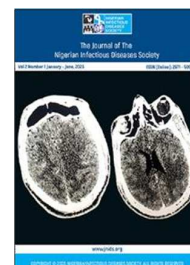




# Journal of the Nigerian Infectious Diseases Society



*Letter to the Editor*

## “Straddling Adolescence” - Perspective on the State of Research on Infectious Diseases in Nigeria

Igumbor EU<sup>1\*</sup>, Esinte I<sup>2</sup>, Rotifa S<sup>2</sup>, Iroezindu MO<sup>3</sup>, Ojimba A<sup>4</sup>, Akande O<sup>5</sup>, Egede M<sup>5</sup>, Audu R<sup>6</sup>

1. Center for Infectious Disease Research, Nigerian Institute of Medical Research, Lagos, Nigeria.
2. Department of Public Health and Community Medicine, Federal Medical Center Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.
3. Department of Medicine, University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital, Ituku/Ozalla, Enugu, Nigeria.
4. Center for Communicable Disease Control and Research, Federal Medical Center Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria.
5. Prevention, Programmes and Knowledge Management Department, Nigeria Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Abuja, Nigeria.
6. Department of Microbiology, Nigerian Institute of Medical Research, Lagos, Nigeria.

**\*Corresponding author:**

[ehi.igumbor@gmail.com](mailto:ehi.igumbor@gmail.com)

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**Quick Response Code:**



Dear Editor,

On the heels of the convergence of world infectious diseases experts in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for the congress of the International Society for Infectious Diseases (ISID) from 17-20 November 2022, the global challenge of infectious diseases was recognised, without equivocation, as requiring local solutions. From nascent pandemics such as COVID-19, to more established pandemics like HIV/AIDS, and epidemics of mpox, Lassa fever, influenza, Yellow Fever, Ebola and cholera, the call for better local science to inform local action was emphasized. This is more so pressing in resource-limited settings such as we find across many of our communities in Nigeria.

It is thus appropriate that for the 10th edition of the Nigerian Infectious Diseases Society (NIDS) Annual General Meeting and Scientific Conference, we have themed our scientific programme “preparedness and response for infectious diseases in resource-constrained settings”. We explore some of the most pressing challenges in the prevention, investigation, and management of infectious diseases in Nigeria spanning such sub-themes as (i) antimicrobial resistance from a One Health perspective; (ii) biomedical innovations in infectious disease diagnostics and countermeasure development; (iii) public health, access and policy - improving access to vaccines and therapeutics; (iv) private sector involvement in infectious disease prevention and control; (v) mental health and behavioural sciences during epidemics of infectious diseases and (vi) e-Health and telemedicine in infectious disease management.

In metaphoric terms, NIDS conferences could be said to have attained “adolescence” in respect of its growth. Our conference now boasts a scientific programme that showcases research work from the leading researchers and institutions working on Infectious Diseases in Nigeria. Our abstract-led sessions pulled together scientific content from clinical practice, basic and translational science, novel approaches to infection control and prevention, epidemiology of infectious diseases, and much more. At a time when our country continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic alongside concurrent outbreaks of Lassa fever, cholera, yellow fever and mpox, there is a heightened importance of better understanding of both the challenges and viable local remedies to infectious diseases in Nigeria.

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Our conference has carefully selected some of the most topical issues to present in plenary as a call for both health professionals and key players in the health sector to match up the current realities in infectious diseases prevention and control in Nigeria.

To this end, the scientific subcommittee applauds the efforts of local researchers, especially all authors who submitted abstracts across various infectious disease thematic areas of national importance. We especially appreciate emerging and young researchers who made submissions and encourage them to sustain the tempo. Indeed, at adolescence, NIDS ought to be intentional about equipping our scientific base with the requisite capacities for research-oriented practice and learning. In this regard, we are pleased to offer a session on the “Rudiments of publishing high impact articles” wherein experienced journal editors and leading authors provide overview of the publication process with recommended actionable advice to improve publication prospects in prestigious journals.

Yet, at adolescence, our scientific programme falls short of the trappings of matured adulthood. For example, although abstracts submitted covered important infectious disease topics, there was paucity of research addressing personalised/integrated approaches across infectious disease therapy and prevention; paediatric infectious diseases; enhancing existing diagnostic capacity through artificial intelligence and data driven approaches; local instances of building capacities and accelerating genomic surveillance and antimicrobial resistance. This lacuna offers areas of research which NIDS should advocate for attention by our research community in Nigeria.

As we listen to the various presentations, we hope you engage with the learning and interact with presenters on the knowledge gained. This is how we advance and better equip ourselves to handle the tasks of infectious disease control across different tiers and levels in our nation and ultimately make our world safer and healthier.

We offer our gratitude to all the speakers and presenters together with everyone who has invested time, energy and money to make this conference a success. Special thanks to our scientific review panel who waded through several submissions to offer us a sound scientific programme. All members of the local organizing committee are also gratefully acknowledged.

Once again, we commend our scientific programme to you and trust you would find the outputs of our 10th edition of the NIDS Scientific conference interesting.

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