



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PLANNING, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

Prof. Ifeoma Okoye
Department of Radiology
University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and
University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital, Enugu,
Enugu State

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24th July, 2023

Dear Professor Ifeoma Okoye,

RE: UNN 187TH INAUGURAL LECTURE: TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR IFEOMA OKOYE

I write on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Health on this landmark occasion of the 187th Inaugural Lecture of the University of Nigeria, which you are presenting on the title, "Dream it, See it, Do it". As a person that has led so many firsts over the course of your career, the title of your lecture is apt, and one can only look forward to the lecture in anticipation.

Among your firsts that I wish to acknowledge is your role in facilitating the establishment of what is now Nigeria's National Health Research Ethics Committee, as well as the National Clinical Trials Technical Working Group. Now with nostalgia, I recall how deliberations arising from the first Annual Conference of Good Clinical Practice of Nigeria (AGCPN) which held at Transcorp Hilton, Abuja, in 2006 with its theme "Promoting Health Research Capacity in Nigeria Within an African Context: Towards the Development of National Good Clinical Practice Guidelines" led to a set of recommendations that included the need for Nigeria to establish a National Ethics Committee. The meeting, true to its importance was well attended by many stakeholders including the then Director of the Department of Health Planning and Research at the Federal Ministry of Health, Dr. Jonathan Jiya, representative from Senate President's office, Chairmen of both Senate Committee on Health and the House Committee on Health, Directors General of NAFDAC, NIPRD, NIMR, & NACA, representative of the Nigerian Army Corps, Faculty from the Ministry of Health of South Africa, Dr Richard Somiari, President and Chief Scientific officer, ITSI Biosciences, LLC Johnstown, PA, USA, Pfizer Facility, Ethics Committee Chair of UNN, representatives from multiple tertiary health institutions. I further recall that it was on the strength of the recommendations from that meeting that the AGCPN excitedly published its first paper (Promoting Health Research Capacity in Nigeria), launched by your distinguished self at the ANPA (Association of Nigerian Physicians in America) meeting in the US, in 2007, where you were the Guest Lecturer on the Nwankwo Memorial Lecture.


I also recall how in 2015 you championed the establishment of the Clinical Trials Technical Working Group and the launch of the Clinical Trials Summit in 2012, both being the first of their kind initiatives aimed at building human and institutional capacities needed to position

Nigeria as a choice destination for clinical trials to address the teeming health conditions affecting Nigerians and Africans in general.

In all these endeavors, I have not only taken personal pride but also have been personally involved and experienced your capacity for pioneering projects/innovation. I am therefore truly honoured to once again be part of celebrating your achievements at this auspicious moment.

I know there are many more impactful things that you have done for humanity including your efforts at creating awareness of breast cancer and facilitating better management among others. As I mentioned earlier, one can only anticipate learning more from your seminal works during the lecture in the hope that it contributes towards cementing your legacies and inspiring the younger generation to aspire towards achieving even more.

Congratulations and please accept the assurances of my highest regards.



Alaiye Dr. Ngozi Azodoh,
Director/Head,
Dept. of Health Planning, Research and Statistics,
Secretary, NHREC