

EDITORIAL

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary disease (COPD) is one of the most common chronic respiratory diseases which contribute significantly to the burden of non-communicable diseases. Dr Umoh presents a review which focuses on the pathogenesis and epidemiology of COPD in Nigeria and globally. The review notes that COPD which is increasing in prevalence has varied pathogenetic mechanisms which are influenced by intrinsic factors and extrinsic environmental promoters. Energy saving bulbs are promoted for their efficiency and capacity to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases; the acknowledged cause of global warming and climate change. These energy saving bulbs however contain varying quantity of mercury which can contaminate the environment with resultant clinical toxicity involving multiple organs and systems. It is on this background that Dr Ordinioha's review emphasizes the urgent need for the safe disposal of the energy-saving bulbs as their use increase in Nigeria through institutionalized and structured recycling programmes.

Health care staffs are at risk of acquiring infections from patients at the workplace. The knowledge and awareness of universal precautions is thus essential for all healthcare workers and people in other at risk occupations. This review by Dr Buowari highlights the risk, prevalence and practice of universal precaution.

Relocation which is a known determinant of malaria in non-immune travellers to malarious areas, has also been found to be a risk factor for malaria among semi-immune persons who change locality within endemic regions. Further research evidence suggests that the higher transmission intensity at the travel location is an underlying factor which may indicate exposure to new variants of *P. falciparum* for which specific immunity is lacking. This study by Dr Ikpe et al was conducted to determine if recent change of

locality increased the risk of malaria fever among semi-immune residents in a community in southern Nigeria. The study found that the recent change of locality within an endemic region, which serves as an indicator of exposure to new variants of *P. falciparum*; for which specific immunity is lacking, is a significant risk factor for malaria fever. The authors recommend protection against malaria for semi-immune individuals moving to new locations with significant risk of malaria transmission.

Essential hypertension has emerged as the commonest cardiovascular disorder in developing countries especially in Sub Saharan Africa. In addition blacks are known to suffer more severe hypertension and develop complications early. The use of electrocardiography is an evaluation modality for the detection of hypertension related cardiac organ damage and other associated conditions. This study by Drs Akpa and Wokoma evaluated the hypertension related abnormalities on the electrocardiograph of patients with untreated hypertension. They report a significant prevalence of significant rhythm and structural abnormalities in adult Nigerian hypertensive patients presenting for the first time and at diagnosis. They conclude that ECG is an important investigation and should be a mandatory evaluation for all newly presenting hypertensives.

Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy constitute major threats to maternal health during pregnancy, labour and the post-partum period. Eclampsia is a leading cause of maternal morbidity and mortality especially in low income and middle-income countries. Dr Buowari presents a retrospective review of the clinical records of women managed for eclampsia during a two-year period at a General hospital in Northern Nigeria. The study showed a significant prevalence of eclampsia which was associated with lack of antenatal care.