



**NIGERIAN  
MEDICAL  
ASSOCIATION  
RIVERS STATE**

Fourth Edition: January 2023

# **NMA RIVERS STATE NEWSLETTER**

**04** University of  
Port-Harcourt (UPH)  
Convocation  
Ceremony

**07** Rivers State Ministry  
of Health Task Shifting  
& Task Sharing (TSTS)  
Dissemination Meeting



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# NMA CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

## A NEW BEGINNING - 2023

I want to humbly welcome all our members and their beloved families and friends to the year 2023.

Indeed the year 2022 can be described by many in different ways, we are grateful to have made it this far and to be counted amongst the living even as we continue to make difference in our world.

Since coming on board as an administration in the last quarter of the year, the Nigerian Medical Association Rivers State has witnessed tremendous growth and in togetherness, we have recorded some lofty achievements.

Today we reflect on some of the events in the past month, better participation in our events, the hosting of the Physician's week, our outreach drive to those affected by the flooding crisis, our participation in deliberations for the Mental Health Bill, the equipping of the ICT Centre, increased health advocacy, public relations drive in digital and print media.

We have also stood by our members who had attendant welfare issues and mitigated security crises as they arose and celebrated our colleagues in their professional and academic victories.

Indeed the year has been memorable and we look forward to a better 2023 on all fronts.

We will not renege on our commitment to deliver excellent and competent leadership that has the welfare of our members at its core.

Long live NMA Rivers!

**Dr Ebbe Robinson**  
**Chairman, NMA Rivers**



## FROM THE P.R.O.

You are welcome to the New Year 2023.

2022 has been very eventful and the publicity committee embarked on several initiatives to build the image of our association while keeping our members informed and engaged.

This year we would build in the experiences in the past year and also onboard other projects as the months go by.

This edition covers activities of the Association in the month of December and covers other highlights and achievements of our members amongst other things.

We also encourage all our members to visit our our rebranded website – [nmarivers.org](http://nmarivers.org) and register as a member.

Relax and enjoy the read.

**Dr Ogechukwu Isokariari**  
**Public Relations Officer**



## FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to our first newsletter for the year 2023.

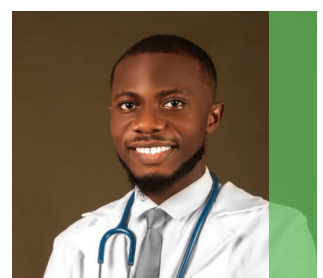
We let out great publications throughout last year and we are grateful to you, dear reader for coming along with us.

This year, we will strive to give you more awesome newsletters.

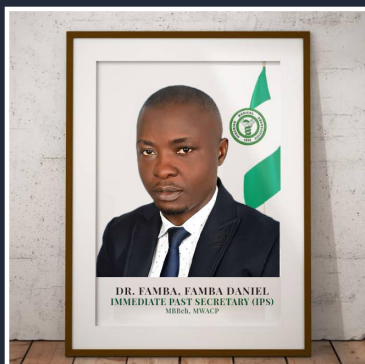
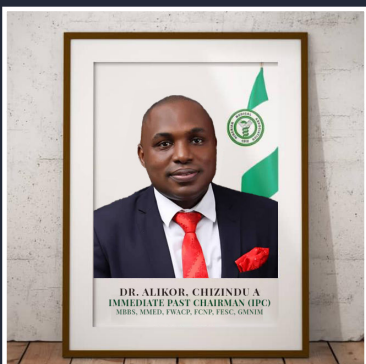
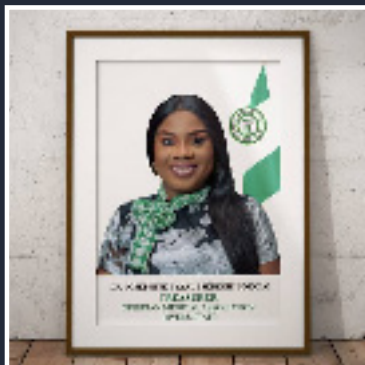
All of us are immensely proud of the newsletters we have published since the beginning of this endeavor and we hope it has always been a pleasurable read for you dear reader.

We pray that we are successful in our resolutions for this new year as we look forward to a fantastic 2023 for us all.

**Dr. Daniel Faithful Miebaka**  
**Editor, NMA Rivers Newsletter**



# MEET THE EXECUTIVES



# FELICITATIONS

## UNIVERSITY OF PORT-HARCOURT (UPH) CONVOCATION CEREMONY

Several members of the NMA Rivers State were robed in official colours of the university during the 33rd Convocation ceremony of the University of Port-Harcourt between December 2nd and 3rd 2022.

The Chairman of NMA Rivers state, Dr Ebbe Robinson on behalf of the SOC and SEC conveyed hearty felicitations with all her members who were awarded a degree from University of Port Harcourt Convocation Ceremony.

## CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

The Provost of the College of Medical Sciences, Rivers State University, **Dr Chituru Godswill Orluwene (Professor of Laboratory Medicine)** was recently elected as the **Chairman Association of Provost of Colleges of Medicine in Nigeria (APCOM)**.

The Chairman, NMA Rivers State - Dr Ebbe Robinson on behalf of the State Officers Committee, the State Executive Council and the entire NMA Rivers community conveyed congratulatory messages and best wishes on the feat.



## PROFESSORIAL ELEVATIONS

The chairman of NMA Rivers - Dr Ebbe Robinson on behalf of the State Officers' Committee, State Executive Council and the members of NMA Rivers State heartily congratulate our colleagues for a well-deserved elevation to the rank of Associate Professor.

### Dr Ureh Oparaodu

Department of Ear, Nose and Throat

### Dr Uche Onubogu

Department of Paediatrics

### Dr Friday Aaron

Department of Orthopaedic and Trauma surgery

### Dr Boma West

Department of Paediatrics

### Dr Kenneth Okagwa

Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology

### Dr Nengi Alazigha

Department of Radiology



# AWARDS

## RIVERS STATE GOVERNMENT HONOURS TWO RIVERS DOCTORS WITH DSSRS

Two notable Rivers Doctors Dr. Emi Membere-Otaji and Dr. Friday Aaron were amongst recipients of the Distinguished Service Star of Rivers State (DSSRS).

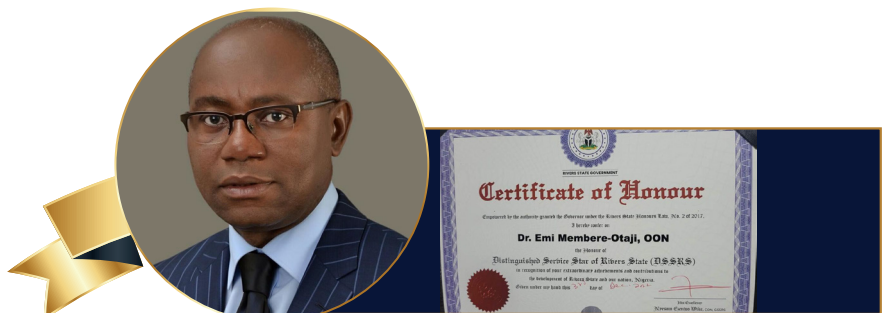
The recognition which is the second highest honour in the state was given at an event organized at the Rivers State Government House by His Excellency, Barr. Nyesom Ezenwo Wike on December 3rd 2022.

**Dr. Emi Membere-Otaji OON** is the Medical Director of Princess Medical Centre and a captain of industry, whereas, **Dr. Friday Aaron** is the Chief Medical Director of the Rivers State University Teaching Hospital.

The NMA Chairman, Dr. Ebbi Robinson while conveying felicitations in a briefing said, the award speaks volumes of excellent service record for the good of Rivers People, especially in the health sector.



*Dr. Friday Aaron CMD RSUTH conferred with DSSRS by Rivers State Government.*



*Dr. Membere-Otaji conferred with DSSRS by Rivers State Government.*

# **MEDIA PUBLICITY CAMPAIGNS**

## **NMA RIVERS STATE AND THE RIVERS STATE MINISTRY OF HEALTH CELEBRATES WORLD AIDS DAY**

On the 1st of December, NMA Rivers and the Rivers state Ministry of Health commemorated World AIDS day.

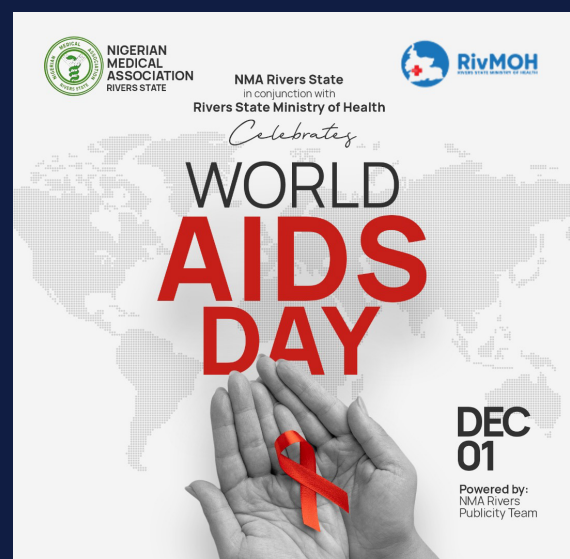
Thirty-four years ago, the United Nations committed to raising awareness for the AIDS pandemic and also remembering those who have died from the disease.

With just 8 years to the 2030 target of ending the burden and threat of the disease, a lot is yet to be done.

Societal prejudice impairs health-seeking behavior as well as the adoption of preventive measures or treatment. Stigmatization has also threatened coping mechanisms, which impacts survivability.

Global funding efforts and resources have been depleted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is therefore important to explore cheaper alternatives and leverage the strength of awareness in reversing the scourge.

While we focus our strategies for change, we must always remember those who have died from a preventable disease, even as we realize that as many as 36.3 million persons have died from this globally as of 2020





## NMA EVENTS

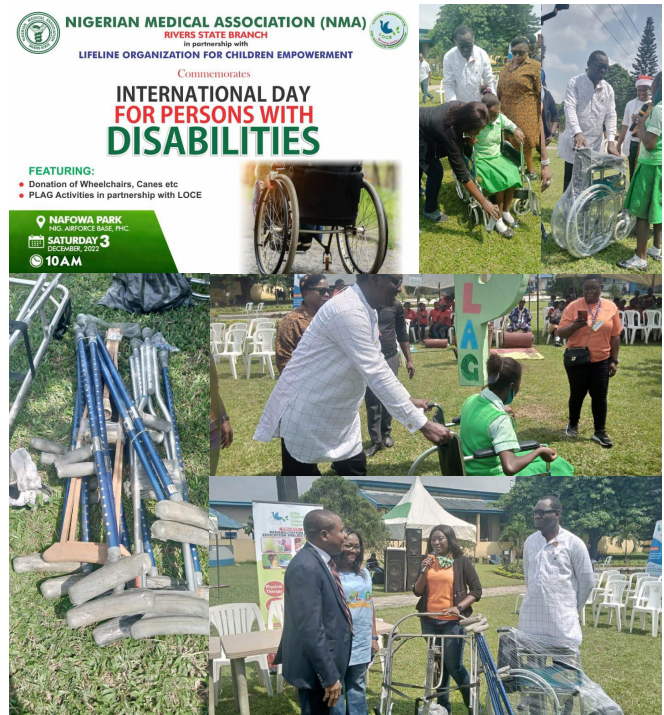
### NMA RIVERS STATE JOINS THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY TO CELEBRATE THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITY (IDPWD).

Several organizations across the globe partnered to bring the world's attention to people living with disability on the 3rd of December 2022.

The theme for this year's event was "Transformative solutions for inclusive development: The role of innovation in fuelling an accessible and equitable world".

The NMA Rivers State Vice Chairman 1, Dr. Vetty Agala on behalf of the Association led efforts to commemorate the IDPLWD through a welfare event at NAFOWA Park, Air Force base, Port-Harcourt.

About 500 children were beneficiaries of the outreach efforts getting smart canes, wheelchairs and other accessories. The general public was also enlightened on the need for more visibility of disabled persons, even as several stakeholders including parents, communities, schools, businesses and government agencies were encouraged to make more concerted efforts towards inclusion that could lead to improvement in overall quality of life.



### RIVERS STATE MINISTRY OF HEALTH TASK SHIFTING AND TASK SHARING (TSTS) DISSEMINATION MEETING.

NMA Rivers State was part of the Task Shifting and Task Sharing (TSTS) dissemination meeting organized by the Rivers State Ministry of Health (RSMOH).

Dr. Vetty Agala, Vice Chairman 1, NMA Rivers gave a goodwill message on behalf of the NMA Chairman on the occasion of the dissemination of the Rivers State Task Shifting and Task Sharing policy meeting.

She noted that NMA was concerned about the delivery of quality healthcare and that the policy would serve as a stop gap method for the human resource challenges in the health system.

While congratulating the State Ministry of Health on this Landmark achievement, DrVetty said the NMA will look into the implementation of the TSTS policy to ensure collaboration and harmony within the health workforce.



**NMA COLLABORATES WITH RSPHMB AND RSMOH FOR THE SCALES 3.0 strategy for COVID-19 VACCINATION CAMPAIGN.**

The Nigerian Medical Association Rivers State Branch collaborated with the Rivers State Primary Healthcare Management Board and the Rivers State Ministry of Health for the implementation of the Scales 3.0 strategy for COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign.

The campaign which began in December is to continue till February at fixed sites at campuses, markets, worship houses, etc. All adults 18 years and above, pregnant mothers after the first trimester, and lactating mothers are eligible to be vaccinated.

## FEATURED ARTICLES

### CHOP LESS TO CHOP LIFE?

An Article Review of "The Less We Eat, the Longer We Live: Can Caloric Restriction Help Us Become Centenarians?"

*by Daniel Faithful and Loizy Fana-Granville*

A recent extensive literature review attempted to establish a link between eating less and living longer, and if such feeding habits contributed to centenarians living longer. The article shows the vital role of nutrition in achieving longevity.

Calorie restriction has been shown to be the most significant modulator of several metabolic processes underlying chronic diseases.

It has been reported to be most beneficial when commenced in early childhood (school age group).

Calorie restriction (CR) is defined as consuming fewer (10-30%) calories when compared to normal daily consumption rates.

Calorie restriction can be achieved in several ways including intermittent fasting, a substantial reduction in carbohydrate consumption, and time-restricted fasting.

The review of literature in various geographical regions with persons over 100 years revealed that most practiced a form of Calorie Restriction (CR) from childhood.

It is well established that as we age our risk for chronic co-morbidities increases. Diseases like diabetes, obesity and a spectrum of cardiovascular diseases increase as insulin sensitivity reduces with a concurrent increase in insulin levels.

Calorie Restriction (CR) has therefore been shown to reverse these harmful insulin effects and glucose levels.

In addition, the concept of an Iso-ketogenic diet has been shown to increase longevity. In the metabolism of biomolecules, Calorie Restriction favors fatty metabolism ahead of carbohydrates metabolism and this leads to fatty acid oxidation and pathogenesis.

Lower T3 levels were also associated with longevity. It has been shown that CR causes a lowering of T3 with no effects on either TSH or T4 levels. A study comparing two groups with

low-normal thyroid levels vs normal-high thyroid hormone levels showed that people in the former group lived 3½ years more than the latter.

CR also impacts gut microbiota, by promoting probiotic species and reducing proinflammatory species.

Whereas inflammation has been implicated in the pathophysiology of stroke, Alzheimer's, heart attack, Parkinson's, and cancer; CR has anti-inflammatory effects by reducing several markers of inflammation.

As beneficial as CR appears, the study revealed that it is not suitable for every group especially the aged, undernourished, or those at risk of sarcopenia or suffering from some other serious medical disease. Persons who are involved in intense physical activity and high-volume exercise were advised to exercise caution in calorie destruction.

The article can be found here for further reading:

<https://www.mdpi.com/1422-0067/23/12/6546>

## **A PROFESSION UNDER THREAT: PLIGHT OF NIGERIAN DOCTORS**

*by Daniel Faithful and Loizy Fana-Granville*

The average healthcare consumer visiting a public health facility is not ignorant of the apparent gaps in the provision of health services. Such facilities serve the majority of the population, and patients suffer the brunt of whatever shortfalls are prevalent in such facilities.

The Nigerian healthcare system is analogous to a person on life support. As at March 2022, Data from the Nigeria Health Facility Registry (NHFR) puts the total number of health facilities at 39,914. This comprises of private and public facilities providing any of the three tiers of services. Translating to a national average of 17 hospitals servicing 100,000 population.

With Nasarawa state leading the pack with 44 hospitals per 100,000 population while Rivers State and Borno state are bottom of the pack with 7 hospitals per 100,000 Nigerians.

Aside from the obvious infrastructural deficit, Nigeria suffers a severe human-resource shortage. According to the data revealed by the President of the Nigerian Medical Association Dr. Uche Rowland, Nigeria requires an additional 363,000 doctors to meet her WHO target of 1 doctor to 600 patients. He went further to state in a 2022 lecture on the impact of brain drain that only a quarter of the 93,000 doctors produced in the country currently practice in Nigeria.

On a deeper analysis, an already bad situation is made worse when the threat to livelihood and life is put in context. The few doctors left to practice in Nigeria continue facing an emerging grim reality which can be taken as punishment for staying behind.

Nigerian doctors under Federal service are benefiting in piecemeal from the newly reviewed Hazard allowances, with many state employees yet to see any glimmer of hope.

The issue of violence against doctors has been a topical issue, with the spate of reports on pockets of abuse in various regions of the country. A young doctor, Dr. Uyi Iluobe was killed at his private facility while providing health services in a community in Delta State on the 29th of December 2022. The perpetrators of this crime remain at large as the medical community anxiously waits on what would be the outcome of the case.

Despite never being the expectation of any doctor during the administration of oaths, being

martyrs while at the point of duty, has now become a reality for practitioners in both private and public service.

Economic hardship and lack of government facilities has also plagued doctors working in some states. Only recently the Nigerian Medical Association(NMA) Abia State declared a total and indefinite strike, following the failure of the State Government to pay salaries of doctors practicing in the State Specialist hospital for 25 months and their counterparts in the Health Management Board’s employ being owed for 13 months. It is the patients who still bear the brunt of such health service disruption.

It is pertinent that the fate of medical practice in Nigeria is brought to the front burner, and reasonable commitments are made to salvage this situation that grows worse by the day. Medical practice in Nigeria is currently under threat. The dearth of infrastructure, decaying facilities, heightened economic hardship, worsening insecurity, increased exposure to violence and abusive behavior, poor remuneration, dwindling manpower, etc are some of the burgeoning realities suffered by many doctors in addition to the broader experiences of the average Nigerian, which increases the likelihood to be poached by other countries.

If there would be any redemption in the nearest future, at least for the sake of the younger generation of doctors, the time to act is now.



*Dr. Uyi Iluobe who was killed while on duty*



*Doctors swearing the Hippocratic Oath*

*Doctors protecting unpaid salaries in Abia State*

# CONDOLENCES

NMA Rivers was represented by the Secretary Dr. Hope Avundaa, member NOC, Dr. Utchay Agiri, Dr. Ureh Oparaodu, Prof. Dada Korubo, Dr. Abiye Tamunopubo and other members of the association at the Service of Songs for Dr. Larisa Imananagha, Mother of Dr. Beatrish Amene of Pharmacology Department, Rivers State University.

May her soul rest in perfect peace. Amen.



**APHPN Annual General Meeting  
and Scientific Conference 2023**

**30th Jan. to 3rd Feb. 2023**

# PRE- CONFERENCE

Hands-on training in Environmental,  
Social and Health Impact Assessment

**PRE-CONFERENCE FEE: N10,000**

## Conference Fee

### Early Bird

**(Begins on 1 May 2022)  
N25,000**

### Late Registration

**(Begins 1 November 2022)  
N30,000**

### Onsite Registration

**N35,000**

### Virtual Registration

**N15,000**

Pre-Conference **Monday 30th January 2023**




**ASSOCIATION OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH PHYSICIANS  
OF NIGERIA**

To register, Click or visit:

[www.aphpnagsm2023.com](http://www.aphpnagsm2023.com)

APHPN website: [www.aphpn-ng.net](http://www.aphpn-ng.net)

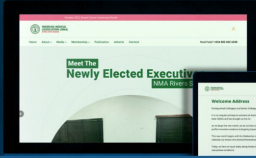
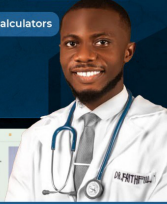




NIGERIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, RIVERS STATE BRANCH

# REBRANDED WEBSITE

- Membership registration portal
- Negligence Complaints
- Advertise your business
- NMA events and activities
- NMA publications
- Regular polls and surveys
- Medical calculators

[www.nmarivers.org](http://www.nmarivers.org)



NIGERIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION,  
RIVERS STATE  
PRESENTS

# MARKET DAYS



Advertise your business on NMA Platform for FREE

Use the opportunity to connect with other business owners and grow your space.

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NIGERIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION  
RIVERS STATE



Dr. Ebibi Robinson  
Chairman NMA Rivers

# 2023

NMA Rivers wishes you a **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

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### Contributors

Members of the Publicity Committee  
Dr. Loizy Fana-Granville

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