

SECRET

JUNE, 2018.

NCH/61/003C

**MEMORANDUM OF THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF HEALTH ON ADOPTION OF
THE GUIDELINES FOR PAIN MANGEMENT IN NIGERIA**

1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this memo is to seek the approval of the Council to adopt the Guidelines for Pain Management in all States of the federation and the FCT.

2. INTRODUCTION/ BACKGROUND

Pain is a major problem accompanying disease entities, which has either been poorly, under or inconsistently treated or managed in patients. It continues to be a major public health issue in Nigeria as it is in other parts of the world.

There is no accurate data on the burden of pain and its management in Nigeria. Based on the World Health Organization's estimation of need for palliative care as 1% of a country's total population, Nigeria with a 2014 projected population of 182,867,631 inhabitants, at a 3.2% growth rate would have an estimated palliative care burden of about 1.8 million. This is made up of several thousands of cancer, HIV/AIDS and patients with sickle cell. In Nigeria today, a vast majority of patients with these diseases are living and dying in unrelieved pain.

The 2015 report of the International Narcotic Control Board indicated that inadequate knowledge amongst healthcare professionals on rational use of controlled medicines is one of the major barriers militating against proper management of patients in pain. Under-treatment of pain is common in surgical wards, intensive care units, accident and emergency departments, dentistry, general practice, and in the management of all forms of other chronic pain conditions experienced by all age groups from neonates to the elderly. Problem areas related to acute pain include road traffic injuries, burn injuries, labour pain and postoperative pain.

It was consequent upon this, that the Federal Ministry of Health in collaboration with relevant stakeholders developed the maiden edition of the Guidelines for Pain Management in Nigeria as part of efforts to ensure all patients with pain receive the highest quality care within a framework of ethics and respect for human rights.

3. CONTENT

The Guidelines for Pain Management in Nigeria is developed to provide informed guidance to healthcare practitioners in their management of pain in all categories of patients requiring pain relief. The key objectives are to:

- a. Provide all healthcare practitioners with standard of practice that will assist them in the effective assessment, treatment and monitoring of pain;
- b. Increase the utilization of, and access to standard pain treatment options and care in Nigeria

- c. Ensure all patients with pain receive highest quality care within a framework of ethics and respect for human rights.

4. PRAYERS

The Council is invited to note as follows:

- i. Pain management is a fundamental human right as provided for by international conventions, to which Nigeria is a signatory;
- ii. This maiden edition of the Guidelines for Pain Management in Nigeria was developed by the Federal Ministry of Health with inputs from key stakeholders and the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC);
- iii. The Guidelines was adopted and validated by the stakeholders at a town hall meeting held in Abuja in November, 2017; and
- i. Implementation of the Guidelines for Pain Management in Nigeria will increase the utilization of, and access to standard pain treatment options and care in Nigeria.

Council is further invited to approve:

- The adoption and subsequent implementation of the Guidelines for Pain Management in Nigeria in all the 36 States of the Federation and the FCT.

Honourable Minister of Health

JUNE, 2018.