I wish to welcome you to this Christmas issue of African Health Sciences which we have produced with a sense of satisfaction and relief.

We have chosen a physiology/biochemistry paper as the lead original article just to emphasize the importance of basic sciences in the health sector. For without a grasp of basic sciences, our scientists will just grope in the dark, and the rest of the world will leave us far behind. We are not accepting the status quo. We must assist our students to have a simple understanding of anatomy, physiology, and biochemistry so as to lay a firm foundation for understanding the biological basis of disease and ill health. This is not to down play the importance of socioeconomic and political determinants on ill health. No! We must put science back on the table. The pendulum has swung too far the other side. So enjoy Theresa’s article on caveolin -1 and nitric oxide synthase!

Returning to the theme of sexuality that is so popular with African Health Sciences readers, we have lined up a number of articles on this subject. For example Chadambuka writes about factors associated with contracting sexually transmitted infections in the Zimbabwean mining town of Zvishavane: Getnet, on the other hand, discusses HIV stigma among female sex workers in Ethiopia, while Ayiga writes on the impact of male circumcision on HIV risk and use of condoms in Botswana.

To bridge reproductive health and child health, we have an article on mother to child transmission of HIV: Jonah Musa writes anout whether withholding breast milk for HIV exposed infants is a viable option for sub Saharan Africa.

Articles on social predictors of caesarian section births; plasma vitamin C levels of pregnant women with pre-eclampsia; and knowledge and utilization of malaria control measures by pregnant and newly delivered women mothers complete our sexual and reproductive health theme.

The health systems in Africa are facing big challenges especially where to get the money from. Moat analyses the influence of institutions on health policy development in Uganda using user-fees abolition, while Muzanyi et al have some innovation. We are used to DOTs in TB. Well, it is a yes for therapy, but not for sputum collection. Muzanyi has written for us a beautiful article on directly observed sputum collection and its impact on sputum culture contamination. We have several articles on dental problems, management of wounds, herbal management of TB, and end stage renal failure.

We wish to thank the authors, reviewers, readers, editors, advisors, and sponsors for all your support! We wish you enjoyable reading as you peruse through these diverse articles.

James K Tumwine
Editor in Chief

References
8. Kaelan AM, Julia A. Analyzing the influence of institutions on health policy development in


