

Substance abuse among Nigerian youths

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Substance abuse has become more prevalent among Nigerian youths and emerged as a major public health problem.^{1,2} The youths are the future of the country and hence leaders of tomorrow. Thus, we need them to be substance abuse free to perform their roles optimally. Unfortunately, many of them are yielding to the vices of substance abuse leading to the disruption of their education, occupation and family life. Some yield to substance abuse due to the feeling of wanting to be among their peers and the feeling of experimentation among many other reasons. Some of the substances are however addictive even after the initial experimentation. The end result is that we have so many of our younger generation addicted to different types of substances including over-the-counter drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, cannabis and so on. Unless something drastic is done, we appear set to have so many youths that are dependent on these substances and unable to perform their roles as future leaders. Therefore hands must be on deck to stem the tide.

We all have roles to play as parents, teachers, medical and health workers and most

importantly as Muslims. There are many articles in this edition of the journal that focus on drug abuse among our youth. Oreagba and Mohammed informed us that Pharmacists play a crucial role in the reduction and prevention of substance abuse, since they are able to advise patient about illicit drugs, psychotropic medicines and alcohol abuse. Musa *et al.* studied screen prevalence of drugs of abuse in urine of patients seeking treatment at a regional tertiary mono-specialist hospital in north-west Nigeria. Interestingly, the drug urine positive test screen prevalence was high with most of the positive cases seen in young men below the age of 30 years.

This is a clarion call for us all to pay attention to this important public health problem that is growing in dimension. Parents should be on the watch out and look for tell-tale signs of substance abuse among their children. The Ulama should dedicate some of their preaching to issues affecting the youth especially substances abuse and its dangers. Health workers should educate the youth on the dangers of drug abuse as enumerated in the articles in this edition. And as reflected by

Muhammad's article on Students' perceptions of drug abuse and its consequences on learning, many others have roles to play including teachers, neighbours and friends of affected youth. While health education should continue to be going on and targeted at those yet to be addicted, affected victims should be offered professional care.

There are however many other interesting and educative articles in this edition including Uthman and Opeewe's Islamic approach as the holistic recipes to numerous mental health challenges, Dahiru *et al.* prescribed roles for the health workers for the IDPs, Mohammed *et al.* development of rapid dipstick test for

schistosomiasis a major tropical illness and Oladosu *et al.* hormonal profile of infertile women seeking treatment at UITH. Happy Reading...

References

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2. UNODC, (2005) United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, World Drug report 2005. Available at https://www.unodc.org/pdf/WDR_2005/volume_1_web.pdf.