

PAEDIATRIC DERMATOLOGY IN FOCUS

...the story so far

INTRODUCTION

Paediatric Dermatology as a specialty has been in existence for some decades and was officially launched in 1972 at the first International Symposium of Paediatric Dermatology which held in Mexico City. The International Society of Paediatric Dermatology was also formed at that time. Since then, interest in this discipline has grown exponentially. Formal training in the sub-specialty exists in many countries and well-established local societies for Paediatric Dermatology have been formed. Examples include; Society of Pediatric Dermatology (SPD, US), British Society of Paediatric Dermatology (BSPD, UK) and the Indian Society of Paediatric Dermatology (ISPD, India).

In Nigeria, there has been more interest in sub-specialisation in Paediatrics with the training of Paediatric Cardiologists, Nephrologists, Endocrinologists, Neurologists in recent years. The paediatric postgraduate training curriculum did not pay too much emphasis on dermatology. Hence, skin disorders in children are mostly managed by adult Dermatologists and Family physicians. This also led to the slow evolution of Paediatric Dermatology as a Paediatric sub-specialty.

Interest in Paediatric dermatology in Nigeria started to pique from about the year 2002, where paediatric residents at the Senior registrar level started to show interest in the sub-specialty. Paediatric Dermatology residents, then had to undergo training under adult dermatologists, sometimes outside their primary training centre. They are usually jointly supervised by paediatricians and dermatologists for their dissertation which is related to skin diseases in children.

CHALLENGES:

Being a relatively new field, it has not been without its challenges. These challenges include; lack of unified training curriculum, getting released for training in Paediatric Dermatology, conflicts in schedules and the actual setting up of a new Paediatric Dermatology Unit. However, despite the fear of Paediatrics as a whole, and Dermatology in particular, more and more people are now developing interest in this sub-specialty. This is quite important as 20-30% of skin disorders are seen in children and who is better placed to manage them than the physician who is trained to care for them holistically.

Paediatric Dermatologists are now available in private and public health facilities running skin clinics for children and offering procedural therapy as well. Paediatric Dermatology is gradually being recognized by the Paediatric Association of Nigeria (PAN) which is asking for a development of a practice protocol. A curriculum is also being developed to present to the National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria to improve training in the sub-specialty. Availability of Paediatric Dermatologists is increasingly helping Paediatricians-in-training to develop skills in management of skin disorders. Few centres are also able to offer training in Paediatric Dermatology. However, a curriculum is yet to be developed for Paediatric Dermatology sub-specialty training.

ACHIEVEMENTS

We now have a sizeable number of Paediatric Dermatology Fellows and resident doctors in various institutions across the country. A Paediatric Dermatology forum was created in 2016 at the Nigerian Association of Dermatologists (NAD) conference in Abuja. The sub-specialists interact on social media, posting interesting cases and sending relevant information to the group. A member was selected to be part of the Academic

COMMENTARIES

section of the International Society of Paediatric Dermatology (ISPD) to represent Nigeria in the forum for Paediatric Dermatologists from all over the world.

Members have been awarded various travel grants to attend international dermatology conferences and scientific meetings. There has also been international collaboration with centres outside the country like South Africa. As part of the collaboration, an Atlas of Paediatric HIV infection, featuring Paediatric HIV dermatoses was published with one of the members, Nigerian Paediatric infectious disease experts and South African Dermatologists. Some of our colleagues have also

obtained Masters degrees in dermatology-related subjects including allergology. Some of our publications include paediatric HIV dermatoses, epidemiology of skin diseases, atopic dermatitis, quality of life of skin disorders and genodermatoses.

ASPIRATIONS

The Paediatric Dermatology forum is still in its infancy and is growing and developing. The following are its long-term goals

AIM:

To pioneer excellent care of childhood skin diseases in Nigeria through research, training and evidence-based clinical practice

A Cross-section of Paediatricians with Special Interest in Paediatric Dermatology



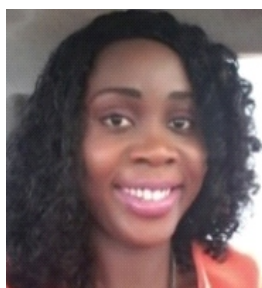
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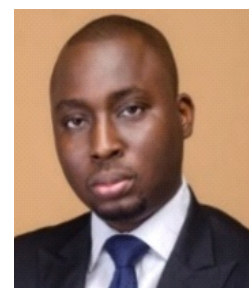
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OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop a training curriculum for Paediatric Dermatologists in Nigeria
2. To organize regular courses for Paediatricians & Dermatologists to enhance knowledge of paediatric skin diseases
3. To carry out high impact research in paediatric skin disorders in collaboration with local and foreign colleagues.
4. To form a Nigerian Paediatric Dermatology society, an affiliate of NAD and PAN which will hold regular meetings at annual conferences of those parent societies and steer the growth of the sub-specialty
5. To form a cohesive force that will be vibrant and energetic and will be worthy representatives of Nigeria at the international forum.
6. To be strong advocates for children all over the world, particularly those with skin diseases

The Nigerian Association of Dermatologists, the parent body for all dermatologists in Nigeria, has been of tremendous support in the development of Paediatric Dermatology as a sub- specialty.

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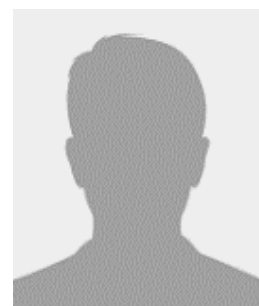
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