



L-R: Leonard Akah, deputy director, Authorization and Policy, National Insurance Commission (NAICOM); Mohammed Kari, deputy Commissioner, Technical, NAICOM; Fatai Kayode-Lawal, immediate past president, Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria (CIIN); Wale Onaolapo, managing director/CEO, Sovereign Trust Insurance plc during the 2014 International Education Conference of the CIIN held in Lagos.

Driving quality healthcare through community based insurance

...PharmAccess, SafeCare certification enhancing facilities

Stories by
MODESTUS ANAESORONYE

Lack of quality healthcare has no doubt been a major challenge confronting Nigeria's healthcare industry, accounting for why the country loses an estimated N250 billion annually to capital flight on medicals, boosting healthcare tourism for other economies particularly India and the United States.

Not only has it undermined healthcare development in the country, it has overtime rubbished the contribution of the sector to the country's GDP and most unfortunately the growing mortality rate and declining life span of most Nigerians as a result of poor facilities, despite the huge potentials in Africa's most populous black nation.

This, however, is gradually being addressed in the last few years following a collaborative effort between PharmAccess-SafeCare and Hygeia to institute facility quality and best practice

among healthcare providers in Nigeria through Community based insurance.

The success point is here is about creating opportunity for patients who automatically are at the receiving end to choose hospitals that have got the right facilities and consequently the best doctors, medication and right treatment.

As Nicole Spieker, director quality, PharmAccess-SafeCare, said Nigeria has really had very bad facilities, but with ongoing efforts there has been tremendous ability to improve these facilities.

"The government ministries, the service providers, have embraced change and what is required is for all stakeholders in the private and public sector to collaborate to achieve this quality standard in healthcare facilities across the country."

SafeCare, she said, came as bridge to close the gap in facilities accreditation which was only available for big hospitals. "So, we came with Nigerian standard that is comparable with what is obtainable in other African

countries, and provided by Nigerians, to enhance healthcare facilities quality and practice standard in the country," she explained.

The next level, she said, is to take the information to the patients at the receiving end. According to her, "If they know that there is quality, they will decide where to spend their money for value because they will look for hospitals that have the right facilities, good doctors and where they will get the right medication and treated the right way."

A programme review, initiated by the World Bank, reveals pioneering quality improvement in 15 health facilities in Lagos. Having participated in the Computer and Allied Products Dealers Association of Nigeria (CAPDAN) health insurance programme, between August 2009 to April 2014.

As part of the programme the participating health facilities enrolled in the internationally recognised quality improvement and certification programme called SafeCare. The result was significant

improvement in their quality of service and patient satisfaction ratings.

The successes of the programme were shared during a workshop held at the Protea Hotel, GRA Ikeja, where SafeCare and its partners revealed important elements behind the groundbreaking approach to quality improvement and shared lessons learnt, with five awards of distinction to benefiting service providers.

Recipients were Osuntunji Medical Centre, Obanikoro for Award for Excellence for Best Overall Facility 2013; Subol Hospital for Award for Excellence for Most Improved Facility 2012 -2013; Kunle Adeyemi - executive director of Crystal Specialist Hospital for Merit Award for the Most Distinguished ED/MD 2012 - 2013, Orile-Agege General Hospital for Merit Award for Exceptional Performance 2012 - 2013; and Hygeia Community Health Care for Leadership Award for Outstanding Technical Assistance Partner 2012 - 2013.

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Nicole Spieker

L-R: Olusola Ladipo-Ajayi, managing director/CEO, LASACO Assurance plc; Ashim Adebowale-Oyekan, chairman, LASACO and Wole Oshin, director, Custodian and Allied Plc at a recent International Insurance Conference in Kigali, Rwanda.



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