EDITORIAL

From HIV AIDS, TB to H. pylori and other infections in Africa

In this issue we bring you very interesting papers on infectious diseases in Africa. Not that that is what is the bread and butter of medical practice in this continent but because the situation seems to be getting out of hand. Thus Damalie Nakanjako and coworkers from Uganda report a very disturbing trend. Half the presenting at the emergency medical ward in Mulago, Uganda’s referral and teaching hospital tested positive for HIV. This is a country with national HIV sero-prevalence of between 6 and 10%. Seventy one percent of those testing positive for HIV WHO stage 3 and 4 and two thirds had not had any prior HIV testing. There is no need to continue this litany for it highlights the ever increasing need for care for those infected with HIV. You will find the results of this study disturbing but very revealing.

From Nigeria we bring you an innovative study by Forbi and Odetunde report a high prevalence of HTLV-1 among pregnant women and commercial sex workers. Why should we be concerned with HTLV-1 when there other pressing problems? Well, precisely because it has been associated with leukemia, lymphoma, tropical spastic paralysis and other syndromes.

Also from Nigeria Aboderin and colleagues report that Helicobacter pylori isolates in Ile-Ife have developed resistance to the antibiotics commonly used to treat this infection that is associated with peptic ulcer disease. From Jinja in Uganda, Anguzu and Olila isolated bacterial from 58% of septic post operative wounds largely S.aureus and coliforms. Resistance to commonly used antibiotics was widespread!

From Cote d’Ivoire N’guessan and colleagues report antibacterial activity of a parasitic plant (Thonningia sanguinea) against Salmonella enteritica. An important addition to the literature on the pharmacological value of African plants! The topics covered in this issue include honey, Burkitt’s lymphoma, maternal mortality, lupus anticoagulant, the persistence of chloroquine and HIV among blood donors. Quite a menu that wets your appetite and truly sustains it! Finally a word of thanks and gratitude to our editorial team, reviewers, the authors and you the readers without whose effort African Health Sciences would not be reaching the height it has!

James K Tumwine
Editor