

**ADHERENCE TO CURRENT GUIDELINES ON PRESCRIPTION OF
ANTIMALARIALS AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS AMONG HEALTHCARE
PROVIDERS IN LOKOJA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA,
KOGI STATE, NIGERIA**

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the memories of all Nigerians who die daily from conditions that would have been prevented or treated if our health system were responsive and easily accessible.

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CERTIFICATION

We certify that this work was carried out by **Sylvanus Chima WELLE** in the Department of Epidemiology and Medical Statistics (EMS) under our supervision.

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ABSTRACT

Adherence to current treatment guidelines on prescription of antimalarials by healthcare providers can promote better malarial treatment outcomes. However, adherence rate and factors influencing adherence to treatment guidelines have not been well explored. This study was carried out to assess adherence to current guidelines on prescription of antimalarials and associated factors among healthcare providers in Lokoja Local Government Area, Kogi State, Nigeria.

The study was cross-sectional in design. A total of 404 healthcare providers aged 18-65 years were selected through proportional allocation from public health facilities and patent medicine stores. Using a semi-structured, interviewer-administered questionnaire, data were collected on socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, knowledge and training on current guidelines and prescription practice. Adherence was defined as correct prescription of artemisinin-based combination therapy for uncomplicated malaria in a child and adult. Knowledge of current guidelines was assessed on a 5-point scale and scores ≥ 3 were categorised as good knowledge while scores < 3 were categorised as poor. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Chi-square test and logistic regression with significance level set at 0.05.

Mean age of respondents was 36.9 years ($SD = 9.2$ years). Respondents comprised of nurses (36.6%), patent medicine vendors (30.0%), doctors (18.3%), community health extension workers (9.7%), pharmacists (3.2%) and community health officers (2.2%). Over half (53.0%) were males and about three-quarters (74.4%) were married. Half (50.0%) had good knowledge of the guidelines of which 34.2% were doctors and 4.0% each were community health officers and pharmacists. A total of 270 (66.8%) of respondents claimed they requested for confirmatory test before treatment of malaria. In all, 54.2% had been trained on the guidelines of which 36.1% were patent medicine vendors while only 1.4% was pharmacists. Overall adherence to guidelines on anti-malaria prescription was 39.6%. The adherence among doctors was 67.6%, community health officers (55.6%), pharmacists (19.8%). Respondents who were trained on the guidelines were twice more likely to adhere to guidelines. ($AOR=2.28$; $CI=1.41-3.69$) while respondents with good knowledge were four times more likely to adhere to guidelines compared to those with poor knowledge ($AOR=3.99$; $CI=2.39-6.69$).

Knowledge of and adherence to current guidelines on antimalarials prescription was generally low in Lokoja among community health officers, nurses, pharmacists and patent medicine vendors in the study. Government should train these categories of health care providers to improve their knowledge and adherence to the guidelines.

Keywords: Treatment guidelines, Antimalarial prescription, Health care providers, Malaria confirmatory test.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|------------|---|
| ACT | Artemisinin-based Combination Therapy |
| ANC | Antenatal Care |
| CHEWs | Community Health Extension Workers |
| CHOs | Community Health Officers |
| FMOH | Federal Ministry of Health |
| IHVN | Institute of Human Virology, Nigeria |
| IPTp | Intermittent Preventive Treatment of malaria in pregnancy |
| IRS | Indoor Residual Spraying |
| ITN | Insecticide Treated Net |
| LGAs | Local Government Areas |
| LLINs | Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets |
| MAPS | Malaria Action Program for States |
| MC | Malaria Consortium |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals |
| MICS | Malaria Indicator Cluster Survey |
| mRDT | Malaria Rapid Diagnostic Test |
| MTN | Multinet |
| NAFDAC | National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control |
| NANNM | National Association of Nigeria Nurses and Midwives |
| NDHS | Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey |
| NMCP | National Malaria Control Program |
| NMEP | National Malaria Elimination Program |
| NPC | National Planning Commission |
| PMV | Patent Medicine Vendor |
| RBM | Roll Back Malaria |
| PHC | Primary Health Care |
| PRINN-MNCH | Partnership for Reviving Routine Immunization in Northern Nigeria-Maternal Newborn and Child Health |
| SFH | Society for Family Health |
| SON | Standards Organization of Nigeria |
| SSH | State Specialist Hospital |