



NEC NEWS

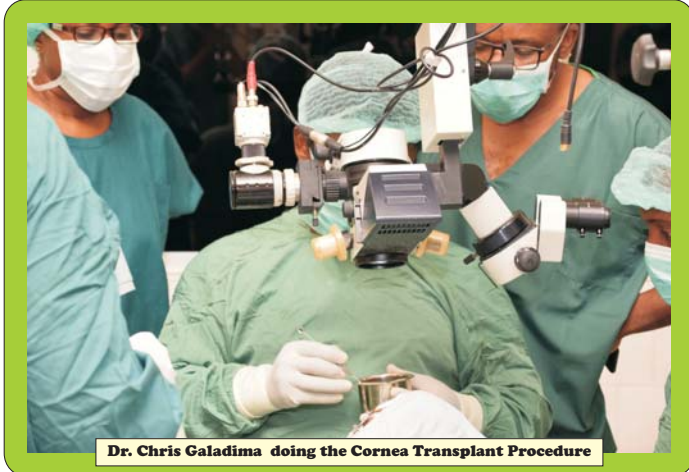
Newsletter

Of the National Eye Centre,
Off Nnamdi Azikiwe Way (Western Bye Pass),
P.M.B. 2267, KADUNA

Volume 23

4th Quarter, 2019

NEC Performs Cornea Transplant



Dr. Chris Galadima doing the Cornea Transplant Procedure

The National Eye Centre carried out its first cornea transplant surgery on 10th May, 2019 at the hospital.

The transplant was performed by one of the Centre's Consultant Ophthalmologists and a Cornea specialist, Doctor Chris Galadima, on a 26- year- old patient having a diseased cornea.

Dr Galadima explained that cornea transplant takes place when a diseased cornea is replaced with a healthy one from a dead person.

He stated that the healthy cornea transplanted was sourced from the United States of America (U.S.A.) through collaboration with three other organisations – Amana Community Eye Health Foundation, Kaduna, chaired by Prof. Caleb Mpyet and which served as a link with the other two organisations based in U.S.A.

The Cornea expert stated that the cornea tissue was got from Vision First (Indiana Lions Eye Bank), U.S.A through the advocacy of Cornea Transplantation Foundation, also in U.S.A.

He said this arrangement was made possible through the Cornea for Nigeria programme – a tripartite foundation with Amana, Cornea Transplantation and Vision First.

According to Dr Galadima, the cornea tissue is free, but the cost of processing and getting the tissue transported to Nigeria should be about two million naira (N2million), but that with the efforts of Amana and Cornea Transplantation Foundation, a patient is made to pay only a reimbursement fee of five hundred thousand naira (500,000.00) while National Eye Centre only charges forty-five thousand (N45, 000.00) naira for the cost of transplanting.

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2019 CEH COURSE ENDS

The Community Eye Health Course (CEH) organised by National Eye Centre ended on the 28th of May, 2019 at the Centre.

Admonishing the participants, the Chief Medical Director, Dr Mahmoud Alhassan, urged them to correctly apply the skills acquired from the training, and in doing so, be good ambassadors of the Centre.

The Chairman of the Faculty of Surgeries, West African College of Surgeons, who was also a resource person for the Course, Prof. Caleb Mpyet, stated that the Course was not just about passing exams and obtaining a certificate, but to impart upon communities; the knowledge acquired. He, therefore, reiterated the need to take the skills acquired seriously.

Also speaking, the Head of Department of Community Ophthalmology, Dr Murtala Umar and Coordinator of the Course said it was a privilege having Prof. Mpyet as a resource person and called for improvement in the stipend given to the resource persons.



The CMD, Dr. Alhassan, speaking during the programme

2019 Ophthalmic Equipment Maintenance Course for Nurses & Technicians Ends

The Ophthalmic Equipment Maintenance Course for Nurses/Technicians organised by National Eye Centre, Kaduna, ended on the 4th of October, 2019.

In his remark, Dr. Musa Danjuma who represented the Chief Medical Director, Dr. Mahmoud Alhassan, congratulated the trainees and tasked them to be good ambassadors of National Eye Centre in their respective places.

Also speaking at the event, a Consultant Ophthalmologist with the Cornea and Anterior Segment Department, Dr. Peter Jiya, who represented the Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee, Dr. Amina Hassan-Wali, described medical engineering as a unique discipline through which a machine can treat a patient without a Doctor.

In his own remarks, the Coordinator of the Course who is also the Head of Instrument Engineering, Mr. Joshua Bala, appreciated God for making it possible for the programme to hold, and also thanked the Management for its support throughout the programme.

The Assistant Director, Engineering, Engineer Ado Masoyi urged the trainees to make Hospital Service better in the country by making use of the knowledge they acquired during the training.

Earlier in his goodwill message, the Assistant Director Establishment, Mr. Gideon Adamu who represented the Director of Administration and Head of Human Resource at the event, congratulated the trainees for their success and for rightly choosing the Centre for the training, considering National Eye Centre as a place well known for capacity building.

The Assistant Head of Theatre, Mr Olatunji Michael, advised the trainees to be good ambassadors of National Eye Centre as they practise what they learned during the training.

Also speaking, Mr John Gbaiyegun of Community Ophthalmology Department, reiterated the need for

continuous practice, so as not to forget the knowledge acquired from the training.

Responding on behalf of the class, the class representative, Mr Samuel Ena, appreciated the Management and promised to be good ambassadors of National Eye Centre.

Certificates and tool boxes were presented to the trainees while those who took 1st to 3rd positions were presented with gifts. One of the trainees came from Ghana.

2019 Ophthalmic Microsurgery Theatre Nursing/CSSD Technician Course Ends

The 2019 Ophthalmic Microsurgery Theatre Nursing/CSSD Technician Course organised by the National Eye Centre, Kaduna ended on the 30th August 2019 at the Centre.

In his remarks, the Chief Medical Director (CMD) of National Eye Centre, Dr Mahmoud Alhassan, who was represented by Dr. Olusegun Olaniyi, a Consultant Ophthalmologist with the Glaucoma Clinic, congratulated the trainers and thanked them for choosing National Eye Centre.

Dr. Olaniyi advised the participants to let patients be the centre of their care as well as be good ambassadors of National Eye Centre wherever they find themselves.

Also speaking at the event, the Head of Human Resource, Malam Ubale Ibrahim, advised the participants to operate within their boundary and uphold the good name of National Eye Centre in their respective places of work.

The Matron-in-charge of Consultant Clinics, Mrs Christiana Sani, who represented the Head of Nursing, Mrs Roselyn Igbokwe, also advised them to constantly practise the knowledge and skills they acquired, otherwise they would forget what they learned during the training.

The Co-ordinator of the Course, Mrs Florence Chukwudebelu expressed appreciation to the Chief Medical Director, Dr. Mahmoud Alhassan, whom she described as a vibrant and visionary leader, for giving approval for the Course to be held this year and, he himself, serving as one of the resource persons.

NEC Marks WSD with Free Eye Screening, Treatment

To mark this year's World Sight Day (WSD), the National Eye Centre conducted free screening for students of Capital School (a government – owned school in Kaduna) and members of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), Kaduna State Branch.

A total of 250 persons comprising students and staff of the School (on 9th October) and 90 journalists (on 8th October) were screened and drugs and reading glasses issued to those needing them while those that needed further management were referred to the Centre.

10th of October (the internationally recognised World Sight Day) witnessed an Annual Public Lecture held by the Centre to mark the occasion and the Lecture was delivered by Professor Emmanuel Abah of the Department of Ophthalmology, Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital, Shika – Zaria, Kaduna State.

According to Prof Abah, the World Health Organisation (WHO) facts show that 189 million people worldwide have visual impairment ranging from mild to moderate and severe and that 89% of this number live in low and middle income countries while 55% of those with moderate or severe visual impairment are women.

He stated that majority of the people with vision impairment are over the age of 50 years and that the leading causes of vision impairment are uncorrected refractive errors and Cataract, Glaucoma, Onchocerciasis (river blindness), among others.

The Guest Lecturer was, however, quick to point out that 80% of all visual impairment is avoidable (can be prevented or cured) and so called on the people to have their eyes examined and at the same time, encourage their families and friends to do same especially those who are vulnerable – young, school children, elderly and those with diabetes, etc.

Prof Abah said that doing so will generally improve the quality of life and life expectancy, and naturally reduce the

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number of years lost due to disability or early death.

Earlier in an opening remark, the Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee (CMAC), Dr Amina Hassan-Wali, who represented the Chief Medical Director, Dr Mahmoud Alhassan, reiterated the need to create awareness for all of us to have our eyes checked and at the same time encourage our families, relatives, neighbours and friends to have theirs checked too.



A doctor examines one of the students

She also told the staff to have their eyes checked, without being prompted, at least once in a year, "especially as we are aging".

Another activity slated to mark the day was a debate between Capital School and Zamani College, Kaduna on the topic: "The Eye is the Most Important Organ in the Body" with Zamani College proposing and Capital School opposing. At the end of the day, Zamani College won the debate.

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Cornea Transplant

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The Cornea expert lamented that an average Nigerian Cornea patient still cannot afford the cost and so, he called on the government to help subsidise the cost while urging well-meaning Nigerians to sponsor the transplant for indigent patients.

He also admonished that Nigerians be enlightened through advocacy on the need to imbibe the culture of donating their cornea and other parts of the body at death for the use of people who are still alive and need them. He urged the mass media, Non-governmental organisations and other concerned organisations to enlighten the people in this regard.

Elated at the successful surgery, the patient, Hussaini Khalid, said the problem started when he was less than five years old and that he had been to different hospitals, but could not get the problem solved until he was referred to National Eye Centre. He has, since, returned home seeing with the eye.

Speaking on behalf of all the participants, the class representative, Dr Momoh Jimoh Abdulrazak, thanked the Management for organising the Course and described it as an eye opener to the participating Doctors towards the health needs of the Community.

The best student of the Course this year was Dr Pam Helen from Jos and was presented with a gift.

The CEH Course is an annual 5-week Course organised by the Centre in collaboration with the West African College of Surgeons.

SCHOOL OF POST-BASIC OPHTHALMIC NURSING GETS RE-ACCREDITATION

The School of Post-Basic Ophthalmic Nursing established in 1996 by National Eye Centre has been re-accredited to continue running all its programmes.

After a seven-man re-accreditation visit to the school in May this year by the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria, the Council gave approval to the School to continue running its programmes and power to increase the number of students it can admit from 30 – 50 for its Nursing Diploma (OND) Course.

According to the Principal of the School, Alhaji Abubakar Rifun, the Council gave the approval based on the very adequate human resource and facilities available in the School.

The School was first accredited in 1996 while it commenced training in 1998. Since then, the School's initial programmes have been re-accredited while those latter introduced have also been accredited over time after visits by different accreditation teams from the Council.

Overtime, the performances in the final qualifying examinations have been very impressive as the School records show that six times from 2005 to 2008 and 2011 and 2016, the School had 100% pass while the least percentage performance had been 77% pass since inception.

The School runs programmes such as the Ophthalmic Nursing Diploma, Advanced Diploma in Community Ophthalmic Nursing, etc.

64m People have Glaucoma

Over 64 million people worldwide between ages 40 – 80 have Glaucoma eye disease, a number expected to increase to 76 million by the year 2020.

This disclosure was made by the Head of Cataract and Glaucoma Department and a Consultant Ophthalmologist, Dr Olusegun Olaniyi at a Public Lecture organised to mark the World Glaucoma Week on the 18th of March, 2019.

Dr Olaniyi stated that “in Nigeria, five out of every one hundred people aged 40 years and above are affected”, while most of those affected do not know that they have the disease and that one out of every five affected people is already blind.

According to him, Glaucoma is divided into two groups, namely Open angle and angle closure types. The open angle type, he said, is usually without any symptom; but that in advanced cases, patients may notice that they can't see things with the sides or corners of their eyes.

The angle closure type, he continued, commonly causes remarkable symptoms such as blurred vision, discomfort in bright light, pain, redness and sometimes, severe headache associated with vomiting.

Dr Olaniyi, a Glaucoma expert, explained that more awareness by the public on Glaucoma eye disease will encourage people, especially those above 40 years old to get their eyes screened for early detection. He said this informed the need worldwide for the annual Glaucoma week during which different activities are carried out by the hospital to create awareness on the dangers of the disease.

At an interactive session held at the Lecture Theatre of the hospital on the 20th of March, 2019 in furtherance of awareness creation, the Chief Medical Director (CMD), Dr Mahmoud Alhassan, called on Nigerians to go for Glaucoma screening in order to protect their eyes from the danger of the disease. The CMD described Glaucoma as a disease that “anybody be it a professor or

farmer can have” and for which, unfortunately, there is no cure, and so the Centre uses the Glaucoma week every year to sensitize people on the disease.

The CMD also told the gathering of the existence of an outreach programme put in place for people in the rural areas that are presently situated at Turunku in Igabi Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

In her speech, the Deputy Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee and Head of Residency Training, Dr Thelma Ndife said that “you can know that you have Glaucoma only when you go for a test”, and so advised the general public to go for regular check up.

With the aid of a Nurse, Dr Ndife who is also a Glaucoma expert demonstrated how to properly apply eye drops.

In her own remark, the Chairman Medical Advisory Committee, Dr Amina Hassan-Wali, advised parents to allow their children with Glaucoma eye disease go through surgery where necessary because according to her, treatment alone may not be adequate in the management of the disease.

Another Glaucoma expert who is also a Consultant Ophthalmologist with the Cataract/Glaucoma Clinic, Dr Sadiq Abubakar, who handled the question and answer session, described Glaucoma as a group of eye disease associated with high pressure of the eye.

Also at the event, a patient, Malam Idris Muhammed, called on the Management of National Eye Centre to send its doctors to rural areas such as Brinin Kudu Local Government Area of Jigawa State to create awareness on the dangers of Glaucoma.

Other activities during the Glaucoma week were free eye screening for the general public and drugs given to those detected to have Glaucoma after screening. The event held between 18th and 22nd of March, 2019.

NEC TO RUN SUB-SPECIALTY TRAINING

The National Eye Centre will soon start running trainings in sub-specialities such as Glaucoma, Vitreo-retinal, Paediatric Ophthalmology, Oculoplasty and Cornea/Anterior Segment when the Centre gets a nod from the West African College of Surgeons (WACs).

A four –man accreditation team, led by Professor Joshua Owoeye, visited the Centre on 9th December, 2019, to examine the readiness of the hospital in terms of facilities and manpower to start running the programmes.

According to the Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee, Dr Amina Hassan-Wali who represented the Chief Medical Director, Dr Mahmoud Alhassan at the occasion, the accreditation team was impressed by the facilities available in the Centre and encouraged the Centre to take the bold step of running the programmes.

She stated that if the accreditation exercise scales through, Ophthalmologists would no longer be going abroad for these trainings as they would be available at the Centre and according to her, would also help promote the Centre's place as the leading eye care provider.

Currently, Nigerian medical professionals travel abroad to places like India and Singapore for the sub-speciality trainings.

Glaucoma Support Group

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Alhaji Alfa said that when he went to India for Glaucoma surgery, he was told that many of the services he accessed had already been paid for by some wealthy individuals or organisations and so he needed not pay. He, therefore, called on wealthy people and other well-meaning Nigerians to support Glaucoma patients financially and other ways they could help ease the economic burden of managing the disease as obtained in places like India.

Senate Lauds NEC on Avastin Injection Incident

The Senate Ad-hoc Committee on Health set up to look into the incident of Avastin infection that initially rendered 10 patients blind at the National Eye Centre commended the Centre for its proper handling of the situation.

The seven-man ad-hoc Committee led by its Chairman, Senator Matthew Urhoghidi came to the Centre on 11th July, 2019 to, according to the Chairman, ascertain the cause of the problem with the aim of finding solution (s) and at the same time, interact with the patients involved to inform them on the efforts being made to resolve the issue.

The Chairman stated that the Committee constituted by the Senate president, Sen Ahmed Lawan, was at the Centre based on a motion moved on the floor of the Senate that 10 patients allegedly lost their sight when injected with Avastin.

Explaining what happened to the Committee, the Chief Medical Director of the Centre, Dr Mahmoud Alhassan, stated that the 10 patients were injected in their eyes with avastin injection usually given to patients whose case require such treatment. One of them returned the following day complaining of pain and blurred vision.

The CMD said that with this development, all the 10 patients who were either hypertensive or diabetic or both and who had the injection were recalled, admitted and corrective procedures were commenced on them immediately. He stated that at the time of the Committee's visit, eight of the patients had started seeing at various levels while the remaining one patient was yet to see but, that the medical team was working assiduously to ensure he regains his sight. One of the patients left against medical advice.

According to Dr Alhassan, the patients' full regaining of their sight or at least to the pre- Avastin injection level will be gradual, but the hospital was making all possible known medical efforts in this direction which explained why the Centre had spent over seven million naira so far on their treatment, feeding and accommodation.

He told the visiting Senators that Avastin had proven to be effective in management of several eye diseases apart from its use for cancer treatment and that in the past, 2113 patients had been treated effectively with the drug by the Centre.

The CMD expressed worry that with the purported ban of the drug by the Senate, it might be difficult for most eye patients needing such a drug to access necessary treatment.

Responding, the Ad-hoc Committee Chairman stated that the Senate did not ban the use of the drug but, ordered the suspension of its use pending the outcome of the investigation it directed National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) to do.

The Committee members, thereafter, interviewed the affected patients (one by one) most of who told them they had started seeing to a great extent while one said he was still unable to see.

The Committee said it was impressed by the way the Centre had handled the unfortunate incident and further stated that probably the temporary blindness was due to inflammation stated as one of the drug's side effects.

The Chairman of the Committee, however, stated that the Committee would await the outcome of NAFDAC's investigation before the Senate would take its stance on the matter.

Glaucoma Support Group

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interactive session as well as get tested through the free screening opportunity provided by the Centre.

Speaking further, he said the Group also supports members psychologically/emotionally as it encourages them to neither see themselves as the only one in the situation nor the end of their lives.

Corroborating the Chairman's claim, the Deputy Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee (DCMAC) of the hospital who is a Glaucoma Consultant Ophthalmologist, Dr (Mrs) Thelma Ndife, explained that the members of the



Mr Ibrahim Wambai, a nurse with the Centre, attends to a patient

World Sight Day

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The World Sight Day is observed annually on second Thursday of October and it aims at creating awareness on blindness and visual impairment while promoting early detection to prevent blindness from avoidable causes.

The WSD was originally initiated by the Sightfirst-Campaign of Lions Club International Foundation in the year 2000.

The theme or call to Action for this year is "Vision First".

group come together at least once a year with Glaucoma specialists in attendance to discuss issues affecting them. "Through such meetings, a Glaucoma victim gets to know that he is not the only one in such a condition and gets to know how to go about the situation", she added.

The DCMAC also stated that in the developed world, "Glaucoma group is very influential. For instance, it orders for its own drugs directly from manufacturers to beat down prices and so make them affordable for members and also to protect members against buying fake drugs".

She further added that costly drugs and frequent life time visits to the hospital are some of the challenges the Glaucoma patients face and so, in the Group which also includes some relatives/caregivers of the patients, many of these challenges are addressed.

Dr Ndife also stated that the group was also in the process of securing approval from the Management of the Centre to create a website where Glaucoma patients and members of the public could ask questions and clarify issues.

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Glaucoma Support Group Canvasses for Membership

The Chairman of the Glaucoma Support Group (a group established at the National Eye Centre two years ago), Alhaji Hassan Alfa, has called on people, especially everyone that has been diagnosed of Glaucoma eye disease, to join the group.

Speaking during an interactive session with members of the public, an event organised by the National Eye Centre as part of activities to mark the World Glaucoma Week, on the 18th of March, 2019, the Chairman said members stand to benefit immensely from being members of the group as the group focuses on passing vital information to registered members and encouraging them to speak up on the challenges they are facing due to Glaucoma, with the goal of addressing such challenges.

The Group, according to Alhaji Alfa, consists mainly of Glaucoma patients and people who have the interest of Glaucoma patients at heart and it is a forum where Glaucoma patients can interact to discuss challenges they are facing pertaining the Glaucoma eye disease and get needed help.

The Chairman stated that the forum is also meant to create a better relationship between National Eye Centre and Glaucoma patients for the betterment of the patients. In doing this, he said, he has had to approach the Management of the Centre on some occasions to beat down the costs of surgery and or treatment for indigent Glaucoma patients who are registered members of the Group.

Alhaji Alfa explained that the group also sensitizes the members to go and create awareness among the general public about the dangers of the Glaucoma eye disease and the need for early detection by getting tested in a standard hospital like National Eye Centre.

The Chairman, who himself is a Glaucoma patient, further said that the Group takes it upon itself to bring people to the Centre during the Glaucoma Week each year to listen to the Glaucoma Public Lecture, participate in the



Dr. Iheanacho (middle), members of NANS and some Residents during the award

NANS Honours HOD, Cornea & Anterior Segment

The National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) has honoured the Head of Department of Cornea and Anterior Segment in the Centre, Dr Urania Iheanacho as an “Icon of Development”.

Presenting the award to her at the Centre, the five man-delegation led by NANS chief of staff, Comrade Usman Sa’idu stated that Dr. Iheanacho was found worthy of the award due to her exemplary service to humanity.

“She has impacted lives in a positive way, and contributed immensely to promotion of health services. We interviewed individuals who gave good reports about her character and work”, he explained.

The NANS leader described Dr Iheanacho as a mentor, bridge builder, mother and social crusader who should be emulated by other people.

Explaining the activities of NANS, Comrade Sai’du, said that apart from honouring people who have performed excellently in their different endeavours and are of worthy character, NANS also engages the less privileged by supporting them with scholarships as well as organising workshops, symposia, etc that will help students shun vices and promote unity in the Country.

The award plaque states that the award was on “outstanding performance in educational development, philanthropic activities youth empowerment, service to humanity, absolute fairness and accountability for the growth and

development of this country and Africa at large”.

Receiving the award, Dr. Iheanacho said she never expected to be honoured by such an association and so “I felt flattered when someone whom I don’t even know up till now called me that NANS wished to confer an award on me. This shows that truly, as we walk through life, people are watching us and our acts”.

The HOD said she was thankful for the honour done to her by the students and urged people to always strive to improve people’s lives and not be a stumbling block to anyone.

She stated that individuals, who are social service providers, should always put themselves in the shoes of their clients and do their best in their job while calling for tolerance in the workplace, where people spend much of their time.

In a vote of thanks, a Resident in the Cornea and Anterior Segment Department, Dr Jimoh Momoh, said he was not surprised by the award judging by Dr Iheanacho’s track record saying that she is “not just a Doctor, and a trainer/teacher but, also a mother to those of us, her trainees.

Thanking the students for initiating awards of recognition for professionals who usually are less known than politicians, he said “people like me are motivated to continue in this profession knowing that some people somewhere appreciate what we do for humanity.” Many other staff of the Centre were present at the occasion.



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1. Chairman of the Senate Committee on Avastin, Senator Matthew Urhoghidi (middle) during their visit to the Centre. See story on page 5.

2. The CMD explaining a point to the ACTU delegation that visited the Centre on Feb. 12, 2019.

3. Mrs Mary Abah and her husband when the former was given an award of excellence for emerging the overall candidate in the nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria professional examinations.

4. Baby Grace, born to the family of Mr. & Mrs Adedayo Oni on the 31st of January, 2019. Mrs. Adedayo is with the IT Unit.

5. Matron Maimuna Alabi during her sentforth organised by the NANNM, NEC branch on the 17th of October, 2019.

6. L - R: Mai. Alhassan Ungo, the DA, Dr. Johnson Akang, Head of Oculoplastics Dept, and Dr. Paul Umung during a walk to observe the 2019 World Diabetes Day on Nov. 14, 2019.

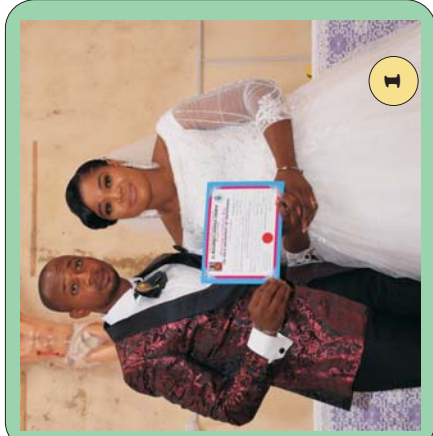
7. Dr. Aminna Hassan Wali, the CMAC and Prof. Joshua Owoseye, leader of the West African College of Surgeons accreditation team. See story on page 4.



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1. Former Miss Rita Bernard Kabuk of the PR Unit and her newly wedded husband during their wedding on Dec. 7th, 2019.



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2. The couple and staff of the PR Unit.



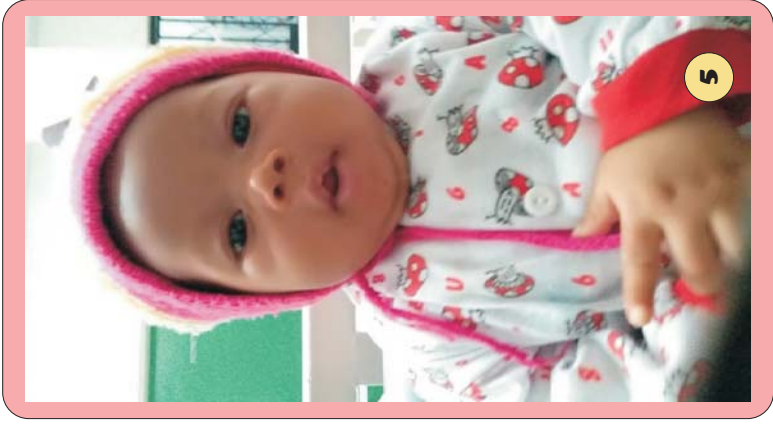
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3. Dr. Dr. Nelson of the Optometry Unit and his bride when they wedded on the 27th of July, 2019.

4. A group pix of the NEC and Forestry teams and their supporters after their friendly match to mark the MHWUN end-of-the-year activities.



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5. Baby Gracious born to Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Ezeanochie on the 26th of July, 2019.

SSAUTHRIAI Holds End of Year Party

The Senior Staff Association of Universities, Teaching Hospitals, Research Institutes and Allied Institutions (SSAUTHRIAI), National Eye Centre (NEC) branch held a get-together party on the 12th of December, 2019.

Welcoming members to the occasion, the Chairman of the Union, Comrade Joseph Amlabu, stated that Unionism is necessary in an organisation because “no employer will give you what you want. You have to ask for it. As workers, we get what we want through unionism.”

Going down memory lane, the Chairman said that moving from CONTISS to CONHESS Salary Scale and implementation of the 2013/2014 promotions, among other benefits that should naturally come to workers, were with a lot of struggles of the Unions with the Government/Management. He added that if “you just sit in one place, nothing will drop on your laps”, to buttress importance of unionism and its achievements over the years in the Health Sector.

Comrade Amlabu urged the people not to lose hope on the 43 days salary arrears saying that the Union officials are working assiduously to ensure the payment just as it has recorded a very huge percentage in the minimum wage review and its implementation.

While thanking the Management for its support over the years, the Chairman asked that the one month mandatory pre-retirement workshop and parking allowances for retirees as entrenched in the Public Service Rules but which have not been implemented for a long time in the Centre, should be resuscitated as, according to him, it will go a long way in helping the retirees who have to wait for a year or two before receiving any money from their Pension Fund Administrator.

The Chairman also pointed out as an anomaly that Management does not organise send-off for retirees after they must have served the government for 35 years or till they attain 60 years of age, as a way of saying thank you to this group of people for their service to the nation.



Mr. Amlabu, Chairman of SSAUTHRIAI NEC branch, speaking during the party

Responding, the Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee (CMAC), Dr (Mrs) Amina Hassan-Wali, who represented the Chief Medical Director (CMD), Dr Mahmoud Alhassan at the occasion, promised to convey the requests of the Union to the CMD and other members of the Management for action.

While commending SSAUTHRIAI and other Unions for their contributions to the progress of the Centre during year, she said that more commitment and efforts would be required of them in the years ahead, especially as the hospital is making efforts to get accredited for sub-speciality trainings in Ophthalmology.

She stated that all the staff, and not only Doctors, have a role to play in moving NEC to greater heights saying, “and I believe you all have potentials to do it”.

Also speaking, the Director of Administration, Mallam Alhassan Ungo, stated that the inability to pay the allowance for the one-month pre-retirement workshop was a concern to the Management and promised that the issue and others raised by the Union Chairman would be looked into.

The Deputy Director (Human Resource) Mallam Mohammed Abdulkadir in his own remark, assured the Staff that the Human Resource (HR) Division would be alive to its responsibilities explaining that the Division would be firm and

entrench discipline as well as ensure that everyone would get what rightly belongs to them according to the Public Service Rules.

In her own remarks, the Deputy Director, Public Relations, Mrs Elizabeth Obiweluozor, who also compered the occasion urged the Staff to sit up in their duties so as to ensure that what they get is the good side of the HR Division in the coming years.

MHWUN to acquire own vehicle

The Medical and Health Workers' Union of Nigeria (MHWUN), National Eye Centre (NEC) branch is set to acquire its own vehicle for the use of the Union and its members.

This was disclosed by the Chairman of the branch, Mr Solomon Bulus, at an end-of-the –year/get-together party organised for members of the Union in the Centre.

The Chairman stated that the vehicle would be acquired within the first quarter of the year 2020 debt free. Comrade Bulus thanked the members for their support over the years and promised more fulfilling union activities in the years ahead.

He also expressed gratitude to the Management of the Centre for the cordial relationship between it and MHWUN which he attributed to the support given to the Union by the Management.

While also thanking the Management for supporting the Union in the Centre, the State Treasurer, Comrade Silas Kure, who represented the State Chairman, Comrade Ayuba Suleiman, advised the members of the Union to obey the constituted authority and abide by the Public Service Rules so as to avoid the wrath of the law while also urging them to give due respect to their bosses, colleagues and subordinates.

The Director of Administration, Malam Alhassan Ungo, who represented the Chief Medical Director, Dr. Mahmoud Alhassan reiterated the cordial relationship between the Management and MHWUN and other Unions in the Centre and pointed out that the only way

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MHWUN to acquire own vehicle

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to achieve success is to be in good relationship with one's Staff.

The DA said that the request made by MHWUN for Management to provide facilities for indoor games was already being looked into as the Engineering Department had been directed to come up with an estimated cost.

In a fraternity message, the Chairman of the Senior Staff Association of Universities, Teaching Hospitals, Research Institutes and Allied Institutions (SSAUTHRIAI), NEC branch, Mr. Joseph Amlabu, urged staff not to lose hope over the payment of the outstanding 43 days arrears of salary saying that the Joint Health Union (JOHESU) was still meeting with government over the matter and added that the meeting would be resolved soon.

Other people present at the occasion were the Deputy Director (Human Resource) Mallam Mohammed Abdulkadir, Deputy Director, Public Relations, Mrs Elizabeth Obiweluozor (who compered the event) and Assistant Director (Human Resource) Mr. Gideon Adamu.

A friendly football match between the College of Forestry, Afaka- Mando and Centre had earlier taken place in the day with 3 – 1 score in favour of the Centre.

PR Staff Member Weds



Rita Signing the Marriage Register

A member of Staff of the Public Relations Unit, Rita Bernard Kabuk got married to Victor Ali Bgynent on the 7th of December, 2019 at St. Mulumba's Catholic Church, Kurmin - Sara, Kachia, Kaduna State.

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SERVICOM organises sensitisation workshop

A one-day Workshop for Front Desk Officers was organised by the SERVICOM UNIT OF National Eye Centre (NEC), Kaduna, on 1st November 2019 with the theme: Attitudinal Change for Efficient Service Delivery.

Declaring the Workshop open, the Chief Medical Director (CMD), Dr. Mahmoud Alhassan, who was represented by the Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee (CMAC), Dr. Amina Hassan-Wali, stated that staff need to change their attitude from negative to a positive one towards the patients, saying that the "patients come because they hope that you are going to give them the best service".

Dr. Hassan-Wali added that "every member of Staff has something to contribute because Doctors can't do the job alone. Both the junior and senior Staff should do what they are employed to do, and the seniors should not look down on the juniors. Moreover, love your job so that you can do it effectively." The CMAC advised the Staff to go for an eye check-up especially because of Glaucoma eye disease that doesn't show signs saying "you can go for eye screening once in a year. Also, check your overall health regularly".

Delivering his lecture titled "Attitudinal Change for Efficient Service Delivery, the Head of Community Ophthalmology, Dr. Murtala Umar, stated that there is no development physically or intellectually without efforts and "effort means work. Do what is right, not what is easy."

He advised the staff to develop their capacity and "have good character, arrive on time, ready to work, listen to and follow instructions, be willing to learn (learning attitude), complete your work in a timely fashion with the job well-done and don't be the kind of person that gives excuses, even as you work with teamwork spirit."

The Doctor added that Staff must work towards achieving the Centre's vision which is to be the leading eye care provider in Africa.

Doctor Murtala also advised the Clinics



Mr. Danny Nnanta, Head of SERVICOM, during the workshop

and other Departments to hold meeting from time to time in order to find a way of resolving issues or challenges.

Also delivering a lecture, titled: "Service Improvement", the Deputy Director of the Public Relations Unit, Mrs Elizabeth Obiweluozor stated that "Service is what we offer ourselves for and is what the people are expecting to have from us and Public Service is the only contact that most people have with government."

Mrs Obiweluozor explained that "when it comes to customers, there's no such thing as over communication, saying that clients feel more comfortable when they know what's going on. That being said, the amount of communication is not so imperative as the timeliness, its context, and ability to identify the value addition to the client." She added that in a world of constant connectivity, one's ability to give quality and timely answer can go a long way.

The Deputy Director also explained that to ensure customer satisfaction, service improvement, in line with global best practice, can never be over emphasised. "It is, therefore pertinent", she noted, that at individual, Unit, Departmental and corporate levels, the driving force should be consistent and continuous service improvement because satisfied customers turn out to become loyal customers and National Eye Centre, like its competitors, need loyal customers to remain in business.

Earlier in his remark, the Head of SERVICOM Unit, Mr Danny Nnanta stated that "good enough is no longer good enough, there is need for more and advised that when the Staff goes back to their duty posts, they should do the right thing as the programme was put together in other to change staff attitude."

Oculoplastic Department Sends Forth Former HOD



Dr. Helen Alen

The Orbit and Oculoplastic Department organised a send forth party for its former Head of Department and one time Acting Chief Medical Director of the Centre, Dr (Mrs) Helen Alen.

Representing the Chief Medical Director, Dr Mahmoud Alhassan at the occasion which held on the 29th of March, 2019 at the Department, the Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee (CMAC), Dr Amina Hassan-Wali said Dr. Alen was a great asset to the Centre due to her hard work and vast knowledge in Ophthalmology.

The CMAC said she wasn't happy that Dr Alen was leaving the Centre having worked closely with her for about 24 years, starting with residency during which they learned a lot from each other. The CMAC was, however, quick to say that since the decision to leave the Centre was because of the need to be near her family, the Centre had no choice but to release her. She said she knew that Dr Alen would be an asset to her new place of work.

The Director of Administration (DA) in the Centre, Mallam Alhassan Ungo, explained that though it was difficult letting Dr Allen go, she would be a good ambassador of National Eye Centre in her new employment down south.

The DA said that the Centre would continue to train people who he believed

would also be good NEC representatives wherever they find themselves.

Also speaking, the Deputy Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee, Dr Thelma Ndife, described Dr Allen as not just a senior colleague and friend, but also a source of inspiration whom she ran to for advice on many issues.

Earlier in his farewell speech, the current Head of Orbit and Oculoplastic Department, Dr Suleiman Ameen stated that Dr. Alen contributed immensely to the hospital, a fact he said was not hidden from anyone.

The HOD pointed out that through the various posts she held, Dr Alen positively affected Residents, patients, staff of the Centre, and the generality of Nigerians. She described her as "a pillar going by her strategic inputs in the operations of the hospital."

While also pouring encomiums on Dr. Alen, the first HOD of the Department, Dr. Johnson Akang, urged people to do unto others what they want others to do to them, saying with this in mind, people should show good character, expecting others to also do good unto them.

He advised people to listen to their conscience at all times when taking decisions, adding that when they do so, they won't have problem with other people.

Representing the Head of Nursing Services, Mrs Roselyn Igbokwe, the Head of Theatre, Mrs Florence Chukwudebelu, described Dr Alen as an ever happy person as there was never a dull moment with her. She said Dr. Alen was such that has solution to every problem.

Other speakers such as Consultants, Residents, Nurses, Pharmacists, CHEWs, and Administrators, also eulogised Dr. Alen and lamented that Centre would miss her sorely.

When given the opportunity to respond Dr Alen was too overwhelmed with emotions that she could not speak.

Dr Alen joined the service of National Eye Centre more than two decades ago as

a Resident and was later appointed as a Consultant Ophthalmologist after passing the qualifying examinations. She was at, one time or the other the Head of Orbit and Oculoplastic Department, Head of Residency Training, Deputy Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee, Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee and Acting Chief Medical Director of the Centre.

Also sentforth at the occasion was Mrs Christianah Yakubu who retired from the Centre as Chief Confidential Secretary, with the Oculoplasty Department as her last place of duty.

Pharmacy, Store send forth Sarki



Mr Alhassan Sarki

A sendforth event was organised for the immediate past Head of Stores, Mr Alhassan Sarki, jointly by the staffs of Pharmacy Unit and Pharmacy Store on the 8th of August, 2019.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee (CMAC), Dr Amina Hassan-Wali, suggested that judging by Mr Sarki's wealth of experience, hardwork and character, a workshop should be organised to enable him train especially the newly employed staff.

The CMAC stated that Mr. Sarki achieved so much and that one would have wished that he continues working, but for the Public Service Policy that requires retirement at the age of 60 or after 35 years in service.

She urged staff to emulate Mr Sarki by ensuring that they handle with utmost sense of responsibility whatever is put in their care, stressing that "do not say it is

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Pharmacy, Store send forth Sarki

Cont. frm p11

government work or government property, handle it the way you will handle your own. Everyone of us working here has something to contribute to the betterment of the patients.”

In his own remarks, the Director of Administration (DA), Mallam Alhassan Ungo, said that as one of the pioneering staff of the hospital, Mr Sarki and the first Head of Stores, late Mr Luka Madami worked tirelessly to set up the Centre's Store where he retired as the Head. “This is a feat worthy of being celebrated,” he said.

The DA advised him that though retired, Mr Sarki should be actively involved in one activity or the other to keep fit.

Earlier in his own remarks, the Head of Pharmacy, Mallam Abdulrasheed Buhari, explained that “we decided to collectively honour Sarki because of his immense contributions to the smooth running of the Pharmacy though he was not one of the pharmacy Unit staff.”

According to Mallam Buhari, Mr Sarki set the standard currently being enjoyed in the Pharmacy Store and which he said has helped the improvement of essential drugs services.

He observed that in some organisations, Drug Revolving Fund suffers serious setback due to cases of theft, falsification of figures, inefficiency, etc, but that none of such things happened during Sarki's time, hence the reason behind the decision to honour his good work at the Pharmacy Store.

While also pouring encomiums on Mr Sarki, the Head of the Central Store, Mr Michael Yusuf, represented by the current Head of Pharmacy Store, Mr Sarafa Adisa, said he was amazed when on assuming duty at NEC he saw the foundation and precedence laid by the late Mr Madami and Mr Sarki, saying “what the duo put in place is likened to the standard found in the private sector – very efficient”.

The event was rounded off with a presentation of cash gift by the organising units to Mr Sarki who came

accompanied by two of his daughters, one of whom also spoke glowingly of him.

Theatre sends forth Albert, 2 Others

The immediate past Head of the Operating Theatre Unit, Mr Albert Uwah, has been sent forth by the Unit, having served the hospital and nation meritoriously.

Mr Uwah, a trained perioperative and Ophthalmic Nurse, was sent forth on the 8th of April, 2019, alongside two other staff of the Unit, Mallam Mohammed Yakubu and Mrs Ladi Mashekeri who also retired from active service as Central Supply Store Department (CSSO) Theatre Officer and Head, Health Attendant respectively.

While making remarks, the Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee (CMAC) Dr (Mrs) Amina Hassan-Wali who represented the Chief Medical Director, Dr Mahmoud Alhassan, stated that the retirees being celebrated contributed immensely to the growth of the hospital. She called on staff to do their best to add value to their jobs saying “all of us, whether Medical professionals or Administrative Officers, are there to add value to the patients who are one of our core values.”

According to her, the eye being a very vital organ of the body, we as National Eye Centre staff giving eye care services should do our best to ensure that those who walk in blind, leave the hospital seeing.

The immediate past CMAC, Dr Johnson Akang, called on all present to treat others as they would want themselves to be treated and commended the retirees for putting in their best while in service.

In her own remarks, the Deputy Director, Public Relations Unit, Mrs Elizabeth Obiweluzor, described Mr Uwah as a responsible person and one with focus, ever putting in his best in whatever he does.

She described Mal. Yakubu and Mrs. Mashekeri as friendly people who also took their job serious, wishing them the best in their future endeavours.

The Assistant Director (Human

Resource), Mr Gideon Adamu, who represented the Director of Administration, Mal. Alhassan Ungo, stated that the celebrants were hardworking and never had any query while in service, qualities which he said should be emulated by other staff.

Earlier in her remarks, the current Head of the Operating Theatre, Mrs Florence Chukwudebelu stated that Mr Albert Uwah was a very valuable member of staff who contributed immensely to the growth and development of Centre in general and the Operating Theatre in particular and that he would be sorely missed.

Speaking about the other two retirees, the head of Theatre described Mallam Mohammed Nda as a very humble, respectful and industrious person, and Mrs Mashekeri, a very respectful and down to earth worker.

Speakers after speakers poured encomiums on the three former staff and wished them the best in retirement, even as gifts were presented to them by the Unit.



QUOTE

“When we strive to become better than we are, everything around us becomes better too”

- Paulo Coelho

NEC Inducts New Staff

The National Eye Centre organised a three-day induction training for its newly recruited staff from 22nd to 24th May, 2019.

Declaring the training open, the Chief Medical Director (CMD), Dr. Mahmoud Alhassan, stated that National Eye Centre has a highly specialized and distinctive workforce with professionalism.

He stressed the importance of all staff in all ramifications including cleaners and admonished the newly employed staff to put in their best efforts to lift the Centre to a greater height.

The CMD enjoined the new staff to discharge their duties with utmost responsibility as directly or indirectly, they would be dealing with “the human eye”, which is one of the most sensitive organs of the body.

Also speaking, the Director of Administration, Mallam Alhassan Ungo, urged the newly recruited staff to abide by the rules and regulations governing the conduct of staff in the Organisation while carrying out their duties.

In his own remarks, the Head of Human Resource, Mallam Ubale Ibrahim, admonished the new staff to be law abiding and discharge their duties with high level of responsibility and sensitivity as they would be dealing with human life.

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PR Staff

Speaking during the solemnization, Reverend Father Ben Ezeobata urged the couple to love and respect each other in order for them to have a happy married life.

Reception followed after at the Local Education Authority Primary School, Kurmin - Sara.

Community Ophthalmology Department Sends Forth Staff



Alhaji Hashim Raiyanu



Mrs Iyabode Bolarin

Two Chief Nursing Officers, Alhaji Hashim Raiyanu and Mrs Iyabode Bolarin, who retired from the Community Ophthalmology Department of National Eye Centre in the course of the year were sent forth by the Department.

Speaking at the occasion, the Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee, Dr Amina Hassan- Wali, who represented the Chief Medical Director, Dr Mahmoud Alhassan described the duo of Alhaji Raiyanu and Mrs Bolarin as two very important staff who shaped “everything for me when I was the head of Department (HOD) of Community Ophthalmology. They were instrumental to our teamwork spirit and operation as a family”.

She stated that they were hardworking and passionate about the community and prayed that they would live long to enjoy the fruits of their labour.

The Centre's Director of Administration, Mallam Alhassan Ungo, described both celebrants who retired as Chief Nursing officers hardworking public servants who in their 35 years of service were of great service to NEC, Community Eye Care and the people at large.

In his own remark, the current HOD of the Department, Dr Murtala Umar, said both of them were very good at their job and left behind a vacuum that will be difficult to fill.

Of Mrs Bolarin, he said “she taught me and many others residents throughout the country School Health through the Community Eye Health course which enables early diagnosis and treatment for children and so she has contributed

immensely to the field of Ophthalmology.

Dr. Umar described Mrs Bolarin as a teacher/trainer of surgeons and a hardworking person who is never tired. Of Alhaji Raiyanu, the HOD said, “He is very generous and kind. A trainer and advocate in getting and preparing communities for outreach programmes. His popularity and acceptance I those have always helped our students.

He stated further that Alhaji Raiyanu remains the most important person up North giving ophthalmic community eye care services while also doing well in Public Health.

Though retired, the HOD said both of them are still resource persons to some courses while he still marks with them in some eye care outreaches.

Many other staff including their superiors, colleagues at the Department, juniors and friends also eulogised the two retired staff and promised to emulate them while urging other staff to do same.

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Nurse Refractionists

places of work”.

In appreciation, the class representative, Mr Bello Suleiman, thanked the Management for giving them the opportunity to learn at the Institution and promised they would be good ambassadors of National Eye Centre. Nine people from different parts of the Country participated in the training.

22nd Batch Ophthalmic Nursing Students Hold Seminar

The 22nd batch of the School of Post Basic Ophthalmic Nursing, National Eye Centre, held its seminar presentation on the 30th October, 2019, at the Lecture Theatre as part of the requirements for the award of Diploma in Ophthalmic Nursing and Management.

The first group's paper was on "Vitamin A Deficiency, a Leading Cause of Preventable Childhood Blindness, Role of Ophthalmic Nurses, presented by Samuel Temitayo and it defined vitamin A as a term encompassing a group of unsaturated organic compounds which include retinol, retinal and retinoic acid and several pro-vitamin A carotenoids.

The group stated that vitamin A and its metabolites play diverse roles in physiology, ranging from incorporation into vision pigments to controlling transcription of a host of important genes.

According to the presentation, Health depends on maintaining vitamin A level within a normal range as either too little or too much of this vitamin can lead to a serious disease.

Group two delivered its paper through Mrs Eja Matina Ogebene on "The Role of Ophthalmic Nurses in the Integration of School Eye Health" into the Existing School Health Services" and described an Ophthalmic Nurse as a general Nurse who has acquired knowledge, skills and attitude in promotion of eye health.

According to the group, at the community level where there is a health facility or Primary Health Care Centre, there is usually no Ophthalmologist. It is the Ophthalmic Nurse that oversees the eye care services provided, and report events to appropriate authorities for continuous management.

The group said the Ophthalmic Nurse must, on a daily basis, carry out eye screening so as to detect preventable blinding conditions and find solutions to the conditions which may be Cataract, Trachoma, Onchocerciasis or Glaucoma.

Group three presented its paper through Abubakar Sadiq Hassan with the title "Blindness Prevention: The Role of an

Ophthalmic Nurse" where it explained that blindness imposes a significant burden on the society in terms of human suffering, costs in loss of productivity, rehabilitation and education of the blind .

The group added that the cost of preventing blindness is very low compared to the cost of rehabilitation and so urged that prevention should be sought for rather than treatment and rehabilitation.

According to the group, Ophthalmic Nurses have the potential to significantly contribute to Ophthalmology such as in diagnosis, treatment, prevention of ocular conditions (including blindness) and the visual sciences.

Speaking at the presentation, the Chief Medical Director (CMD), Dr. Mahmoud Alhassan, who was represented by the Head of Community Ophthalmology Dr. Murtala Umar, congratulated the students and tasked them to practise in their various places, what they learned during the training programme.

Earlier in his remarks, Mr Gideon Adamu of the Establishment Unit who represented the Director of Administration, Malam Alhassan Ungo, stated that "National Eye Centre, being an academic Institution, is an avenue for sharing ideas, knowledge and so on and the Post-Basic Ophthalmic School, expectedly, has a role to play".

In her own remarks, the Head of Public Relations, Mrs Elizabeth Obiweluzor advised the students to always pick the best among them when it comes to the issue of presentation to share the knowledge with every other member of the group so that everybody can participate and respond to questions during the presentation.

While also making remarks, the Head of Pathology Department, Dr. Paul Unung, advised that the School should have a research reviewer and that the School should be supported in every way necessary.

Also speaking, the Head of Library, Mrs Samanah Ndams, commended the students for their presentation which she

said was a job well done.

While addressing the gathering, the Principal of the School, Alhaji Abubakar Rifun, thanked the audience for their commendations, corrections and suggestions and promised that the School would take the suggestions into consideration for improved future presentations.

Alhaji Rifun also stated that the School was working hand-in-hand with the Management for the School to be affiliated with a university.

Nurse Refractionist Course Ends

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The Nurse Refractionist Course organised by the Community Ophthalmology Department of the National Eye Centre, Kaduna, ended on 19th July, 2019 at the Centre.

In his remarks, the Chief Medical Director (CMD), Dr Mahmood Alhasan, commended the Department for a Job well done and the Course participants for their dedication during the period of the training.

In the same vein, the Chairman Medical Advisory Committee (CMAC,) Dr Amina Hassan-Wali, said "refraction is a skilled area" that needs constant practice while encouraging them to come again to the Centre in future for update on the knowledge acquired.

Also speaking at the event, the Head of Community Ophthalmology Department, Dr Murtala Umar, thanked the participants for being so hardworking during the programme which he said explained their success.

Earlier, the programme Co-ordinator, Mr John Gbaiyegun thanked the CMD and Heads of Departments involved in the training saying the Course was a success because they all played their different roles well.

He specifically appreciated the robust leadership provided by the CMD towards the graduation of the Students and expressed confidence that the participants would successfully represent Centre well wherever they find themselves. In his words "I am sure you will be very productive in your various