Editorial

From Mycobacterium bovis, oxidative stress and HIV to brucellosis

In this infectious disease issue, we bring you internationally peer reviewed articles that we chose specifically to mark our 10th anniversary as a journal. For it was in August 2001 that we launched African Health Sciences with support from the Makerere University Faculty of Medicine under the leadership of Nelson K Sewankambo. Since then, African Health Sciences has undergone great metamorphosis: from a new born to a fledgling adolescent!

In the first article, Ben Kahla and colleagues from Tunisia report on the isolation and molecular characterization of Mycobacterium bovis from raw milk. They have one consistent message: ‘consumers of raw milk are at high risk of zoonotic infection with M.bovis. This is followed by two articles on oxidative stress: Ediz colleagues report on increased oxidative stress in patients with familial Mediterranean fever. The second article on oxidative stress was written by Hasan Karse on evaluation of oxidative stress in patients with Fasciola hepatica. They conclude that oxidative stress has an important role to play in the ‘pathogenesis of Fasciola hepatica.’

Intestinal parasites: are they more prevalent among HIV infected patients? According to the article by Abaver and colleagues, the jury is still out! What about renal disease and HIV? Well, Nigerian authors contend that ‘severity of renal function impairment has a positive correlation with degree of immunosuppression’.

We have a series of articles on antibiotics and bacteria susceptibility. David Kitara from Gulu in northern Uganda reports that suppurative lesions from Lacor Hospital are teeming with drug resistant Staphylococcus aureus. Fortunately they report that MRSA is very rare, so far. This calls for vigilance. Remaining with this theme, Mulugeta and others report on the antimicrobial susceptibility of E.coli from Ethiopia. They conclude that the rate of antimicrobial resistance is high. There is a glimmer of hope though. E.coli is still sensitive to nitrofurantoin, norfloxacin, gentamicin and ciprofloxacin.

Have you heard about ‘bothersome urinary symptoms’? Well, read Adaji’s article on the same problem among pregnant women. He reports that ‘diverse bothersome forms of lower urinary tract symptoms are experienced by pregnant women.’

No infectious disease treatise would be complete without malaria. Ucakcon and others report prescribing practices for malaria in a rural hospital in Uganda. Almost 90% of the hospital prescriptions were consistent with national policy. They also report predictors of conformity with national guidelines.

Are our HIV infected patients satisfied with health care services? Well? In Tanzania there was a mixed message: those on lower level clinics were more satisfied than those at the national referral hospital.

Nigerian workers report on the influence of knowledge and socio-demographics on AIDS perception and sexual practices among secondary school students, while Harris reports on social marketing for condoms in Liberia.

Remaining with the social theme, Sami reports on social factors associated with pulmonary hydatid cyst in Aegean, Turkey. Meel writes for us on poverty, child sexual abuse and HIV in the Transkei, South Africa.

Morki reports on the reliability of scored patient generated global assessment of nutrition status among HIV infected adults in Uganda, while Sabal assesses the feasibility of recommendations to improve communicable disease surveillance.

The rest of the articles cover stigma among TB patients, predictors of TB treatment failure and pulmonary involvement in brucellosis.

We hope that you will enjoy this diverse menu and look forward to your feedback. Finally we extend our most heartfelt thanks to our editorial team, consultants and reviewers who work tirelessly to maintain the high standards we have set for African Health Sciences.

James K Tumwine
Editor in Chief