

Special Session on the topic “The Role of Traditional Health System in the Management of HIV/AIDS”

Date: Tuesday, 6th December, 2005

Time: 12.30H – 14.30H

Venue: SHERATON 1

The 2nd presentation on “Efficacy of African herbal medicines in the treatment of HIV positive African population – Jobelyn as a case study” by Mr. Olajuwon Okubena

Mr Okubena started his presentation with a slide titled “evidence” he said without scientific evidence, the developed countries and medical scientists would not fully accept and embrace herbal medicine. He introduced himself as a chartered accountant and management consultant who discovered a Nigerian herbal medicine in 1994 and have since embarked on a journey to place Jobelyn in the hands of the entire world”. He said there is need for evidence of the efficacy of herbal medicines. His work will go on to prove otherwise that herbal medicines are not all fetish.

He introduced the presentation by providing the following facts that worldwide the number of HIV infected people are rising, particularly in developing countries; the management of HIV infection, particularly in developing countries, presents multiple challenges, including problems of adherence to therapy and access to care. Herbal medicines are recognized as effective remedies in health care. About 80% of people in developing world depend on traditional medicines for primary health care. A wide range of herbal remedies are being marketed and used worldwide to manage various disorders. He continued that Free radicals are responsible for a host of health disorders including aging, cancer, reduced body immunity and death. Increased consumption of processed and synthetic foods increases free radical production in the body. Free radicals can be neutralized by anti-oxidants and foods which have high Oxygen Radical Absorbent Capacity (ORAC) values.

Jobelyn is a herbal preparation from the leaves of tropical plants. It was originally marketed in Nigeria under the trade name, Jubi Formula. The component herbs of Jobelyn have been used by natives of South Western Nigeria for more than a century to treat diseases of diverse origins including sickle-cell anemia, leukemia, cancer, arthritis, multiple myeloma, heart, other blood-related problems and even headache. The main active ingredient of Jobelyn is Sorghum bicolor.

Jobelyn has much higher anti-oxidant activity compared with other plants including Prune, Raisins, Blueberries, Strawberries, Plums, Oranges, Red Grapes, Spinach, Brussels, Sprouts, Broccoli, Beets, Onions, Corn, and Egg-plant which have been rated as having high anti-oxidant values.

Jobelyn, he said, contains proanthocyanidins having antioxidant capabilities 1,590 times more powerful than Vitamin E.

Speaking on The world of anti-oxidants: He said the higher the anti-oxidant value in a plant the more valuable the plant is for health restoration purposes. The ORAC is the measurement of a plant's Oxygen Radical Absorbent Capacity.

Jobelyn was analysed by Brunswick Laboratory of USA and it has a Total ORAC Anti-oxidant value of 1,590 ($\mu\text{moleTE/g}$) and Phenolics Compounds of 86.18 (mg/g) which makes it the highest in the natural plants kingdom.

Jobelyn Analysis: Mr. Okubena presented the results of a study carried out on Jobelyn compared with other plants, Jobelyn obviously had the highest ORAC units.

Laying emphasis on the benefits of Jobelyn for treatment purposes, the following facts were highlighted: Jobelyn offers protection against many diseases including heart disease and cancer. It has substantial antiparasitic effects. Jobelyn is an effective adjuvant in the management of HIV/AIDS. It increases cellular immunity in HIV positive individuals either alone or in combination with antiretroviral drugs. In a preliminary study involving 64 patients, Jobelyn significantly increased the CD4 counts in HIV/AIDS patients receiving antiretroviral drugs. Anti-HIV activity has been confirmed by laboratory studies.

The speaker presented a study carried out on its efficacy at the Military Hospital, Lagos titled "Effect of Jobelyn, a Nigerian Herbal Extract on the cellular Immunity of persons living with HIV/AIDS". The purpose of the study was to evaluate the efficacy of Jobelyn in enhancing cellular immunity in HIV infected patients. 36 males and 28 females HIV/AIDS patients, who regularly attended clinic at Military Hospital, Lagos between May and September, 2003 were recruited for the study. All the patients were confirmed to be HIV 1 & II positive using western blot technique.

The Experimental protocol: Patients were grouped into three: Group A, had CD4 count > 300 and each was placed on one Jobelyn capsule twice daily for 12 weeks. Group B: Had CD4 count < 300 and each was placed on one Jobelyn capsule twice daily plus Nevirapine (200mg bd), Lamivudine (150mg bd) and Stavudine (40 mg bd) for 12 weeks. Group C: Had CD4 count < 300 and each

was placed on Nevirapine (200mg bd), Lamivudine (150 mg bd) and Stavudine (40 mg bd) for 12 weeks.

The patients CD4 counts at 0, 6 and 12 weeks were determined using the coulter counting when method.

Findings: There was a significant increase in the elevation of CD4 count of patients (n = 40) placed on Jobelyn + triple antiretroviral drugs (AVRD) when compared with those placed on AVRD alone (n=17) . Jobelyn alone significantly increased the CD4 counts of patients (n=7) with initial CD4 counts > 300. Patients placed on Jobelyn + AVRD showed up to 91.4% mean rise after the administration of the drugs, those placed on Jobelyn alone had an increase of 43% while those placed on AVRD alone had up to 30.5% increase in CD4 count. Other findings include, patients appetite and weight increased and there was improvement in their general well-being. The maculo-papular skin rash of 3 of the patients who had Herpes zoster remitted.

Mr. Okubena showed a representation of the findings with a chart.

The effects of Jobelyn have been presented as poster in a number of conferences they include: XXXV International Congress on Military Medicine in Washington, September 2004. There were 2 peer-reviewed journal publications from Lagos University Teaching Hospital and University of Benin, both in the African Journal of Biotechnology. The Toxicological Studies (LD₅₀) to confirm the safety of Jobelyn was done at the University Teaching Hospital, Lagos.

There are on-going clinical studies at the clinical research center, Nigerian Institute of medical research, Yaba, Lagos. The objective of the study is to determine the efficacy, tolerance and safety of Jobelyn in the management of HIV/AIDS in adult subjects.

Jobelyn market: Jobelyn has been presented at many National and International fora (UK, USA, Senegal, Ghana etc). It is a fast selling herbal product in Nigeria with most pharmaceutical outlets being used as the distribution channels. Jobelyn is being prescribed by orthodox medical hospitals across the country. Jobelyn is also available on the internet on <http://www.jubi-formula.com> and also available on <http://www.health-forever.com>