



CBR NEWSLETTER

A NEWSLETTER OF CENTER FOR BIOETHICS AND RESEARCH

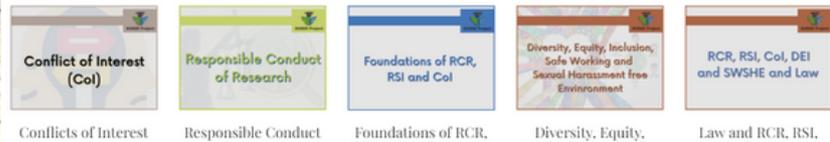
VOL. 16 | ISSUE 2

Center Bioethics & Research
e-Mentoring Program



Capacity building for ethical and safe research environment

The SURER Project implements a multi-institutional collaboration to develop Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR), Research/Scientific Integrity (RSI), Conflicts of Interest (Col), Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Safe Working and Sexual Harassment free Environment (SWSHE) training programs for researchers in Nigeria. Graduates of the training program become Research Integrity Officers for their institutions and complete training practicums that lead to development of their institutional Research Integrity Units (RIU).



Health Research Ethics Practice for Clinical Trials in Nigeria

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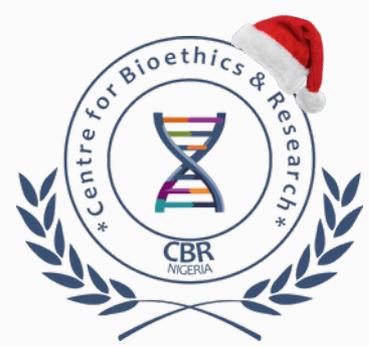


The Centre for Bioethics and Research (CBR) continues to implement a wide variety of research and ethics capacity-building programs for biomedical researchers, members of health research ethics committees, and health professionals in Nigeria and other West African countries.

As 2022 comes to a close, we would like to thank each and every one of our collaborators and funders for their support and partnership on several projects that are being implemented by CBR.

In this edition of our Newsletter, we share news of our activities in the second half of 2022.





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A NEWSLETTER OF CENTER FOR
BIOETHICS AND RESEARCH

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1.0 Masters' degrees training programs in Bioethics

1.1 New focus for the M.Sc. Bioethics degree program at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

The University of Maryland School of Medicine and the Center for Bioethics and Research (CBR) Nigeria have started implementing a new Fogarty International Center of the US National Institutes of Health funded training program with full scholarship - the **Scaling Up Research Ethics and Research Integrity (SURER)** Project - at the University of Ibadan. This new program is a close collaboration between the University of Maryland School of Medicine, the Center for Bioethics and Research, Nigeria, and several prestigious Universities in Nigeria.

The SURER Project is focused on building capacity for Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR), Research/Scientific Integrity (RSI), Conflicts of Interest (Col), Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Safe Working and Sexual Harassment free Environment (SWSHE) in Nigeria.

Graduates of the MSc Bioethics program in the SURER Project would return to their institutions after completing their coursework and their course project is to establish or revive Research Management Offices (RMO) in their institutions where they are expected to serve as Research Integrity Officers (RIO)

Institutions that are interested in training Research Integrity Officers and establishing Research Integrity Units in Nigeria should contact the Administrator, Center for Bioethics and Research (admin@bioethicscenter.net) for more information. You can also visit the project website at <https://surerproject.net> to know more about SURER project.

SURER Project

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Short, medium and long-term training with blended learning mode

Capacity building for ethical and safe research environment

The SURER Project implements a multi-institutional collaboration to develop Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR), Research/Scientific Integrity (RSI), Conflicts of Interest (Col), Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Safe Working and Sexual Harassment free Environment (SWSHE) training programs for researchers in Nigeria. Graduates of the training program become Research Integrity Officers for their institutions and complete training practicums that lead to development of their institutional Research Integrity Units (RIU).

- Conflict of Interest (Col)
- Responsible Conduct of Research
- Foundations of RCR, RSI and Col
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Safe Working and Sexual Harassment free Environment
- Law and RCR, RSI

Conflicts of Interest Responsible Conduct Foundations of RCR, Diversity, Equity, Law and RCR, RSI

SURER Program webpage (<https://www.surerproject.net>)

1.2 M.Sc. Bioethics at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria.

The University of Maryland School of Medicine, Center for Bioethics and Research (CBR) Nigeria, and University of Nigeria, Nsuka (UNN) bioethics training program, “the Eastern Nigeria Research Ethics Training (ENRICH) Program”, which is funded by the Fogarty International Center of the US National Institutes of Health has continued to train students in Bioethics at UNN. The pioneer set of 5 students in the MSc. Program have successfully defended their theses before examiners and faculty members of the UNN MSc. Bioethics program.

The candidates and their theses topics are shown in the table below.

S/N	Candidates	Dissertation Topic
1	Anthonia Orié ARUA	Anesthetists’ Perceptions, Attitudes, and practice of informed consent
2	Onyinye H. CHIME	Content Analysis of Informed Consent Documents approved for research by the Research Ethics Committees of Health Institutions in South-East Nigeria
3	Ijeoma A. MEKA	Compliance with Ethical Clearance Certification among Medical Journals in Nigeria
4	Nkechinyere Judith UCH	Willingness to participate in ophthalmic Genomic Research and expectation of feedback of Research Findings among potential research participants in Southeast, Nigeria
5	Nnema UDEH	Ethical Issues in Health care at the End of Life, Experienced by patients, Their families and Health care givers at the University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital Enugu, Nigeria.

Eight students were admitted into the 2021/2022 academic session of this program, and they have completed their first semester course work.

2.0 MPH with Bioethics concentration at University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

The University of Maryland School of Medicine and CBR are continuing to work with the Department of Community Medicine, University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) to implement the Masters in Public Health (MPH) with Bioethics concentration program. The second cohort of trainees on the program made presentations on their final dissertations to ENRICH faculty and academic members of the Department of Community Medicine. Prof. E.R. Ezeome who is the director of the Bioethics program at UNN facilitated the presentations.



Prof. Ezeome during his welcome address

He welcomed everyone and explained the ground rules, he also told the presenters to efficiently manage the allotted time. There are currently 4 students in the MPH with Bioethics concentration program, and they will complete the program at the end of the current academic session. The MPH students with Bioethics concentration also completed the compulsory 2-month blended diploma on research ethics of the Center for Bioethics and Research. The diploma program gives the students a grounding in Informed consent, ethics review, and the process of ethical review of research involving humans.

3.0 Keynote speaker at the BESON Conference.

Prof. Clement Adebamowo was the keynote speaker at the 8th international conference of the Bioethics Society of Nigeria (BESON). The Society was established in 2006, and it is a forum for bioethicists in Nigeria. Prof. Adebamowo's presentation was titled 'Health Research Ethics Practice for clinical Trials in Nigeria'.

During the presentation, he described the evolution of health research ethics regulation and environment in Nigeria including the critical roles that US NIH funded research ethics training programs implemented by the Center for Bioethics and Research (CBR) Nigeria have played since 2004. He informed the conference participants about the implementation of postgraduate degree programs in Bioethics at the University of Nigeria (UNN) and the University of Ibadan (UI), the establishment of the Department of Bioethics and Medical Humanities (DBMH) in UI which is a critical tool for sustained development and production of local capacity and leadership in Bioethics in Nigeria. He added that a new Masters degree program in Public Health with Bioethics

concentration is also being implemented at the University of Nigeria (UNN), whose objectives differ from those of the Masters degree in Research Ethics.

Prof. Adebamowo also highlighted CBR's collaboration with BRANY-CITI which has provided over 150,000 training courses to biomedical researchers in Nigeria. CBR recently worked with BRANY-CITI to make the landing page on the CITI website more user friendly to highlight different training opportunities hosted there. He encouraged conference attendees to visit the website, take advantage of the courses which would be beneficial to everyone including researchers and research ethicists working on clinical trials in Nigeria.

In rounding up his presentation, he said researchers must continue to improve the quality and comprehension of informed consent by including local words in African languages that can be incorporated in informed consent documents to improve comprehension. He urged them to identify more ways of improving comprehension in order to ensure that when research participants give informed consent those consents are truly informed.

Prof. Adebamowo also mentioned the importance of improving the quality, thoroughness, and audit of the review process. He said there is always room for improvement through training, refresher courses, and technology.

In his conclusion, he said there is no doubt that there are challenges to Research Ethics practice as it relates to implementation of clinical trials in Nigeria but there is a firm conviction that there are substantial activities that individuals, institutions that are working together can do to make sure that they create an environment that is conducive to the implementation of the highest quality scientific and ethical clinical trials and health research in Nigeria.

Health Research Ethics Practice for Clinical Trials in Nigeria

Clement Adebamowo

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 University of Maryland School of Medicine, Baltimore,

 Scientist, Center for Bioethics and Research, Ibadan,
 Nigeria



4.0 CBR Blended Diploma in Research Ethics program

The Annual Blended Diploma Program in Informed Consent and Foundations of Modern Bioethics of the Center for Bioethics and Research (CBR) is still training interested individuals with interest in research ethics who desire more training in research ethics but are unable to take advantage of the 18 months fully sponsored MSc Bioethics program at the University of Nigeria, and the University of Ibadan.

CBR supported 21 participants that registered for the blended diploma program this year by providing internet subscription, course materials and textbooks for the course, and transportation, accommodation, and feeding during the weekend retreats for all participants.



Participants of the CBR blended diploma program for 2022 with their certificates of completion.

The courses in the diploma program include Introduction and History of Research Ethics, Ethical principles for review of research protocols, the Nigerian National Code for Health Research Ethics, Informed Consent, Composition of Ethics Committees, Role of different categories of ethics committee member amongst others.

The diploma program uses various participatory mechanisms to facilitate learning. They include brainstorming, question and answer sessions, case studies, plenary discussions, and mock IRB sessions. All the participants of the program were presented with certificates of completion at the end of the program.

5.0 Online Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) in collaboration with BRANY New York

As part of our partnership with the Biomedical Research Alliance of New York (BRANY)'s CITI program, we provided 1,224 online CITI trainings in Informed Consent, Responsible Conduct of Research, and a specialised module on the Nigerian National Code for Health Research Ethics from the 19th of August 2022 to 14th of December 2022. Out of the total number of candidates that completed the CITI trainings 224 of them completed the Responsible Conduct of Research course.

6.0 Announcing the library Management system of the Center for Bioethics and Research

CBR is proud to announce the setting up of a Bioethics e-library of books, journals, and other educational materials for students, faculty members, and researchers. The e-library would empower students and faculty to discover and obtain information needed for their research. The library can be accessed through the following link <https://library.bioethicscenter.net>.

7.0 Publications by MSc. Bioethics Students & faculty

- i.** Princewill CW, Jegede AS, Malomo A, Ezeonu FC, Lawal AA, Adeleye O, Onyia CO. Content development footprints for the establishment of a National Bioethics Committee: lessons from Nigeria. *Glob Bioeth.* 2021 Jun 11;32(1):85-99. doi: 10.1080/11287462.2021.1939548. PMID: 34177253; PMCID: PMC8205093.
- ii.** Ezeome IV, Akintola SO, Jegede AS, Ezeome ER. Perception of Key Ethical Issues in Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) by Providers and Clients in Nigeria. *Int J Womens Health.* 2021 Nov 3;13:1033-1052. doi: 10.2147/IJWH.S331917. PMID: 34764702; PMCID: PMC8572738.
- iii.** Ojedoyin OE, Jegede AS. A quantitative study of nurses perception to advance directive in selected private and public secondary healthcare facilities in Ibadan, Nigeria. *BMC Med Ethics.* 2022 Aug 25;23(1):87. doi: 10.1186/s12910-022-00825-5. PMID: 36008832; PMCID: PMC9404628.

8.0 My Experience on the Blended Diploma Program of the Center for Bioethics and Research

Reflecting on one's learning is a great idea at the end of a study period. With each training session, one develops new skills, learns more about the field, further explores interests and strengths, and gauges motivation for further study or a career in the field. New knowledge and self-understanding can be attained through self-discovery, the active cultivation of intellectual monitoring, and the evaluation of formal learning experiences. I couldn't agree more with John Dewey's statement that "We do not learn from experience... we learn from reflecting on experience" as I put pen to paper to reflect on my CBR research ethics diploma journey. I pulled out my mini diary as I relaxed in my consultation room after a busy clinic day to look for the cues I needed to finish this reflective piece about a phenomenal three-month journey of incredibly valuable learning that has had a significant impact on me as a primary care physician and a lifelong learner beyond receiving a diploma.

It was easy to have high expectations after receiving the congratulatory email of acceptance to the program because the program sponsor's name, NIH, carries a lot of weight, and I was aware from the start of the online learning that I would be privileged to experience world-class learning. What I could not have predicted was how much interest I would later develop in bioethics. The cohort was extremely diverse in terms of academic background and cultural exposure due to the class's wide range of interests and professional backgrounds. All thanks to the CBR for bringing us together, this diversity in geography and profession has broadened our perspectives and enriched us with a network for cross-regional collaborative efforts in advancing the course of research ethics and bioethics broadly across Nigeria and beyond. Despite the fact that we had very different professional vocations, I could immediately tell that we had a lot in common. With the same main goal in mind—to gain a deeper understanding of the foundations of bioethics and discover how we could more actively participate by committing to advancing the knowledge and practice of research ethics.

We covered a wide range of topics during the three months, each with multiple facets and bearing on their own importance, such as the foundation of research ethics, informed consent, the ethical review process, and many others. We had virtual meetings to go over the learning modules at the end of each month. Students were able to articulate the specific ways in which they view a variety of ethical issues from their professional perspectives, which was a really helpful aspect of the great diversity that initially fascinated me.

The weekend retreats were an incredible experience, with the program manager, Mr. Olusegun Adeyemo, who serves like a consular officer, giving students a royal reception. In the ambience of the Davies Hotel's seminar room, we had a breadth of academic cross-fertilization. The mock institutional review sessions were fascinating experiences. Hearing several perspectives on the same question of an ethical issue under consideration by the mock boards revealed the intricacy of each situation in full, as various voices reflected various perspectives and ideas, and

the professorial contribution of the tutors brought the boards to logical conclusions. Because of this, one of the things I learned from this experience that I value the most is how to allow open conversations and dialogue and how much more there is to learn, unlearn, and relearn with regards to bioethics.

The intensive academic drill was led by the best minds in the field, Professors T.O. Ogundiran, A. Adejumo, and A.S. Jegede. We found the carefully structured modules and faculty selection to be very exciting. Prof. Ogundiran challenged our understanding of how ethical principles are applied from theory to practice. He shared his multigenerational expertise in assisting us in discovering who we are, elevating bioethics practice beyond a professional vocation to a personal quest for a more equitable and cohesive society. This reawakened our commitment to fostering bioethics in service to humanity.

Prof. Adejumo piqued our curiosity with insights into the practical reality of the extent of ethics application in the hallowed rooms of review boards. He led us through the challenge of devising means toward consensus building, contextualization, and cultural competence in reaching conclusions. On protecting researchers and research participants for the full realization of responsible research conduct, he alluded to moral rectitude in everyday life.

Prof. Jegede guided us through not only the letters but also the spirit of various codes of research ethics, instilling in us the tonic of resilience to forge steadily and ultimately achieve the program's goals. He congenially cited first-hand experiences to break the dicta to our understanding. In a guest appearance, Prof. B. Ogunrin piqued our interest with his insights into the past, present, and future of bioethics. His take was yet another push to delve deeper into meeting technological advancement with bioethical advancement. Prof. E.R. Ezeome concluded by challenging our understanding, from thoughts to research. Advocating for research to be translated into policy and practice, as well as providing us with a road map for navigating the bioethics research landscape.



Author:
Dr. Ibrahim Banaru Abubakar
Family Physician
Participant 2022 Blended
Diploma

Overall, my CBR blended diploma was a life-changing journey that taught me the importance of bioethics. Bioethics goes beyond just knowing what is right; it is about gaining trust and credibility in science and research. Bioethics guides one's life so that it is consistent with one's moral code and allows one to prioritize humanity. Finally standing on the threshold of history, I am most grateful for the opportunity to study bioethics under the NIH-sponsored partnership. This experience has given me a wider worldview. It has equipped me with the skill set to be an effective advocate for bioethics, not only in my clinical practice as a family physician but also in my stint as a member of the ethics working party of the World Organization of Family Doctors. Going forward, I hope to pay forward my experience through research and practice on ethics review boards.

9.0 Onsite Local Health Research Ethics Committees and Health Researchers training

The following onsite trainings were facilitated by CBR from June to December 2022.

Institution	Date	Attendance	Participants	Training type
Oyo State Ministry of Health Research Ethics Committee	16th - 18th September	19	Members of Health Research Ethics Committee	Modern Research Ethics
APIN Public Health Initiatives	28th - 30th November	13	Members of Health Research Ethics Committee	Modern Research Ethics

These trainings are part of the requirements by the National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) for members of an Ethics Committee and the registration of newly inaugurated Ethics Committees.

10.0 Appointments/Achievements

10.1 Promotions



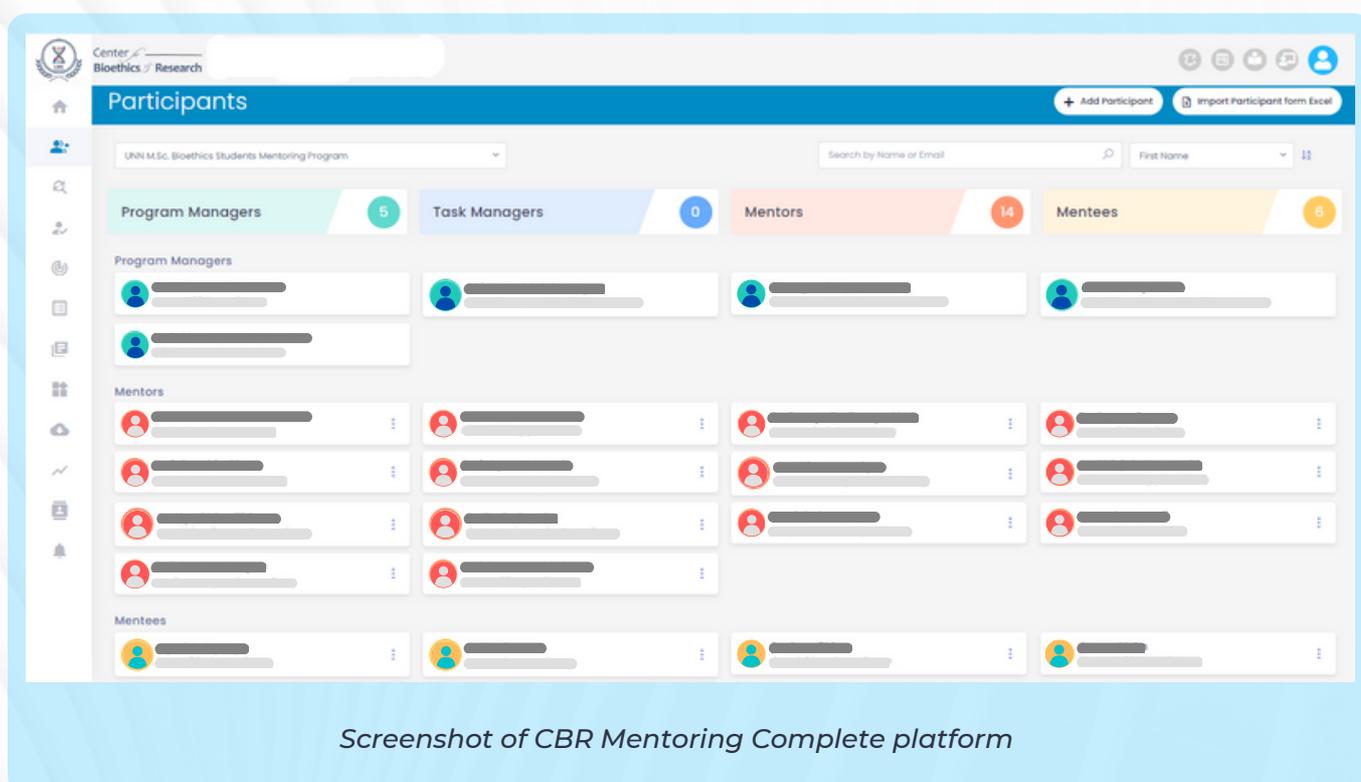
Dr. Jadesola Lokulo-Sodipe

Dr. Jadesola Lokulo - Sodipe was promoted to 'Reader' by the management of the University of Ibadan. Dr. Lokulo - Sodipe is an alumnus of the Bioethics Postgraduate degree program of the University of Ibadan, and the blended diploma program of the Center for Bioethics and Research. She is a founding member of the Center for Bioethics and Research, and a member of faculty for the Department of Bioethics and Medical Humanities University of Ibadan. She is also a member of the faculty of law University of Ibadan, and she teaches Health Law and Bioethics on the Bioethics postgraduate degree program. CBR is proud to be associated with Dr. Jadesola Lokulo-Sodipe.

11.0 New CBR Programs

11.1 CBR e-Mentoring Program

CBR launched an e-mentoring program for trainees and researchers in the field of health research ethics and health research in general. The program provides structured mentoring for in Research Ethics, Responsible Conduct of Research, and general research career development. The program was established to support the career development of local researchers, members of ethics committees and bioethicists. The e-mentoring program addresses the problem of lack of local mentoring resources by recruiting accomplished local and international researchers to mentor, provide career guidance and support for mentees. The mentoring process is proactive and managed by a program manager at CBR.

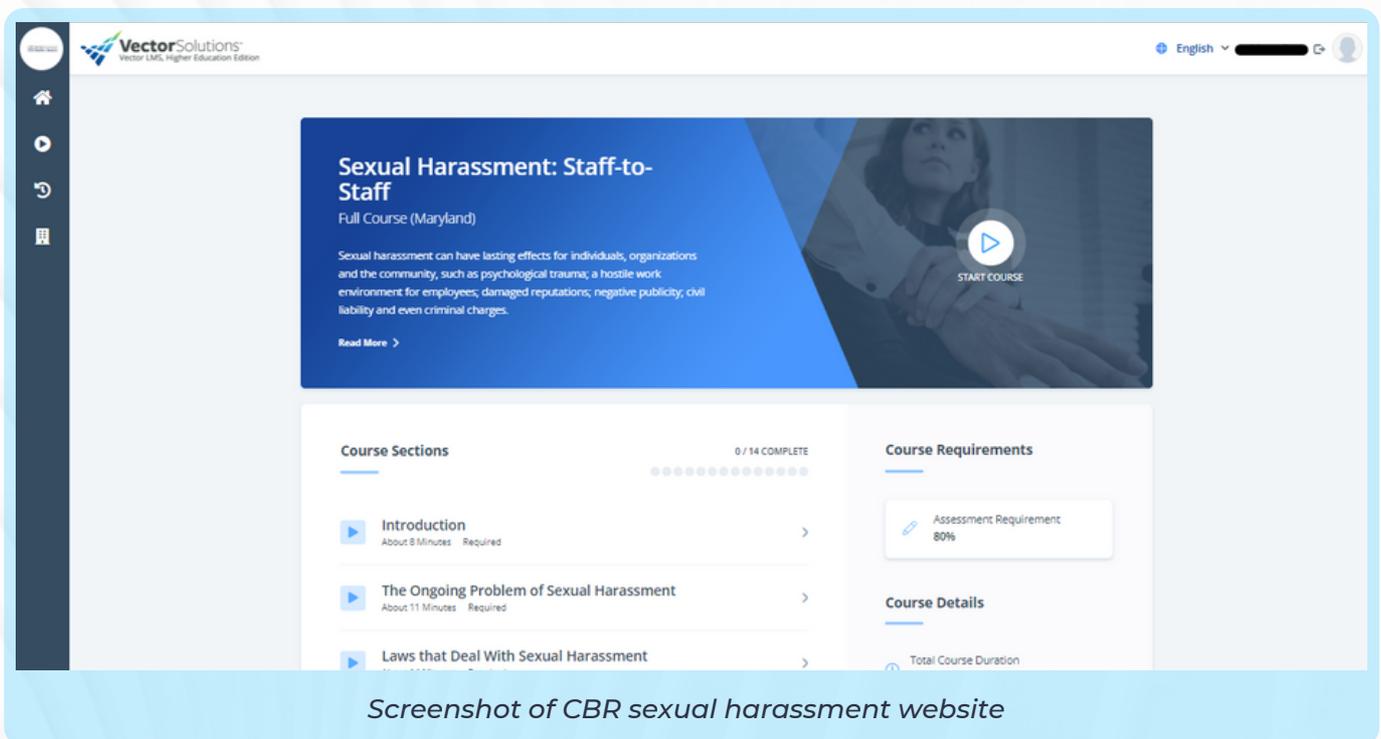


Screenshot of CBR Mentoring Complete platform

To support mentors and mentees, the program includes compulsory training courses in mentoring, behavioral nudges, and inducements to support establishment of successful mentoring relationships. The e-mentoring program is integrated into the postgraduate degree programs supported by the Center for Bioethics and Research (CBR) in different Nigerian universities but is also available to interested individuals/groups outside of these programs. Information and steps on how to enroll or get invited into the program, either as a mentor or as a mentee is available via the following link. Please visit - Mentoring Training – Center for Bioethics and Research (bioethicscenter.net) for more information.

11.2 CBR Sexual Harassment and Safe Working Environment Training Programs

CBR also recently launched new courses on 'Sexual Harassment Prevention' as part of our programs for building capacity of biomedical researchers in Nigeria. The main objective of the course is to educate, inform, protect, empower, and support the research community in confronting all forms of sexual misconduct and harassment in the workplace. Sexual harassment undermines the integrity of working relationships and interferes with the right of individuals to work and learn in an environment free from harassment. Please visit Sexual harassment training - Center for Bioethics and Research (bioethicscenter.net) for more information. CBR is committed to being a leader in preventing and effectively educating individuals on sexual harassment and misconduct.



Screenshot of CBR sexual harassment website

11.3 Bridging Gaps in the ELSI of Data Science Health Research in Nigeria (BridgELSI)

CBR is still implementing "The Bridging Gaps in the ELSI of Data Science Research (BridgELSI) Project". The Data Science for Health Discovery and Innovation in Africa (DS-I Africa) program organized its 2nd consortium meeting at Protea Breakwater Lodge and UCT Graduate School of Business (GSB) Conference Centre from October 29th till November 3rd, 2022, in Cape Town, South Africa. Members of the BridgELSI project from the Center for Bioethics and Research Nigeria attended the meeting in Cape-Town to share our experience in executing the project in



the last 1 year with other recipients of the NIH grant for DS - I Africa. Please visit the project website BridgELSI Project – Center for Bioethics and Research (bioethicscenter.net) for more information.

From Left to Right:
Prof. Jegede, Prof. Akintola,
Dr. Maduka, Mr. Akintola

12.0 BeOnline Journal – Accepting Manuscripts for Review and Publication

BeOnline Journal - the Bioethics Online journal of the Center for Bioethics and Research is an open-access online journal that provides a platform for individuals to contribute to the global discourse on bioethics by adding the voice of Africans and research in Africa to the discussions about clinical and research ethics, primarily in Africa and in the world at large.

To better serve potential submitters, our journal now has a dedicated online home - [BeOnline® Journal of the Center for Bioethics and Research \(\[beonlinejournal.net\]\(http://beonlinejournal.net\)\)](http://BeOnline®JournaloftheCenterforBioethicsandResearch.beonlinejournal.net). You can also submit by contacting the Editor in Chief directly by email at editorinchief@beonlinejournal.net.

We invite you to submit your work to our panel of experienced reviewers and publish in the BeOnline Journal. Rapid review and decision are guaranteed. We also provide text editing support to improve the quality of your papers. Let the world hear your view about research ethics.

For more information on how to submit a manuscript for review, please visit us at [BeOnline® Journal of the Center for Bioethics and Research \(\[beonlinejournal.net\]\(http://beonlinejournal.net\)\)](http://BeOnline®JournaloftheCenterforBioethicsandResearch.beonlinejournal.net) or send an email to editorinchief@beonlinejournal.net.

13.0 Information on Job Opportunities

The Center for Bioethics and Research widely disseminates information about job opportunities in research and bioethics on our social media pages and website for interested individuals. Please visit <https://bioethicscenter.net/jobs/> for more information.

I was opportune to apply for the Patient Advocate Scholarship (many thanks to the Center for Bioethics and Research Nigeria advert of the scholarship on the Job and Opportunity section of its website). Privilege to gain access to the course as a Patient Advocate scholar (through a scholarship awarded by New York University's Compassionate Use and Preapproval Access Working Group and the University of Arizona Health Law and Policy Program) was granted after being awarded the scholarship on 12th April, 2022

Pharm. Oyebode Oluwaseyi Dosunmu.

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Closing Remarks

Thank you for taking the time to read this issue of the newsletter. Your comments about the current issue and ideas for the next issue are what will keep the Center for Bioethics and Research Newsletter an interesting and lively newsletter.

Please send contributions and suggestions to admin@bioethicscenter.net

CHECK US ON THE WEB

www.bioethicscenter.net

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We wish you a happy holiday season
and a prosperous new year.