Change of Guards at the AJPS: Opening New Frontiers

'AJPS aims to establish itself as the leading journal in paediatric surgery in Africa ….'

–Francis Uba (Maiden edition of AJPS, 2005)

At the last Annual General Meeting of the Association of Paediatric Surgeons of Nigeria, Prof. Emmanuel Ameh, immediate past Editor in Chief of the journal, completed his tenure and I had the privilege of taking over the task of leading the editorial board of the flagship journal of paediatric surgery on the African continent. Thus, I became the third Editor of the journal.

In the maiden editorial of the journal, Prof. Francis Uba defined the need for the journal, its scope and its vision when he wrote:

'Paediatric surgery has existed in Africa for over 60 years now, and several national and regional associations now exist to promote paediatric surgery in Africa, yet there remained the establishment of an indigenous scientific journal in Africa that is devoted to paediatric surgery speciality. As a result, the peculiar surgical conditions of children have not received the much-desired attention and publicity they require in Africa. This has resulted in the slow pace in the growth of paediatric surgery speciality in Africa. The desire to provide an interactive forum for the exchange of ideas, dissemination of information, research and/or discoveries among specialists and professionals in the field and practice of paediatric surgery on the African continent orchestrated the birth of AJPS, which is the first of its kind in Africa. AJPS is devoted to the publication of new and important information from the entire spectrum of paediatric surgery. The major purpose of the journal will be to promote research, postgraduate training and further education in the surgery of infants and children (emphasis mine).



In the last 17 years of the journal, it has achieved each and every of the conceived visions through the birth pangs of the Founding Editor in Chief – Prof Uba– who navigated the journal through the early years, through adequate breastfeeding and a balance of needed nutrients through the teething years and toddler stage till it became a standing journal with international repute. To the relentless labour of this great pioneer, the whole body of specialist paediatric surgeons on the African continent is grateful.



Having steered the affairs of the journal for over a dozen years, the pioneer editor handed over to another giant in our speciality in Africa – Prof. Emmanuel Ameh. Prof. Ameh is a workaholic with pristine work ethics, a prolific academic and a surgeon with unusual dexterity. All these qualities are coupled with a humble disposition and disarming smile. Prof. Ameh took the journal through undulating waves of uncertainty and particularly during the pandemic. And now, the journal is a force to reckon with. To his selfless services, commitment to excellence and persistent passion, we are grateful and we hope to lean on the experiences they have gathered to give traction to the journal as we steer through uncertain waters.

In this issue, and in line with the vision of the founding fathers, we have introduced some new sections to the journal. First, we hope to have invited reviews on a topical subject in paediatric surgery in subsequent issues of the journal. We hope this will be from African paediatric surgeons either on the continent or in the diaspora. When it is the latter, we hope it will be written in collaboration with Africans at home. Second, and to encourage trainees and medical students, we plan to introduce the medical education segment using either picture tests or clinical scenarios. Finally, another innovation introduced is the section of 'Pillars in African Paediatric Surgery' to showcase African Paediatric Surgeons and their contributions to the speciality. In this issue, the contributions of one of the foremost paediatric surgeons in Nigeria, who recently passed on during the pandemic are highlighted. We welcome paediatric surgeons on the continent to contribute to this section of the journal. We hope you find these and other interesting original papers and case reports in this issue an interesting read.

Adesoji Oludotun Ademuyiwa[1,2]

[1]Department of Surgery, Faculty of Clinical Sciences, College of Medicine, University of Lagos, [2]Department of Surgery, Lagos University Teaching Hospital, Idi Araba, Lagos, Nigeria

Address for correspondence: Prof. Adesoji Oludotun Ademuyiwa, Department of Surgery, Paediatric Surgery Unit, Faculty of Clinical Sciences, College of Medicine, University of Lagos, Idi Araba, Lagos, Nigeria. Lagos University Teaching Hospital, Idi Araba, Lagos, Nigeria. E-mail: aoademuyiwa@cmul.edu.ng

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