

EDITORIAL

Chronic Hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection is a major cause of cirrhosis, hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), and end-stage liver disease. Dr Wokoma presents a review of the virology and management of Hepatitis C infection. The review observes that successful treatment of Genotype 1 HCV infected patients with protease inhibitor based triple therapy has improved sustained virologic response (SVR) rates and treatment induced clearance of HCV infection.

Occupational lung diseases (OLD) remain one of the most common workplace health challenges since the industrial revolution. One of the risks for OLD is the exposure to cement dust which is associated with varying degrees of respiratory symptoms and reduction in lung function. This study by Drs Douglas and Alasia evaluated the lung function of workers in a cement manufacturing company in Port Harcourt and estimated the determinants of the measured rates. The study shows that impaired lung function was related to prolonged exposure to cement dust. The effective use of the PPE was also associated with normal lung function evaluated with PEFr.

Hearing impairment or deafness is a major disabling condition worldwide. The etiology of hearing loss includes congenital to acquired preventable childhood infections like otitis media and meningococcal meningitis. It is known that the morbidity and burden of hearing impairment on the children and their parents is enormous. It is on this background that Dr Frank-Briggs carried out a study to evaluate the perception and attitude of parents to children with hearing impairment. She concludes that the public should be enlightened about common preventable causes of hearing impairment in order to correct all negative attitudes about hearing loss/impairment.

Although Africa has the worst mortality data in the world, the picture painted by the high mortality rate of serving Africa leaders in the last

five years suggests reasons and causes far beyond poor socio-economic conditions. This study by Dr Ordinioha examined the causes and age at death of serving African leaders, in the last five years, and draws out the lessons, for the health profession and the general public. The study shows that the African leaders died mainly from noncommunicable diseases (NCDs); at an age that is below the world average. It advocates public enlightenment campaigns and greater emphasis on patient-centered chronic care of NCDs.

Acute limb ischemia is an uncommon condition and the diagnosis may be missed as it may mimic more common conditions that cause sudden loss of function in a limb. The aim of this case report by Dr Umoh et alis to highlight the possibility of this clinical presentation and improve awareness among practitioners. They note that a high index of suspicion is required especially in patients with a high risk for peripheral artery disease as early intervention is essential to prevent loss of the limb.

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