

**NEWS**

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MEDICAL JOURNALS TOP NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION RANKING OF NIGERIAN JOURNALS, 2005

The National Universities Commission (NUC), Nigeria recently assessed locally published journals which serve as outlets for Nigerian academics. “The inception, midterm and current editions of the journals were assessed” 138 journals were assessed based on evidence of peer review, evidence of editorial board membership acceptance, regularity of publication, quality of editorial policy, including evidence of global abstracting and indexing services and quality of their editors. Samples of published editions since inception, format and printing quality and institutional spread of contributing authors and articles were also considered.

Journals evaluated were distributed in the following disciplines: Administration, Agriculture, Arts, Education, Engineering and Technology, Humanities, Law, Medicines and Health Sciences, Social Sciences and Veterinary Medicine. “The assessment scores were used to rate the journals into four groups:

- A: International Standard (minimum 60%) **** (Four star)
- B: Prospective International Standard (50-59%) *** (Three star)
- C.: Local Standard (20-49%) * (One star)
- D: Super Local Standard (Under 20%).”

Only four journals were rated as international journals. They are all Medicine and Health Sciences journals. These include: African Journal of Reproductive Health, Nigerian Journal of Natural Products and Medicine, **African Journal of Traditional, Complementary and Alternative Medicines** and African Journal of Medicine and Medical Sciences.

PEER REVIEW CONGRESS AND PRE-CONGRESS SHORT COURSE FOR MEDICAL EDITORS, 2005



Photo credit: Danilo Blank

Participants at the Pre-Congress Course for Medical Editors

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A successful pre-congress short course for editors and editorial staff took place at Fairmont Hotel, Chicago from September 14-15, 2005. Sponsored Participants were drawn from all the continents. Four African Journals including African Journal of Traditional, Complementary and Alternative Medicines, Annals of African Medicine and Nigeria Journal of Surgical Research were represented at the Congress. The course was coordinated by Tim Albert's Short course for Medical Journal Editors (<http://www.timalbert.co.uk/editors.htm>). About five hundred participants also attended the Peer Review Congress and Biomedical Publication at the same venue from September 16 to 18, 2005. There were three days for presentations of new research into peer review and all aspects of scientific publication, including plenary session presentations and posters (www.jama-peer.org). The Congress Director is Dr. Drummond Rennie while the Congress Coordinator is Ms Annette Flanagan. Other dignitaries at the Congress include Eugene Garfield, Jane Godlee, Jane Smith, Catherine D. DeAngelis, John Overbecke, Peush Sahni and Michael Callahan.

CONCERN OVER GLOBAL SPREAD OF BIRDS' FLU

According to the World Health Organization, 5-150 million people could die from the outbreak of birds' flu. However, a realist death could be about 7.4 million people in case of bird's flu pandemic. In South East Asia, the disease was first reported in birds in 2003. The infection in man has been reported in four countries in Asia. Indonesia is the fourth country in which bird's flu has led to loss of lives. There is a concern that mutation of the bird's flu virus into human strain might lead to bird's flu pandemic. Bird's flu is spreading to parts of Europe and elsewhere. Human beings are at risk of being infected. The affected nations in Asia lack the resources and manpower to combat a bird's flu pandemic. Governments must therefore be battle ready by planning ahead in order to combat an outbreak in a global village.

GRADUATE PROGRAMME IN PHYTOMEDICINES

The Drug Research and Production Unit, Faculty of Pharmacy, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria focuses on Medicinal Plant Research and has nearly three decades of research and teaching experience. The Unit encourages and initiates research into natural products. The Unit also provides facilities for developing natural products, especially medicinal plants into different dosage forms. In addition, there is the mandate to develop appropriate pharmacopoeia. The Unit in collaboration with the Department of Pharmacology has introduced postgraduate programmes in Phytomedicines. The following programmes are available: (i) Diploma in Phytomedicines (PGD. Phytomedicines), (ii) Master of Science in Phytomedicines (M.Sc. Phytomedicines), (iii) Doctor of Philosophy in Phytomedicines (Ph.D. Phytomedicines). Interested candidates should contact: registrar@oauife.edu.ng, provost@oauife.edu.ng, cadewumi@oauife.edu.ng