EDITORIAL

Actualising the dream

It was a little over five years ago when we had a small dream that brought about the journal. NJSR was founded as a publication of Surgical Sciences Research Society Zaria to encourage scholarly publication of research findings by society’s members, but with world wide focus. It started with a modest number of articles and has since arrowed itself through the haze of time. To reflect on these few milestones is to give an insight into what has been done and what must be done to raise the profile of the journal to fully actualise the initial dream.

The first leading article of the NJSR in its maiden edition elaborated on research and education and more recently information technology in the dissemination of research and continuing education in medical academics. That has been the driving spirit of the NJSR and the journal has tried to maintain these tenets and premiums even zealously. There remains a paucity of specialists in some of the surgical disciplines as has been previously lamented, in cardiothoracic, plastic surgery and neurosurgery in the region. Manpower deficiency, ignorance, poor government support and decaying facilities and infrastructure still plague our research institutions, training programmes and the overall content of health care delivery. Indeed the health indices of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa were frighteningly appalling as we entered the millennium (WHO) and these are presently threatened and worsened by the scourge of the New Pandemics (HIV-AIDS) and increasing incidence of road traffic accidents threatening mankind more than ever before.

Though gasping sometimes we have managed to keep vigil by remaining focused and the NJRS has attained a true link with the global village in the on going campaign to encourage academic medicine, evidence based medicine and international collaboration. The readership and authorship is presently world wide, sparing no continent. We must at this point thank the Reuters Foundation for encouraging support 2003. This support has helped the journal to upgrade publishing facilities, leading to an improvement in the overall quality and timeliness of the publication.

Interest in the journal has increased in recent times with well researched papers in various parts of surgery originating from many parts of the world. Subscription rate has also increased. The abstracting on African Journals Online (http://www.ajol.info) and availability of free availability of full texts on the Bioline International website (http://www.bioline.org.br) has greatly improved the visibility of papers published in the journal to the world of surgery and surgical research. In the coming months, the journal will be indexed in a number of other abstracting and indexing bodies.

Our authors from non-English speaking countries have continued to make wonderful efforts to write their work in English, as a third Language. Our wonderful peer reviewers have been great and the immediate past editor-in-chief has had a good ride with a wonderful crew.

The past editor-in-chief has been a man of abundant dedication and great care for detail. The soaring height of the journal is his insight and enterprise. Most recently the journal has been adopted as the official publication of a foremost association of Surgeons in Nigeria (Association of Surgeons of Nigeria). This distinctive choice among several acceptable journals was due to the sterling premiums of this journal; unbiased, objective and transparent publishing.

As we continue to advance into the millennium, it is our dream that surgical research will assume the center piece in our endeavours to find solution to the myriad of surgical problems and innovation of existing knowledge in looking for new frontiers in the solutions to these problems. Several areas in the various fields are virgin and yearning for exploits. Lister probably just needed a listening mind to unravel the mystery of infection and has remained forever the best that ever will be in the after care of the operated patient. His famous use of carbolic acid to combat sepsis was an epoch making small step and but a giant leap into world of antibiosis. The NJSR will continue to sound a small voice amongst fixed modes, patterns and indeed ideals. And that is excellence. By little steps, but one at a time, we shall continue to make definite progress.

We salute our authors, readers and well wishers and along with all, let me have the privilege of welcoming you to the next stage of actualizing the dream for the NJSR

Hyacinth N. Mbibu
Editor-in-Chief