

# WAB Newsletter

A Newsletter of West African Bioethics  
Training Programme



## West African Bioethics

**funded by:**

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## About WAB

The West African Bioethics is program for teaching, service and research in International Bioethics

The West African Bioethics training program is unique because it uses the opportunity afforded by its location in West Africa to research and train in Bioethics in English and French languages, both of which are widely spoken in the West African subregion.

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## MSC Bioethics Trainees

Four students were admitted this session for the masters degree program on partial scholarship. They recently concluded the second semester of their course work.

### 1. **Dr. Fakorede Omokehinde**

**Olubunmi:** She is a Physician at the Neuropsychiatric Hospital, Aro, Abeokuta Ogun State.

**2. Chilobe Damian Chinonso:** He is a secondary school Principal at Plato Academy, Enugu State, Nigeria.

**3. Gbadamosi Raymond Ojo:** He is a recent graduate of B.A Philosophy, from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

**4. Ogwu- Richard Sandra Olukemi:** She is a graduate of Microbiology from Olabisi Onabanjo University, and an M.Sc graduate in Public Health.

## New Intakes for 2015/2016

### Academic Session

The university is presently in the second semester of the 2014/2015 academic session and the admission process is ongoing, so far six students have submitted their applications successfully to the UI PG School. Interviews will be conducted for the applicants at the Department and the names of successful applicants will be recommended and forwarded to the PG School.





## Onsite/Institutional Based Step-down Training

The following onsite trainings were conducted by West African Bioethics Training Program faculty members from January 2015 to date.

Institution	Date	Attendance	Participants	Training type
The Neuropsychiatric Hospital, Aro, Ogun State.	Feb. 25-26	33	Members of the Ethics Committee and staff of the hospital.	Health Management and Ethics Course
Department for International Development. DFID	Mar 9 - 11	47	Members of Health Research Ethics Committees of 6 Northern States.	Modern Research Ethics.
The Ethics Committee for Bauchi and Sokoto States.	June 3- 5	50	Members of Health Research Ethics Committees.	Research Ethics Workshop
The Health Research Ethics Committee University of Nigeria teaching Hospital, Ituku Ozalla.	June 18-20	200	Members of Staff, Resident Doctors, Allied Health Workers, Postgraduate Students and Interested Researchers.	Responsible Conduct of Research Workshop.
The Ondo State Health Research Ethics Committee.	August 26-27	19	Members of the Health Research Ethics Committee.	Research Ethics Workshop



## Online Diploma Program

**An experience in Research Ethics of one participant of the WAB Online Diploma Program.**

### About myself

My name is Dr. Chiedozie Godian Ike, the Last son of Late Chief Vincent Ike. I am a Nigerian, married to Mrs. Stella Eghiaighe Ike and we have two great kids, Ikechukwu and Chioma. Chioma is our bioethics baby, born in May, 2014. I am a Senior Registrar in the Department of Community Medicine, Irrua Specialist Teaching Hospital, Irrua, Edo State. I graduated from Ebonyi State University; Abakaliki in 2004 and in 2005, had my internship at Ebonyi State University teaching Hospital, now Federal Medical Center, Abakaliki. In 2005/2006, during my National Youth Service, I worked for both the Nigerian Police Force, (Nigerian Police Clinic, Lokoja) and The Nigerian Army, (Army Records Center, Cherimegumeri barracks, Lokoja) as a medical officer. Between 2006 and 2009, I worked first as a medical officer, second, as a

senior medical officer and third, as a Registrar in Family Practice at Faith Mediplex Benin City. Presently, I am doing my residency at Irrua Specialist Teaching Hospital. Apart from my basic medical degree, I obtained a certificate of proficiency in Management which was awarded by the Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM - Chartered) in 2006; a certificate in Basic of Health Economics from the World Bank Institute (WBI), Washington DC, in 2009. In 2013, I obtained a Master Degree in Public Health from the University of Benin (UNIBEN), Benin City, and just recently, in July, 2014, bagged a prestigious certificate in Research Ethics from the West African Bioethics (WAB).

Part of my work as a senior registrar is assisting medical consultants in teaching bioethics to medical students and junior residents. In a recent short course in Spatial Epidemiology organized by the Institute of Lassa Fever Research and Control, Irrua, Edo State; as the lead facilitator, I included Bioethics as one of the courses to be taught, since the whole course was in preparation for a field research.



## My experience in Research Ethics

There were two major periods in my undergraduate career when I first heard of Research Ethics; these were during my clinical year orientation program and during my rotation in Community Medicine. My first contact with a Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC) was at the medical school, when I submitted my first research protocol to Ebonyi State University Teaching Hospital Ethics Committee. In my postgraduate career, I had my second and third contact with HREC at The University of Benin Teaching Hospital HREC and Irrua Specialist Teaching Hospital HREC respectively. It was during my MPH program at UNIBEN that I began a formal training in Bioethics. It was also during my MPH program that I got acquainted with WAB online Bioethics and the National Health Research Code. In 2011, I received another Bioethics training during an Institutional based step down training at Irrua Specialist

Teaching Hospital (ISTH) by WAB, and a short course in Research Ethics in 2012, by The West African College of Physicians. What I may call a landmark experience in Bioethics took place at the last concluded online diploma course in Bioethics.

## The first Online Diploma in Research Ethics- a landmark learning experience in Research Ethics.

In April, 2014, I started the diploma program with more than twenty participants selected across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. Although, the course took time to start, by the time I was done with the first onsite meeting, I forgot about WAB delay in starting the course. Sufficient explanations about the reason for the delay and apologies were given by the Program Administrator, on behalf of WAB. In response, my colleagues and I appreciated WAB for the management of the challenges that caused the delay.



### **The learning structure**

The entire course was taught online for three months with two weekend's onsite meeting in Abuja. There was a website to log in with log in details for each participant; a module for each topic for the week; a quiz for each topic; other online resources and a few reference materials sent to each participants ahead of the course. There was a chat session every weekend for the three months. I got acquainted with my Lecturers through the chat platform created by WAB. Along the line, and in response to our request to have a general forum, the program administrator, in the usual efficient manner, provided a general forum corner for us. We also got e mail alerts concerning the week's program and any other business relating to research ethics. If any of us was not familiar with e- learning, he/she would have great difficulty catching up with regular updates coming from the Administrator. I was fortunate enough to have gone through e- learning courses apart from CITI courses, Coursera, Johns Hopkins e-learning and others. I had my first e-learning experience in a World Bank Institute's (WBI) e - learning course in Basic of Health Economics. It was these initial e learning experiences that helped me to navigate through the entire program without difficulty. No wonder WAB insisted that prospective participants

complete the CITI courses before applying for the diploma. A few of my colleagues experienced difficulty in meeting up with the week's assignment either due to epileptic power supply, slow speed internet or competing activities. These difficulties were handled at the onsite meeting as the facilitators had to go through each week's module all over again for us (These facilitators were great!).

### **The Facilitators**

We had four facilitators- Prof Adebamowo CA, Prof Jegede AS, Dr. Ogundiran TO and Dr. Adejumo AO. Prof Adebamowo could not be with us physically but he was still great and good with his mastery of online teaching of the subjects. He never got tired explaining ethics in clear and very simple terms so my colleagues and I could understand not only the subject matter, but the underlying basic concepts. We have been hearing about the role culture plays in ethics but not so clearly as when Prof Jegede taught the course. For the first time, research ethics wore a traditional garment representing respect for Nigerian culture. Dr. Ogundiran dissected the review process for us. His lecture improved my perception about HREC that I have known for some time.



HREC is no longer a kind of concept that was thrown to us from the moon. I have been sufficiently enlightened on the functions of HREC and their review process. I had a rethink about some studies I had participated in and I quickly came to a conclusion that some of them were led by investigators who may have had a conflict of interest. Dr. Adejumo clearly explained what it meant to have conflicts of interest and I got the explanation; that was why I could look back and count the studies where conflicts of interest existed. These men are the best!

### **Program Administration**

This program was successful not just because the courses were well taught but because there was an efficient administrative system that was in operation throughout the lifespan of the program. The first challenge we faced was the login challenge. The next challenge was in viewing and downloading lecture resources. Issues bothering on the quiz and weekend chat was attended to by WAB Admin staff. By the time we were nearing the end of the course, most of us were at home with every issue that posed difficult at the initial stage. I must confess that this online learning was the first I have seen hosted in Nigeria and it was beyond my expectation. The organization of the onsite

meeting met my expectation. I was well taken care of like every other participant. All participants were reimbursed for all their expenses and I can tell you that we were treated as first class candidates. Of particular note was the way WAB Admin staff managed the cancellation and change of flight issues, when Abuja Airport was temporary shut down for maintenance. None of my colleagues who had issues was abandoned. Every one of us received a touch of compassion from the admin staff. WAB was ready to bear extra cost for the travelling re arrangement as a result of the Airport maintenance. The IHVN logistics manager worked with the program administrator to ensure we all had a smooth journey back to our destinations. In all, those in administration, the technical crew, logistics and the entire WAB staff ensured that my colleagues and I enjoyed the e- learning mode of the diploma course.

### **Take- home experiences**

One of the take -home experiences was the very day I read "Jesse's Intent" a foreword by Paul Singer to the textbook titled Institutional review Board: Management and function by Elizabeth A. Bankert and Robert J. Amdur.



I felt like crying because I was being reminded of several told and untold fatal misconducts of some colleagues and other biomedical researchers in West Africa and beyond. My family was a victim of one of such misconducts; we were told my father was going to survive his gunshot injury but he died after the surgical removal of the pellets. I recommend every biomedical researcher read the foreword once every day.

The second take home experience took place during Prof Adebamowo's lecture on Exploitation and international collaborative research. for the first time, I had to admit that a form of exploitation is going on in all spheres of human endeavour and in fact, some kind of exploitation is necessary for life to be sustained; although, exploitation should not be taken for its literal meaning in the context of research ethics. Concerning international collaborative research, Prof Adebamowo awakened the feelings I had when I read the Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks. A story of how Henrietta Lacks cancerous cell known as Hela cells made significant contribution to the drug treatment of leukaemia, herpes, Influenza and Parkinson disease yet, her poor relatives were not told of the immortality of her blood sample several years after she died while The researchers and

collaborating institutions enriched themselves from the fallouts of the research. Prof Adebamowo's lecture left an impression in my mind regarding collaborative research in terms of Material Transfer Agreement (MTA). I wondered whether today's Nigerian researchers are not reinventing the wheel when they send samples abroad without following up the endpoint of the sample or without the oversight of the National Health Research Ethics Committee.

### **Now that I have a Diploma in Research Ethics**

For me, real learning has just begun. But this time, my contributions to the field of Bioethics must be in tandem with my continued quest for further knowledge in Bioethics. For to whom much is given, much is expected. I must endeavour to brighten the corner where I am, both in the class room and in the field. Freely I have received, freely I shall give.

Thank you to WAB, to Fogarty International Center, to my Institution back at home and to my beautiful colleagues at the Diploma course.

### **Semper Fidelis!**

### **WAB Online Diploma Student**



### Students and Faculty Training

- Dr. Adebayo Adejumo attended a 3 months training on IRB at the NIH, Bethesda from September – December 2015.
- 4 M.Sc Bioethics Students successfully defended their thesis in the oral examination that was held on the 14th of July, 2015, to be eligible for graduation.

### Online Collaborative Institution Training Initiative

As part of our partnership with the University of Florida Miami's CITI program, we provided 998 online CITI trainings in Informed Consent, Responsible Conduct of Research and a specialized module on the Nigerian National Code for Health Research Ethics from January 1st to December, 2015 and 353 certificates for the TRREE program from January 1st to December, 2015.

### BeOnline Journal – Accepting Manuscripts for Review and Publication

BeOnline, the Bioethics Online journal of the West African Bioethics Training is an open-

access online journal. This journal contributes to the global discourse on bioethics with the focus of adding the voice of Africans and research in Africa to the debate about clinical and research ethics, primarily in Africa and in the world at large.

Submit your work for review by our panel of experienced reviewers and get it published in BeOnline journal. Rapid review and decision is guaranteed. Let the world hear your view about research ethics.

For more information on how to submit a manuscript for review, please visit us @ <http://www.bioethicscenter.net/journal/> or [send an email to admin@bioethicscenter.net](mailto:admin@bioethicscenter.net)

Please visit -

<http://www.bioethicscenter.net/journal/index.php/journal1/issue/view/3> for recent publications on the Journal Website.

One of the Articles in the Current Edition of BeOnline Journal discusses how Medical Practitioners in Nigeria need to be aware of their culpability in acts of commission and liability as a result of Negligence.

*The entire WAB family wishes you all*

*Merry Christmas*

*&*

*Happy New Year*



**West African Bioethics**





## CLOSING REMARKS

Thank you for taking your 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 West African Bioethics Newsletter an interesting and lively newsletter.

Please send contributions and suggestions to **admin@bioethicscenter.net**

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