approaches to support victims.”

Addressing the Needs of GBV Survivors in the COVID-19 Era: Innovations and Challenges

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated lockdown, several innovative programmatic and structural approaches to meet the needs of GBV survivors have been recorded in the Nigerian health sector. Of particular significance in this context, is the Spotlight Initiatives implemented by the United Nations System with the support of the European Union. These innovative services include:

- Phone-based counselling
- Virtual referral and response services
- “Safe spaces” and “one-stop centres” for GBV survivors
- Improved GBV reporting data collation.

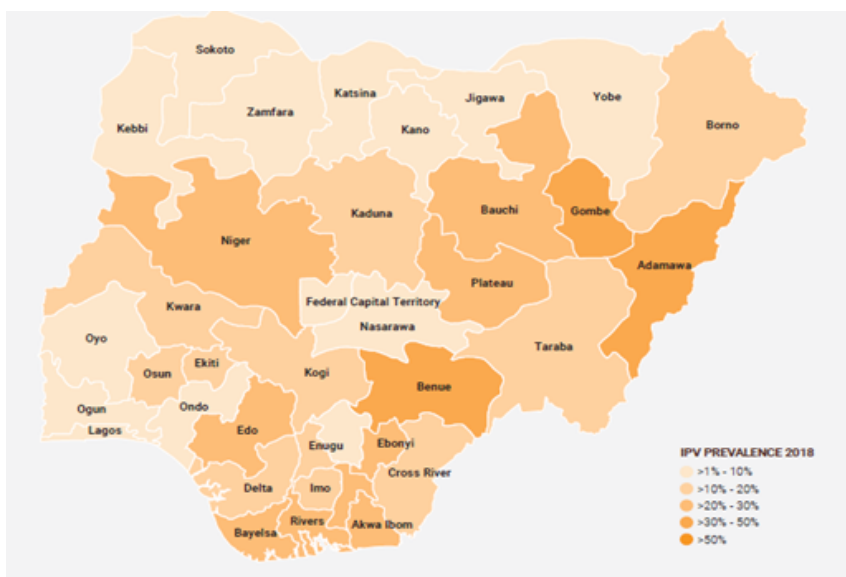


Figure 2: Prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence in Nigeria

GBV Response: A framework for Public Health action

If GBV is a Public Health Challenge, the public health professionals with the Public Health Physicians as the leading group, must be at the forefront of “Challenging the Challenge”. The following 5-dimension ABCDE approach provides a useful framework in that regard:

A- Advocacy and activism: Public health professionals must actively advocate for improved efforts to address the challenge of GBV in Nigeria through holistic prevention, treatment and care, and rehabilitation programmes.

B- Building capacity: There must be intensified efforts at building capacity to address the challenge of GBV – at the community level for community resource persons, at the pre-service level for all students of all health disciplines, and in-service training to build the capacity of all practising health workers.

C- Community-based actions and clinical care: Both community-based actions and clinical care need to be offered complementarily to reduce the burden of GBV and GBV-survivors in Nigeria.

D- Development of evidence-based policies and programmes: Evidence-based policies and programmes are needed that ensures the availability and adequate access to survivor-centred services and GBV prevention services.

E- Evaluation of policy and programme actions: Policies and programmes that are put in place need to be appropriately evaluated to generate learning and use evidence to further improve GBV-related interventions

News in Brief

BY OMOISIVIE MADUKA & TERKAA BITTO

National President visits Port Harcourt

The National President, Association of Public Health Physicians of Nigeria (APHPN), visited Rivers State on Monday 28th of June 2021. During this visit, he interacted with some members of the Rivers State Branch of APHPN who expressed their excitement and pledged their support to the newly elected EXCO of APHPN. In his response, the National President appreciated the warm welcome and pledged to do his utmost best to bring APHPN to even more enviable heights.



APHPN Delta State and Partners hold Medical Outreach

APHPN Delta State Branch in collaboration with JCI Asaba Chapter and Net Pharmacy held a free medical outreach on the 1st of September 2021. Health education/counselling, distribution of long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs), screening for hypertension, diabetes mellitus, malaria, retroviral disease and malnutrition, deworming of under-five children, consultation and treatment of minor ailments were carried out. Ninety six patients were seen made up of 31 (32.3%) males and 65 (67.7%) females; 58 (60.4%) adults and 38 (39.6%) children.



APHPN Benue and partners mark World Hepatitis Day 2021

The Benue State Ministry of Health and Human Services (SMoH) in collaboration with APHPN Benue state branch and Advocacy for the Prevention of Hepatitis in Nigeria (APHIN) on the 28th of July 2021 marked the World Hepatitis Day 2021 with a free screening for Hepatitis B and C at the Benue State Secretariat, Makurdi. The theme was; "Hepatitis can't wait". Two hundred and thirty-five people were screened; 54.5% male and 45.5% female. The yield of the screening exercise was 7.7%



APHPN pays courtesy call to Lagos State Honorable Commissioner for Health

On the 8th of September 2021, the executives of APHPN Lagos State Branch and members of its Biennial Scientific Conference, Local Organizing Committee paid a courtesy visit to the Honorable Commissioner for Health Lagos State at the state ministry of health, Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos. The visit was to solicit his support for the APHPN forthcoming biennial conference and explore opportunities for further collaboration.



Appointments and Promotions

OMOSIVIE MADUKA



APHPN congratulates Prof Steve Abah on his appointment as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academics), Federal University of Health Sciences, Otukpo. We wish him a fruitful and impactful tenure.



APHPN congratulates Dr Auwal Gajida on his elevation to the rank of Professor of Community Medicine at the Bayero University, Kano.



APHPN congratulates Dr Seye Babatunde on his elevation to the rank of Professor of Public Health of the University of Port Harcourt.



APHPN congratulates Dr Haroun Omeiza Isah who has been confirmed Professor of Community Health by Bingham University.



APHPN congratulates Dr Olugbenga Abodunrin on his appointment as Professor of Community Medicine LAUTECH Ogbomoso.

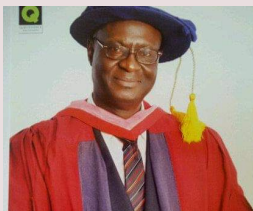


APHPN congratulates Dr Ijeoma Nduka on her promotion to Associate Professor of Public Health at Abia State University.

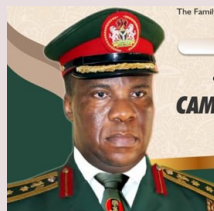


APHPN congratulates Dr Oyefabi Adegboyega Moses on his promotion to Associate Professor of Public Health at the Kaduna State University.

Necrology



**Professor Ademola
Olugbenga Awoyemi**
APHPN Kwara State
Branch
24th May 2021



**Col (Dr) Chinedu John-
Camillus Igboanosi**
APHPN Enugu State
Branch
11th June 2021



Prof Amobi Linus Ilika
APHPN Anambra State
Branch
15th March 2021

Research Highlights

Medicalization of Female Genital Cutting (FGC)

Journal of Community Medicine and Primary Health Care. 33 (1) 30-40
<https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jcmphc.v33i1.3>



**JOURNAL OF
COMMUNITY MEDICINE AND
PRIMARY HEALTH CARE**

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Medicalization of Female Genital Cutting in Sapele Local Government Area, Delta State, Nigeria: The Implication for Health Care Provision in Nigeria

Ikechukwu I, Isah EC, Ehinze SE

Department of Community Health, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria

This study was carried out among 502 women of reproductive age (15-44 years) between November 2017 and June 2018 and aimed to determine the prevalence and practitioners of FGC in Sapele LGA of Delta State. The self-reported prevalence of FGC from the study was 55.2%. Of those that had FGC, 80.5% were medicalized with nurses performing most of them (79.4%). The mean age at FGC was 16.8 ± 5.5 years.

The authors made the following recommendations: There is a dire need for intervention to limit the medicalization of FGC. Healthcare providers especially nurses need to be trained and retrained on the adverse effects of FGC. In addition, the public need to be educated on the adverse effects of FGC.

This article is one of many high-quality research pieces published in the Journal of Community Medicine and Primary Health Care, the flagship journal of the Association of Public Health Physicians of Nigeria. To send in an article for consideration for publication, please email it to editorjcmphc@gmail.com. You can find the instruction for authors and more articles published by the journal at <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jcmphc>



Photo credit: World Health Organization website



Coming Soon

38th Annual Scientific Conference and General Meeting: Ilorin Kwara State

DR OMOSIVIE MADUKA

The 38th annual conference of the Association of Public Health Physicians of Nigeria holds in Ilorin, Kwara State between the 7th and 11th of March 2022. The Local Organising Committee is leaving no stone unturned in order to deliver an excellent conference.

The registration process would soon kick off. Watch out for it and ensure to take advantage of the early-bird registration. Also, prepare to submit an abstract on the conference theme and sub-themes. Visit aphpn-ng.org for more information,

Pottery Making In Ilorin

CONFERENCE FEE

- Early Bird - **N25,000**
- Late Registration - **N30,000**
- Onsite Registration - **N35,000**
- Early Bird Virtual - **N15,000**
- Late Registration Virtual - **N15,000**

Early Bird and Early Bird Virtual registrations end on 7th February 2022

www.aphpn-ng.org

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38TH ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE ILORIN 2022

THE IMPERATIVES FOR STRENGTHENING THE NIGERIAN HEALTH SYSTEM

DePeace Hotel, University Road, Tanke, Ilorin, Kwara State

7th-11th of March, 2022

Global Public Health Dates of Significance: October to December 2021

COMPILED BY OMOSIVIE MADUKA

October

- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- Eye Injury Prevention Month
- National Dental Hygiene Month
- Mental Illness Awareness Week (Oct. 3-9)
- Malnutrition Awareness Week (Oct. 4-8)
- World Mental Health Day (Oct. 10)
- International Day of the Girl Child (Oct. 11)
- World Sight Day (Oct. 14)
- Global Handwashing Day (Oct. 15)
- International Infection Prevention Week (Oct. 17-23)
- World Food Day (Oct. 16)



November

- World Pneumonia Day (Nov. 12)
- World Prematurity Day (Nov. 17)
- International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day (Nov. 20)
- World Antimicrobial Awareness Week (Nov. 18-24)



December

- World AIDS Day (Dec. 1)
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities (Dec. 3)

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