



"Established by the NIMC Act No. 23 of 2007, it has the mandate to establish, own, operate, maintain and manage the National Identity Database in Nigeria, register persons covered by the Act, assign a Unique National Identification Number and issue General Multi-Purpose Cards (GMPC) to those registered individuals, and to harmonize and integrate existing identification databases in Nigeria."

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Vision

It is our vision to provide sustainable world class identity management solution to affirm identity, enhance governance and service delivery in Nigeria by 2019.

Mission

To establish and regulate a reliable and sustainable system of National Identity Management that enables citizens and legal residents affirm their identity in an environment of innovation and

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ENROLL FOR YOUR NIN; SULTAN SA'AD ABUBAKAR TELLS NIGERIANS

The Sultan of Sokoto, His Eminence Alhaji Sa'ad Abububakar has called on Nigerians to enroll for the National Identification Number (NIN).

He made the call during a joint courtesy visit by the Director General, National Identity Management Commission (NIMC), Engr. Aliyu Aziz and the Director General, National Orientation Agency (NOA), Dr Garba Abari to the Sultan to brief him on the ongoing collaboration between NIMC and NOA to Sensitize Nigerians and Legal residents especially at the grassroots on NIN enrollment,



The Sultan of Sokoto, His Eminence Alhaji Sa'ad Abubakar, flanked by the DG/CEO, NIMC, Engr. Aliyu Aziz, Alhaji Balarabe Gambo (Representative of the NOA DG) and others

it's benefits, importance and the National Identity Management System (NIMS). Speaking during the event, Engr. Aziz informed the Sultan of the need to populate the National database to be able to manage individual's identity against card issuance which was the previous narrative, as the world is moving towards digital identity, like the US social security number, the UK social insurance number and the Indian Aadhaar. Aziz also emphasized the Commission's Commitment towards populating the National Identity Database with all Citizens

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and legal residents including Children, hence the ecosystem approach to be implemented in July 2018, in which various Government agencies and other private partners that are into data collection will be licensed to capture data that will be sent to the back end of NIMC's Database. He also noted that enforcement of the mandatory use of the NIN will also shoot up enrollment.

Confirming the Message of the DG, NOA, his representative, Alhaji Balarabe Gambo expressed his gratitude to the Sultan for the reception and


called on the Sultan to use his influence and status to encourage his subjects to enroll for the NIN as it is of immense benefit to the citizens and legal residents.

He further stated that NOA is committed to ensuring that Nigerians and Legal residents are fully sensitized and educated on the NIN and its benefits as well as the NIMS. Being the Government agency saddled with the responsibility of publicizing Government policies and activities, NOA has become a natural partner with NIMC to drive this project especially at the grassroots level.

In his response, the Sultan commended NIMC and NOA for taking the initiative to collaborate in order to achieve success. He pledged to drive the message down to his subjects, and further assured the team of his support towards ensuring the success of the exercise, as it will be of immense benefit not only to the people of Sokoto state, but the entire Nation.

In his closing remarks, Engr. Aziz expressed his profound gratitude to the Sultan for the warm reception and support, and presented the National electronic identity card to his Eminence, the Sultan of Sokoto.

Can't Find your NIN Slip? Use *346#USSD Code to Check/Retrieve Your NIN

National Identity Management System Federal Republic of Nigeria National Identification Number Slip (NINS)			
Tracking ID: S7Y0000000000000	Surname: FUNMIHASSAN	Address: 11 SOKODE CRESCENT, ZONE 5, WUSE, ABUJA, NIGERIA	
NIN: 123456789012	First Name: TABLETON		
	Middle Name: UCHELON		
	Gender: M		
<p>Note: The <i>National Identification Number (NIN)</i> is your identity. It is confidential and may only be released for legitimate transactions. You will be notified when your National Identity Card is ready (for any enquiries please contact)</p>			
 helpdesk@nimc.gov.ng	 www.nimc.gov.ng	 0700-CALL-NIMC (0700-2255-646)	 National Identity Management Commission <small>11, Sokode Crescent, Off Dalaba Street, Zone 5 Wuse, Abuja Nigeria</small>

Dial *346#, and take the following steps:

A message will appear on your screen welcoming you to NIMC service and also displaying two available options.

Option one has the NIN retrieval, which is for persons using the

mobile number they used when they enrolled for their National Identification Number. This option instantly returns a text containing the applicants NIN.

Option two has the NIN Search. This can be used with any mobile number. When you select

the NIN Search option, you will be requested to supply your last name, etc., after which your NIN will be displayed.

This service is available on all networks. Service charge of N20 applies.

**SPEECH BY MR. PRESIDENT, MUHAMMADU BUHARI *GCFR*,
AT THE FOURTH (4TH) ANNUAL GOVERNMENT FORUM
ON ELECTRONIC IDENTITY IN AFRICA (ID4AFRICA 2018)
WHICH HELD APRIL 24 – 26, AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
CENTRE, ABUJA, NIGERIA**

It is with great delight that I welcome you all to the **Fourth (4th) Annual Government Forum on Electronic Identity in Africa tagged ID4-Africa 2018**. I am particularly happy that International delegates, major arms of Government, the private sector, diplomats, and other development agencies are participating.

The importance of this Summit in optimizing the benefits of digital identity and leveraging its use for accelerating development prompted Nigeria's decision to host it.

The theme of the summit ***"Harmonization of Identity Schemes"*** is of utmost importance to Nigeria. Identity forms the nucleus of our daily activities, cutting across several sectors of the economy. As a responsible Government, we are extremely aware of the importance of gravitating towards e-Governance.

The International community, especially the developed countries have adopted identity as a tool for transformation of governance and service delivery in areas such as: transportation, financial inclusion, immigration, healthcare, social safety nets, agriculture, security and so on.

According to the World Bank

Group 2017 report, with increased access to identification, over 38 million Africans could open their first bank accounts upon receiving proper documentation. A total value of \$800 million in social safety net programs will benefit the citizenry from improved targeting and management. 4.4 million refugees and stateless persons in Sub Saharan Africa could also have access to better protection and humanitarian assistance.

Digital identity can transform the efficiency of safety nets with electronic cash transfers; track immunization of children and delivery of health care to citizens; issue driver's licenses linked to a digital identity registry and track border control and issue passports linked to a digital identity registry.

The inclusion of the provision of legal identity for all as a Sustainable Development Goal also reflects its importance as a global development issue.

The Federal Government of Nigeria has long recognized the need to have a single national identity system for all citizens in order to carry out its mandate in social and economic development, law enforcement, intelli-

gence and political development.

In 2017, the Federal Government of Nigeria issued the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) as its overall strategy to drive the country's economic development. As part of Economic Recovery and Growth Plan, the Government plans to deliver key services, including safety nets, agriculture development, food security, energy, transport and enterprise development, while strengthening the macro fiscal environment, investing in people, and developing a local digital economy.

Through the process of Harmonization of Identity Schemes, in Nigeria, the National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) grew the database from seven (7) million to fourteen (14) million by 2016 and from fourteen (14) million to twenty eight (28) million in 2017. Our target is to grow the database to Fifty (50) Million by December 2018 and subsequently Seventy (70) Million by December 2019.

In this regard, Nigeria is convinced that for businesses and innovation to thrive in Africa, a digital strategy to develop global reputation for technological -

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leadership and business dynamism is essential. This entails building digital ecosystems; Investing in smart infrastructure, platforms, and services; Identifying and nurturing digital talents; digitizing our records and classifying them accordingly; as well as reviewing and upgrading the legal and regulatory framework. A robust Identity Management System with quality data is key for every emerging economy. Nigeria, and by extension Africa, must leverage on its digital identity as a reliable tool for socio economic development.

The importance of the confidentiality of data inherent in the identity management system cannot be over emphasized. We must therefore ensure absolute integrity and security of this

information. As a nation of over 180 million people, it is important that we develop an integrated and connected system to ascertain that an individual is truly who he claims to be.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Africa needs to embrace the global drive towards optimization in the use of resources by making its Digital Identity Infrastructure efficient, thereby creating an enabling environment for talented African youths to tap into these technologies. Indeed, with the advent of disruptive technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Block-chain, now is the time to build an ecosystem that will enhance continent-wide security, minimize fraud and wasteful expenditure.

I am aware also that a lot of work is being done in this re-

gard by all the stakeholders represented here. However, it is my desire and my charge to you that the National Identification Number (NIN) be used to enhance the democratic process in Africa in the immediate future.

I wish to commend the ID4Africa Forum for its concern and interest in the development of a robust identity management system in Africa.

With the calibre of participants here, I am convinced that there will be robust discussions on identity schemes, and action plans to address challenges of harmonization in our respective homelands will emerge.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, it is my singular honor and pleasure to declare the **2018 ID4-Africa** Summit open. I thank you all and wish you fruitful deliberations.

Payment Services now Available on the National e-ID Card

The National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) in conjunction with the United Bank for Africa (UBA) and MasterCard have opened up the EMV services of National e-ID Card payment applet for use. These services are being enabled in phases:

Phase 1 which is currently enabled for use comprises of:

- Fund loading at UBA branch
- ATM Transactions
- Web Transactions
- POS Transactions
- EMV activation at the Banks Branches
- PIN reset/PIN unblock



Phase 2: Is at the final stage of testing:

- Fund loading via Payarena
- Fund loading via Mobile
- Fund loading via ATM
- Fund loading via UBA internet banking platform

- EMV activation at the ATM
- Members of Staff are encouraged to fund and use their National e-ID Cards as all the channels in phase 1 are enabled to work at all UBA branches nationwide and other banks ATM.

NIMC PARTNERS KADUNA STATE ON RESIDENCY CARD PROGRAMME



The Governor of Kaduna State, Mallam Nasir el-Rufai, the DG/CEO, NIMC, Engr. Aliyu Aziz, SA on Trade and Investment Promotion to the Governor, Mr. Jimmy Lawal, and the GM, NIMC, LRCS, Hajiya Hadiza Ali-Dagabana.

The National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) in the country, and explained has partnered the Kaduna State Government in the launch of its Residency Card Registration Programme. The programme was officially flagged-off by the Governor, Mallam Nasir el-Rufai and the DG/CEO of NIMC, Engr. Aliyu Aziz at Rigasa, on Wednesday, June 27th, 2018, in Kaduna.

While delivering his welcome address at the event, Engr. Aliyu Aziz gave a brief history of Mallam Nasir El-Rufai's contribution to the setting up of NIMC, and how he has continued to play pivotal roles in the affairs of the Commission.

He lauded the Governor for championing the course of

state registration programmes that registration for the residency card also allows every resident of the state to have a National Identification Number (NIN), which is crucial for planning purposes. The NIMC DG further noted that the Commission has so far enrolled over 1.1 million Kaduna state residents into the National Identity Database.

In his remarks, the governor noted that the state is partnering NIMC to deliver Residency Cards to all those residents in Kaduna State and also key into the National programme of populating the unique national identity database.

He said the programme is designed to enable government

to better plan, implement and monitor the delivery of essential public services, adding that there are 58 Residency Card Registration Centres currently across the state to ensure ease of access.

“Through this process, government will gather population records that capture the data of all residents in Kaduna State and use

this data to plan properly for the provision of schools, hospitals, roads and other critical infrastructure.

“The Residency Card will also serve as an all-in-one multi-purpose card for identification, a debit card for financial transactions, a platform for receiving salaries and other means of social service delivery for financial inclusion,” he said.

He also appealed to traditional rulers, religious and community leaders to help sensitize citizens, to ensure that all residents in their respective communities get registered. He promised to recognize the first and one millionth registrants, in order to encourage residents to turn out for registration.

REMARKS BY MALAM NASIR EL-RUFAI, GOVERNOR OF KADUNA STATE, AT THE FLAG-OFF OF THE KADUNA STATE RESIDENCY CARD PROGRAMME, HELD AT RIGASA, ON WEDNESDAY, 27TH JUNE 2018.

I am delighted to welcome you all to this formal flag-off of the Kaduna State Residency Card Programme. This programme is designed to enable the government to better plan, implement and monitor the delivery of essential public services. It is a logical extension of the steps we have taken since 2015 to launch a data revolution and reverse the absence of concise data and accurate information on the demographics of the state and other socio-economic indices.



By identifying precisely who lives in Kaduna State, together with relevant data, the government is better able to develop and implement targeted initiatives and provide social services which would ensure that no one is left behind, especially our poorest and most vulnerable. For achieving results and progressive outcomes in these lean times, there can be no substitute for data-driven planning. This is self-evident. Our health sector is already delivering on our manifesto commitment to provide free health care in public hospitals for the vulnerable in our society, especially pregnant women, children below five years and senior citizens. But it would be much better if our health sector managers know precisely how many residents of our state are within this segment, and where they are!

The Social Investment Programme of the Federal Government is already piloting the payment of N5,000 monthly to some beneficiar-

ies in some of the poorest parts of our state. But it would be much better if the FGN knew each and every citizen that can benefit from this monthly cash transfer programme.

The situation in our education sector further illustrates the importance of accurate data. The overcrowded school in Rigasa made national headlines after we revealed its existence. But how did one primary school in Rigasa come about having more than 20,000 pupils? Was any agency tracking population growth in the ar-

***...Data-driven planning
supports progressive
outcomes!***

ea, and

responding with projects to expand the school capacity to meet the demographic explosion?

A modern government needs to know the vital socio-economic statistics, or it will be reduced to the uncertainty of guesswork, groping in the dark and thereby wasting public resources by not matching projects and services with actual needs.

The Residency Card Programme is aimed at building a robust and secure database of residents for effective public administration and delivery of sustainable so-

cial services. Through this process, government will gather population records that capture the data of all residents in Kaduna State and use this data to plan properly for the provision of schools, hospitals, roads and other critical infrastructure.

The Residency Card will also serve as an all-in-one multi-purpose card for identification, a debit card for financial transactions, a platform for receiving salaries and other means of social service delivery for financial inclusion. The Programme is also a strategic part of our e-Governance automation platform with Microsoft.

Most importantly, after registration, residents will also have a unique identification number from the National Identity Management Commission, which will help in checkmating identity fraud and improve the level of trust in the society. This will also allow for thorough evidence-

NIMC COOPERATIVE SOCIETY ELECTS NEW EXECUTIVES

The much anticipated National Executive Elections of the NIMC Staff Multipurpose Cooperative Society Limited (NSMCSL) was held on 15th March, 2018 for all members across the 36 states and the FCT.

The Elections which commenced between the hours of 9.00am and 4.00pm was conducted quietly and peacefully.

Voting was done electronically (online) in the NIMC State offices using a unique token generated with the NIN of voters, while all those in the FCT - Abuja exercised their franchise through the open ballot system

To ensure orderliness, voters in Abuja were grouped into batches and were scheduled to vote at specific times; an SMS was sent to all voters telling them the batch they belong to and when they are scheduled to vote.

The results from the states were projected live at the polling venue (Abuja) and online on the NIMC Facebook page as they cast their votes.

Ballots were compiled and counted immediately after elections. The winners are as follows:

1. President – Mohammed Bala Adamu.
2. Vice President – Ita Daniel
3. General Secretary – Nwokpor Chukwuka Mbam
4. Asst. General Secretary – Susan Vincent Dogo
5. Financial Secretary – Ibrahim Lukman Gbadebo
6. Treasurer – Dorothy N. Idam
7. Auditor 1 – Yusuf Garba Ibrahim
8. Auditor 2 – Oluyori Vivian
9. Legal Adviser – Esangbadebo Festus Nosa

Inauguration and swearing in of newly elected members held on Thursday, 12th April, 2018.

The position of the President, Vice President and General Secretary were the most keenly contested and openly discussed, weeks leading up to the election.



Some members of the New Cooperative Executives

ESNI TIPS: SERIES S0008

HOW TO REPORT AN INCIDENT AND CREATE A NEW SERVICE REQUEST

There are different modes of creating an incident request. One of them is using the web-based form.

To use this method, you must have a login access to the NIMC Service Desk Portal.

NIMC Service Desk Portal provides you with a Self-Service Portal where you can search solutions for the most common issues before raising a request.

Using the portal you can log your complaints and issues online with the help of a web-based form. Once you have filled your issue, it gets listed in your request view page, where you can keep track of the logged issue. Locate and Login to NIMC Service Desk Portal

1.To locate NIMC Servicedesk Portal, type <https://servicedesk.nimc.gov.ng:8022> or <https://10.1.18.18:8022> into the address bar of your browser.

2.To Log in, type your Active Directory Username OR the username sent to you (for those not on the NIMC Active Directory) in the corresponding box provided.

3.Next, type your Active Directory password OR the password sent to you (for those not on the NIMC Active Directory) in the corresponding box provided, and email it to ithelpdesk@nimc.gov.ng

4. This e-mail will automatically be changed to a new re-

quest in the NIMC ServiceDesk Portal and actions to be performed on the request will be immediately taken into notice.

♦ You can also call up the IT Help desk Staff and report an issue or explain the nature of your request via IP phone /extension: 2333, 2258 and /or +234157691137, +234157691138

A Staff will manually feed in the details into the application through the web-based New incident form available in the Request module.

EMAIL:
ithelpdesk@nimc.gov.ng

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based justice system and effective law enforcement activities in our State.

In 2016, we embarked on a journey, in partnership with the National Identity Management Commission, to deliver Residency Cards to all residents in Kaduna State through the Kaduna State Residency Card Programme. Currently, there are 58 Residency Card Registrations Centres across Kaduna State. Three Mobile Enrolment Buses are also shuttling within Kaduna Metropolis, bringing the registration process to the elderly and persons living with physical disabilities. The ultimate goal is to ensure ease of access by scaling up the registration centres to

255 with one in each ward of our 23 Local Governments.

I call on all residents of Kaduna State to please locate a registration centre close to you or any of the mobile buses and please register. As a token of appreciation, we shall every now and then recognize landmark registrants with incentives and award certificates.

To this end, it is my pleasure today to recognize the first and one millionth registrants, and request them to come forward and receive their certificates. Residents of Kaduna State should note that at in the near future, no citizen will enjoy some of our free or subsidized social services like basic education, healthcare or

even be considered for land allocation unless he or she can provide a Kaduna State Residents Card. I therefore urge each and every citizen of Kaduna to register and obtain his or her State Resident Card as soon as possible. I appeal to our traditional rulers, religious and community leaders to help sensitize our citizens, intensify advocacy and enlightenment to ensure that all residents in your communities register as a matter of urgency.

Thank you all for listening and God bless you.

God Bless Kaduna State and God Bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

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@The Mobilisation and Sensitisation of FCT Rural Dwellers on Benefits of the NIN



At the Ona of Abaji, His Royal Highness, Adamu Baba Yuusa Palace



The ETSU SA' Rubochiyi, Alh. Ibrahim Mohammed Palace



At the Gomani of Kwali Arae Council, H.R.H Alh. Adamu .U.



H.R.H Alh Abdullahi Adamu, Etsu Yaba.



H.R.H Ibrahim.D. Yaro, Esu Bwari FCT, Abuja, Palace

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@The Citizenship & Leadership Training Centre Sea School Apapa Lagos State.



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@The Citizenship and Leadership Training Centre, Jos Plateau State.



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Official Flag-Off Ceremony of the Kaduna State Residency Card Programme



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Joint Courtesy Visit by the Director General, National Identity Management Commission (NIMC), Engr. Aliyu Aziz and the Director General, National Orientation Agency (NOA), Dr Garba Abari to the Sultan of Sokoto.



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Fourth left: Ekiti State Coordinator, NIMC Gbenga Ifayefunmi and Sixth right: Mrs Talabi, Comptroller of Nigerian immigration service, Ekiti State Command flanked by some Nigerian Immigration Service officers during a courtesy visit .



From L-R: NIMC Ekiti State Corrdinator, Gbenga Ifayefunmi and Aare Afe Babalola, founder Afe Babalola University Ado Ekiti (ABUAD) and Dr. Bayo Ogundipe, Director ICT ABUAD after being enrolled at NIMC Ekiti State Office.



NIPR Training at NIMC HQ, Abuja.



Afternoon with Research on 3rd July, 2018



DG/CEO NIMC Courtesy Visit to the FCT Minister office

“USSD Code *346# currently operational for NIN Status and NIN Search

Can you tell us about yourself?

My name is Lanre Yusuf and I am the DGM Software and Biometrics Unit.

What role(s) does the Software Unit play in the Commission?

The Software Unit plays a critical role in the IT/Ecosystem of the Commission. We are responsible for developing new applications, maintaining and modifying existing applications. We are also responsible for giving software requirement specifications to vendors who are partners to the Commission and who deploy solutions to us. We also develop applications based on needs and requirements of each departments in the Commission.

We understand that you are involved in the development of some applications to assist customers with the status of their NIN and ID cards, how far have you gone on this laudable assignment?

We have verification solution which staff and enrollment officers can use to check status of NIN and already printed cards using document ID or the NIN. This has been deployed and it has been efficient in trying to verify either new or existing enrollees who cannot remember the information they provided. An individual can actually do a search based on demographic information, based on their name, surname, and phone number etc. to pull their details if they are already existing on the database. We have also deployed the **USSD code *346#** which can be used to check ‘NIN status’ and ‘NIN search’ currently operational on 9MOBILE, MTN and AIRTEL. Our intention is to deploy it on all mobile net-



DGM Software, Mr. Lanre Yusuf

work operators. At the moment, we are on the final stage of deployment with MTN which is the biggest mobile network operator and the reason it is yet to be live/operational is because, of infrastructural constraints as we need faster response time for MTN to be able to move the services to live environment. Notwithstanding, we have carried out a few tests with them and hopefully, in the next few weeks we would go live. GLO is also not left out as efforts are being made to go live with them too and very soon, we should be able to go live with all the network providers. At that point, there will be public campaign, and adverts to sensitize citizens on other ways they can get information about their NIN.

What are the anticipated benefits of this service?

The service is a real time check on your NIN. Later, we will include the “card status” where you can check if your card is ready and this will be an addition. It pretty much works like the way we now check our BVN on our phones.

What challenges have your team

faced in the discharge of this initiative?

We have faced several challenges which are expected. One of them is, the need for tools to make the team function more effectively. Some of the tools include laptops, software and other materials that will help us perform optimally. We also need training as software development is a very dynamic environment where the individuals need to be trained and retrained to keep up with new technology developments. We also need better and comfortable working environment and lastly, staff remuneration needs to be improved - people need to be compensated well and motivated so that work will be done.

Apart from your tight schedule at work, how do you unwind?

Laughs... Work is work. In IT business and as a developer, there are no days off because the system needs to be working all the time. There are times I may be on leave and I get called or as I am wrapping up to close for the day, they inform you that the system is down and these are sacrifices that come with the job. But of course, I go on lunch breaks, have my dinner and enjoy my time with friends and family.

Any last words?

I am very impressed with the way NIMC staff carry on with their jobs regardless of the poor remuneration. This alone is encouraging. NIMC staff should be applauded for their dedication and tireless efforts and they should be awarded with better remuneration and good working environment to better attain the 2018 goal and I am positive that we will get there.

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES... FOCUS ON HYPERTENSION

Recall our earlier write up on Hypertension has been called Non-Communicable diseases (NCD) where NCDs were described as diseases that cannot be passed from one person to another; which are usually of long duration and slow progression; resulting from a combination of genetic, physiological, environmental and behavioural factors. Cardiovascular diseases were among the major groups enumerated.

Blood is a very vital fluid in the body and it needs to flow freely because it carries vital oxygen and other nutrients to and from the heart. Blood pressure is created "by the force of blood pushing against the walls of blood vessels (arteries) as it is pumped by the heart. The higher the pressure the harder the heart has to pump." It is normal for blood pressure to increase following periods of hard physical exercise, anxiety and stress. However, when this blood pressure becomes persistently higher than the normal levels when resting, high blood pressure, otherwise called **Hypertension**, results. High blood pressure requires the heart to work harder than normal to circulate blood through the blood vessels.

Hypertension has been called the silent killer or silent threat because the symptoms are not always obvious, most patients are discovered on routine medical check-ups. Hence, the need for regular blood pressure checks. Uncontrolled hypertension has been known to cause myriads of health problems especially targeting the heart, kidneys, brain and eyes.

Types of Hypertension

Primary hypertension has no definite cause, however, there are risk factors that increases one's chances of getting it. These can be non-modifiable as in ageing, positive family history, black race and/or modifiable as in stress, fatigue, obesity, poor eating habits, lack of exercise, smoking, alcoholism, etc. About 90% of patients with hypertension belong to the primary category.

Secondary hypertension accounts for the remaining 10% of people with hypertension, and the elevated blood pressure is as a result of other diseases primarily affecting the heart, kidneys, thyroid glands, sleep etc. The blood pressure levels would usually return to normal once the primary cause is treated.

How common is hypertension?

Globally, the incidence of hypertension has doubled over the past 40 years, being a major contributor to one-third of deaths from cardiovascular causes. Although the developed countries have witnessed a decrease, low and middle-income countries like Nigeria have had increase in new cases. The rate of hypertension in Nigeria, has nearly doubled that of other African nations. Current estimates of incidence averages 35%, with one in three men, and one in four women suffering from the disease. These increases is greatly attributed to our increasing urbanisation and unhealthy lifestyles.

Our experience at the NIMC Staff Clinic

On the average, 16-20% of all consultations at the NIMC clinic bothers on this silent killer. The age range of affected staff spreads from late twenties to late fifties, males being more affected than females. Majority are of the primary category with presence of one or more attributable risk factors.

Blood Pressure Categories



BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120 – 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 – 139	or	80 – 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

for the detection, prevention, management and treatment of high blood pressure.

For those without hypertension, prevent or delay the onset by observing these healthy lifestyles:

- Know your numbers: Check your blood pressure at every opportunity.

While most have been able to maintain good blood pressure control through use of medications and lifestyle modifications, a few still have theirs, poorly controlled. The major cause of poor control is a failure to adhere to the medical prescriptions and advice. Some staff still battle with unhealthy lifestyles such as alcoholism, smoking, physical inactivity and obesity. Some complain about the side effects of the medications as a reason for poor adherence. A good number, however, struggle with having to take medications every day of their life.

It is pertinent to emphasize that, even though the blood pressure is satisfactorily controlled or ‘symptoms’ have disappeared completely, the patients must not reduce the dosage or stop taking the medications by themselves. Medications should only be modified by a medical doctor during regular follow-up consultations and monitoring of

the blood pressure.

The primary goal of emphasizing adherence to medications and lifestyle modification in patients with hypertension, is to prevent development of complications which would generally target the eyes, heart, kidneys and head resulting in conditions such as hypertensive retinopathy, stroke, heart failure, kidney failure, to mention but a few.

Just recently, the guidelines for categorizing blood pressure was changed. The new guideline lowers the definition of high blood pressure to account for complications that can occur at lower numbers and to allow for earlier intervention. Thus, high blood pressure should be treated earlier with lifestyle changes and in some patients with medication – at 130/80 mm Hg rather than 140/90 – based on the new Joint National Committee (JNC) and American Heart Association (AHA) guidelines

- Try to achieve 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise, 4-5 times weekly.
- Reduce alcohol intake and quit smoking.
- Ensure diet low in salt, sugar and unhealthy fats.
- Increase your fruits and vegetables intake.
- Maintain a healthy weight and ensure minimum of 7-8 hours of sleep daily.

For those already diagnosed with hypertension, achieve a good control of your blood pressure when you: Commit to taking your medications as prescribed. Also do not miss your routine appointments, or change/discontinue your medications by yourself.

Continue the lifestyle modifications as these could reduce the dosage of medications you need.