

### **Clinical skills acquisition by medical graduates: a prerequisite for good practice ...**

Approximately half of the seventeen manuscripts appearing in this last issue of Volume 48 of this journal present information on non-communicable diseases. They include glycaemic control (correlating blood viscosity, age and anaemia; relationship between ghrelin level and glucagon-like peptide-1 release); adherence to therapy for systemic hypertension, benefit of diuretic therapy stored at low temperature and protected from light for treating pulmonary hypertension in children, bladder cancer trends, frailty and ageing and haemoglobinopathy. Three of the remaining manuscripts cover interesting topics in dentistry such as sequence of tooth eruption, use of acrylic dentures for improved well-being of partially edentulous individuals and overcoming shyness as one of the peculiar reasons for prolonged indulgence in oral habits by school children aged 6 to 12 years. Two other manuscripts highlight traditional practices for childbirth and male circumcision. These articles reinforce the emerging health problems posed by non-communicable diseases.

The article by Abdur-Rahman and colleagues from University of Ilorin deserves special attention. It was based on data obtained from a questionnaire survey of 163 new interns, and it showed dismal performance in pre-training self-assessed proficiency level particularly with nasogastric intubation, chest tube insertion and fracture management. The poor performance was attributed to inadequate training facilities, reluctant patients and competition between undergraduate and postgraduate trainees. These procedures, among others, are essential and should be within the competence list of most graduates. The essential professional duties of medical and dental graduates in sub-Saharan Africa was published as a review article in the September 2016 edition of the journal and there was an editorial titled “Ensuring professional competence of medical and dental graduates in sub-Saharan Africa” to highlight the key points

This is a time for sober reflection on our training programmes and we must find ways to ensure that all the needed competences are acquired by the time a student graduates from our training institutions. In the era of globalization, the products of our medical schools must be competitive and should not be short-changed in their training. Use of manikins for simulation and the acquisition of clinical skills laboratories will go a long way in overcoming some of the highlighted factors in the article. Interns who are found deficient should have extra teaching during the internship year and residency training.

The focus of the national template for undergraduate medical education is patient-centred, competency-based teaching and many medical schools have adopted this new curriculum. This article therefore serves as a reminder to all training institutions to place the right emphasis on formative assessment to ensure that necessary skills are acquired to ensure smooth professional practice and quality care of patients.

#### **Reference**

1. Olapade-Olaopa EO, Sewankambo N, Iputo JE *et al.* Essential professional duties for the sub-Saharan medical/dental graduate: An Association of Medical Schools of Africa initiative. *Afr. J Med med sci.* 2016; 45: 221-227

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