



LADY HELEN CHILD HEALTH FOUNDATION

Reaching them one at a time



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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



It is my pleasure to present to you the first volume of the Lady Helen Child Health Foundation Quarterly Bulletin. We are very excited about what we do to support and propagate efforts in the improvement of health outcomes and delivery for children by encouraging a culture of informed preventive medical practice and use of best evidence for promoting child health. The Lady Helen Child Health Foundation carries out its activities in a tripod programme termed RAP (Research-Advocacy-PTAP) which focus on supporting the vulnerable child in different sectors of the community.

The Coronavirus is a ravaging global pandemic that affects both Children and Adults markedly, but not as pronounced as in adults. Most children infected by Covid 19 do very well with the number of deaths of children noted to be low. Children die more from malaria, diarrhoea, typhoid and other diseases, and the impact of Covid 19 on Children are tremendous and disruptive to their lives:

- Loss of education
- Low attendance in the Hospitals
- Low immunization uptake
- Hospitals not functioning to full capacity
- Reduction in family income
- Inadequate government intervention as it affects vulnerable children (*see result of research on our website research and publication page*)

With all these factors, there is an urgent need for all agencies to focus on the impact and provide solution to ameliorate this. So we need to note that while we address the issue of Covid 19 in children, we need to make sure that children access health facilities to prevent them dying from malaria, typhoid, diarrhoea and other preventable diseases.

The LHCHF carry out research activities for utilization and management of knowledge to provide informed best practices in child healthcare system, we advocate for child health and social welfare for children at the state and federal government level through conference and symposiums. The Patient Treatment Assistance Programme (PTAP) is our flagship initiative through which we assist and give medical grant to Orphans and Vulnerable Children who cannot pay their hospital bill and others detained in the hospital for inability to pay for treatment offered.

LHCHF recognizes the importance of its programmes and initiatives which are being supported by stakeholders, partners, donors, international organization and the private sector to whom we remain grateful. The Lady Helen Child Health Foundation is committed to delivering its programmes and activities in line with our good governance policies and transparent structures. We hope you enjoy reading programme updates and useful health and topical issues in the LHCHF bulletin and we look forward to your feedback so we can continuously improve the quality of our information dissemination.

On behalf of the Executive team and Board we thank the staff and stake holders for their support and wish all safety at all times.

Dr. Benjamin Odeka *MB DCH MA (Law) FRCP (London) FRCPC*
CEO/Founder Lady Helen Child Health Foundation
Consultant in Health Care Governance and Quality in
Paediatrics & Gastroenterology

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CHILD'S RIGHT: COVID 19 AND THE ALMAJIRI CHILDREN

In Nigeria, child's right practice is well within the ambit of Governmental Influence, Family Structure, Environmental factor and the civil society involvement. The child right act which recognizes the right of children, restore their self-esteem and improve their status has been adopted in 24 out of the 36 states in Nigeria. So far, some of the provisions of the Child's Right Act are being implemented through a few governmental agencies such as the NPHCDA, National Planning Commission, Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Development, but the major implementing organizations of the Child's Right Act are the NGOs.

COVID 19 Threat

With the emergence of Covid 19 and the steady rise of cases in Nigeria, there are growing concerns over the negative impact this will have on orphans and vulnerable children. According to Save the Children the COVID-19 pandemic could turn into a serious child rights crisis in Nigeria, as hundreds of thousands of the most vulnerable children could be exposed to a dangerous mix of extreme poverty, malnutrition and hunger. One of the most vulnerable groups who are exposed to Covid 19 and child protection risk on a daily basis are the Almajiri children.

The Almajiri system is a form of Islamic education offered to children to provide them with vast knowledge of the Holy Quran, this is in accordance with the practice of Islamic faith. They are often children sent away from their families from far and near, sometimes to different cities to study the Quran under the care of an Islamic scholar, most time, they are left to fend for themselves and they survive through street begging and scavenging where they are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

Reality Checks

- The Almajiris constitute 9.5 million of the country's children within the ages of 3-14. (UNICEF Report 2014)
- 72 percent or 9.5million out of the 13.2 million Nigeria's out-school children are Almajiris (UNICEF Report 2014)
- They lack parental guidance and information on messages/ guidelines of Covid 19
- Almajiri children are far removed from all source of information on Covid 19 and they are not able to protect themselves or access medical services should they contract the virus.

Various state governments across the country have raised concern over the spread of covid 19 through the Almajiri children plight. In the effort to contain the problem, the issue of how to manage their presence had become a sour point for state governments. Whilst the various government are taking actions to manage the return of the children to their various homes. Amidst this panic there are no clear measures and policies on how to manage the issues that their presence and the fear of pandemic spread have created. Although the child right issues are clearly fundamental to the way and manner in which the Almajiri children plight are dealt with, it is clearly evident that issue of their rights and their dignity are not at the forefront of any measures that are being put in place now or in the long term.



Implications of the Distribution of Almajiri

The evacuation and distribution of the children, through cross boarder travel without necessary structures and guidelines will:

- Jeopardizes the fight against Covid-19
- Expose the children to a high risk of infection
- Their distribution without the necessary structure, will take away their fundamental human right especially when taking cognisance of the child right act, 2003:
 - Section 9: right to free movement,
 - Section 11: right to dignity of the child
 - Section 16: right of a child in need of special protection measures Put the country on the

The consequences of the covid 19 pandemic on both the society and the children necessitate the need for concerted effort, to put structures in place to scale up support to increase protection for children displaced, street children, Almajiri and other vulnerable groups

In this regards, Government should make provisions that are in line with child protection and safeguarding principles as contained in the Convention on the Rights of Children, African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and other conventions that the country has signed and ratified.



The CEO presenting donations to the Anawim kids



A visit to FACADO Orphanage Home

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LHCHF – Patient Treatment Assistance Programme (PTAP)

The provision of equitable access to basic health services is a major challenge in Nigeria health system. This affects the most vulnerable population which includes children, pregnant women, people living with disability, displaced, the elderly and the unemployed.

Most households in Nigeria bears the burden of largely paying for healthcare services and these leaves the most vulnerable population at the mercy of health care services that are not affordable to them. A significant majority of the Nigeria population are unable to afford basic healthcare services despite the existence of the National Health Insurance Scheme NHIS which was established in 1999 to ensure access to quality healthcare.

The enactment of the child right act, should act as the corner stone for ensuring that the health and well-being of every Nigeria child is secured. However, there are no specific policy and guidelines which ensures that every Nigeria child have access to health services irrespective of parents ability to pay. The detention of patients in hospital especially vulnerable children and their parents, for inability to pay their medical bills is common in public as well as private hospitals. This is to be assumed that it is the right of these hospitals to detain vulnerable patients in the hospital ward until their bills are paid.

In some instances, vulnerable children and their parents are detained for long periods in the hospitals and are subjected to denial of vital services. These detentions result in psychological trauma for the parents and guardians of the children. This experience can result in some of the poorest parents sliding further into poverty, even though the Federal Government has warned against hospitals detaining patients who cannot pay their medical bills.

The Lady Helen Child Health Foundations' Patient Treatment Assistance Program (PTAP) is an initiative based on the need for medical aid for Vulnerable Children, with special focus on the patients and families who are detained in the hospital due to their inability to pay for their child's medical bill.

PTAP Intervention

Lady Helen Child Health Foundation is involved in:

- Providing treatment assistant grant to the children who cannot afford to pay for their medical bill, in other to meet their needs for good health and protection.
- Supporting families to meet the cost of treatment
- Staying in touch with these Children and their caregivers to see how they are improving.
- Supporting families with adequate information necessary to provide the best treatment for the child's Health
- Working with stakeholders to develop stronger support structures for Orphan, Vulnerable Children and their caregivers.
- Partnering with other organizations to assist Vulnerable Children and their family in meeting health needs.

To access the Lady Helen Child Foundation PTAP grant, Application is based on the following criteria:

The vulnerable child is diagnosed with a specific medical condition or suffering from an ailment certified by a qualified and registered Medical Practitioner.

- The child is within the age of 0-18.
- Must be in need and proven to be unable to afford to pay for the treatment being offered.
- Must fall under UNICEF's definition of Vulnerable Children.

Our Role in LHCHF PTAP Medical Grant

- Full or part payment for the hospital bill depending on the cost
- Contribution towards the cost of prescribed medication
- Transportation to and from the nearest health center
- Nutritional support during treatment.

How to Apply

Parent or guardian of applicants are to visit www.ladyhelenchildfoundation.com/patient-treatment-assistance-programme/ fill the PTAP application form and click the submit button.

Or apply through the social welfare officer of the hospital by calling this number 08137654501, 08104859191.



LHCHF CEO Dr. Benjamin Odeka shaking hands with PTAP grant Beneficiary



Asokoro Hospital Welfare Officer, grant beneficiary and LHCHF PTAP Committee members



LHCHF Secretary and PTAP Beneficiary at Garki Hospital

To Support the LHCHF Patient Treatment Assistance Program PTAP, Kindly make your donation to:

Account Name: Lady Helen Child Health Foundation
Account Number: 0385232693 Bank: GTB

Your donation will be tagged to a beneficiary and you will have the mechanism to cross check the use of your monies. This is in line with our accountable and transparent governance package.

Advocacy on Maternal New-born and Child Health

The prevalent Maternal New-born and Child Health challenges has become a matter of urgency for the Nigeria health sector, as a consequence, advocacy for implementation of better policy and practice has become a focal point of the Lady Helen Child Health Foundation.

In the effort to achieve this, LHCHF established an initiative to deliver annual lecture series which will cover a whole range of maternal and child health issues. In October 2019 a lecture with Theme: "Facing the Challenges of Delivering Healthcare to Vulnerable Children in Nigeria" took place. The agenda covered discussions on the following key elements:

- Global picture of health challenges among vulnerable children
- Addressing barriers in accessing proper healthcare among vulnerable children
- Setting measurable goals to reduce inequalities among Vulnerable Children
- Child Right Act

One of the main highlight of the lecture focussed on a Master class that discussed the delivery of workable solutions to address the Maternal New-born and Child Health Emergency declared by the Federal Government. The Masterclass session was coordinated by the Primary Healthcare Development Agency NPHCDA with Dr. Ngozi Nwosu, Heading the team of panellist from NPHCDA. The session addressed issues around:

- I. Poor Governance Structure and Synergy between the Federal and State in relation to implementing health related policies in the Country.
- II. Factors contributing to the high maternal mortality rate which included Delay:
 - in decision to seek care,
 - in reacting,
 - in receiving adequate care
 - in accessing advanced care.
- III. Workable solutions highlighted the need for improved:
 - Governance structure
 - Policy Implementation
 - Investment in the health sector.



Founder, Secretary, Special Guest and Speakers at the LHCHF 2019 Lecture

The Lecture recorded over 200 participants drawn from the Federal Ministry of Health, National Primary Healthcare Development Agency NPHCDA, Ministries, Government Agencies and Departments, Government and Private Hospitals, the Academia; Health related NGOs, Orphanage Homes and the Private Sector. These agencies debated and provided valuable pressure points and recommendation which has since be shared with the Honourable Minister for Federal Ministry of Health and National Primary Healthcare Development Agency. The recommendations from the lecture seminar are currently being considered for deliberation at the Core Technical Committee (CTC) for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health.

Visit www.ladyhelenchildfoundation.com for the communiqué, full report and presentations.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



Lady Helen Child Health Foundation is a non-profit organization that is established to promote and improve healthcare delivery to vulnerable children in Nigeria. Volunteers are needed to support the activities of the Foundation in the area of Research, Advocacy and PTAP programme.

To join the LHCHF as a volunteer group, Kindly visit our website: www.ladyhelenchildfoundation.com. for more information on how to apply.

Research: Awareness , Actions , and Support Related to COVID-19 Among Orphanages in the Federal Territory of Abuja at onset of Restricted Movement in March- April 2020.

Dr Benjamin Odeka MB DCH MA (law) FRCP(London)FRCPCH Director of Research

The introduction of the severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) has caused upheaval across the world with the resultant evolution to a pandemic certified by the world health organization. The Corona Virus infections led the WHO to declare a state of world Pandemic as a result of the high attack rate and ease of spread to many countries. This has resulted in increased mortality figures in many countries. Individual countries therefore designed bespoke public health measures to stem the spread of the Virus in their localities.

This development now requires the need for effective messaging on how to reduce the spread in the form of effective and reliable messaging in a changing world in need of public health related information. The messaging is confused at times and the effect on compliance directly related.

In a bid to curtail the spread of Coronavirus in Nigeria, the Federal Government by presidential order under the quarantine Act ordered the lock down of 2 states and the Federal Capital City for 2 weeks. The 14-day lock-down which was enforced in Lagos state, Ogun state and Abuja the FCT kicked in at 11pm on Monday 30th march 2020. The order meant that all non essential services were suspended, with all schools, Bars, Courts, Mosques, Churches

During this lock-down, everyone were to stay at home while offices and businesses within the affected areas were ordered to be closed and the Government announced that conditional cash transfer would be immediately paid to the most vulnerable members of the society and the poor as a palliative for restricting social liberty, movement and enforcing the staying at home directive which was bound to affect the livelihood of the individual worker, companies and orphanages.

It is against this background that the lady Helen Child Health Foundation carried out a time sensitive study among orphanages in the Federal Capital territory to determine their current awareness of COVID 19, government awareness messages, satisfaction and confidence with government material support during restricted movement. This took place from 1st to the 4th of April 2020 during the first period of restricted movement in the Federal Capital territory of Abuja.

The questionnaire focuses on the awareness of the respondents to Covid 19 issues, and the precaution in place at their respective orphanages to protect and prevent the children from contracting the virus and qualifying the level of education and support received from government or its agencies to combat COVID-19 during the lock down.

For the full research article, please visit

<https://ladyhelenchildfoundation.com/research-and-publication/>

LADY HELEN CHILD HEALTH FOUNDATIONS' AMBASSADORS



Dr Ms Bibian Nwanyioma Ofoegbu

Dr Ofoegbu is a Consultant Neonatologist and Clinical risk Lead (Neonatology) currently based in the United Arab Emirates(UAE) since 2014. Currently she is the Clinical Chief of Neonatology at the Corniche Hospital, which houses the largest NICU in the UAE.

She is an MRCPCH (UK) Part 2 clinical examiner, an avid teacher and trainer and educator.

She is a proud medical graduant of the University of Benin, Nigeria and is actively involved with her alma-mata.

Outside of formal clinical work, she has a keen concern to reduce inequitable access to health care that is attributable to the Socio-economic gap in Nigeria. She has several publications in peer-reviwed journals and has spoken at various local and international conferences.



Dr. Yemi Oluwole

Dr. Oluwole has many years of NHS practice as a Consultant in paediatric practice. She has interest in managing Children with Allergies and she is engaged in philanthropist activities. Dr. Oluwole contributes to the education of Doctors in Training.

MBBS FRCPCH

Consultant Paediatrician (UK)

Lead and College Tutor Rochdale/Oldham

Ambassador Lady Helen Child Health Foundation

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LHCHF ACTIVITIES



NEMCHIC (National Emergency Maternal and Child Health Intervention Centre)

Lady Helen Child Health Foundation and other NGOs engaged to galvanize stakeholders support to provide strategic direction and oversight to states in implementation of RMNCH+N intervention at the Primary healthcare level.



LHCHF Patient Treatment Assistance Programme [PTAP]

LHCHF Volunteers and PTAP committee members working as a team to expand PTAP outreach and increased the number of award for medical grants and support to vulnerable children within Abuja and its environs.



Focussing on Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Times of Need (COVID-19).

The Lady Helen Child Health Foundation in supporting the Government in providing Palliative during the lock-down initiated a programme to reach out and present palliative to Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Orphanage homes within FCT.



Christmas Roundtable with Orphanages

LHCHF 2019 end of year activity: **Christmas Roundtable with Orphanages**. provided continuous support to orphanage homes through cash and gift item. The event featured A Philanthropist and On Air Personality at Wazobia FM, Mr. James Expensive. Cash and gift items were awarded to the orphanage homes for the yuletide season.

EDITORIAL TEAM



CHIEF EDITOR

Dr. Benjamin Odeka
MBBS DCH MA(Health Care Law)
FRCP (L) FRCPCH



EDITOR

Dr. Mrs. Francisca Odeka
Bsc (Mass Com.) Msc (Mass Com.)
PhD (Glasgow) Social Policy

CONTRIBUTOR

Mr. Remi Akejelu

COMMUNICATION

Mr. Otokpa Obande



www.ladyhelenchildfoundation.com



info@ladyhelenchildfoundation.com



Suite 9, Wing B, City Plaza, Area 11,
Garki, FCT-Abuja.



ladyhelenchildfoundation



@LadyHelenCHF



+2348104859191, +2348137654501