

Editorial

Welcome message from the Editor-in-chief

Professor Andrew Anthony Adjei
Email: info@hsijournal.org



It is with great pleasure that I write this editorial to welcome authors, reviewers, and readers to the second edition of the HSI Journal (Volume 1 Issue 2) in 2020. This issue is an Open Access publication and all published articles are accessible by everyone for greater dissemination. The HSI Journal subscribes to the progressive thinking that everybody must benefit from the access to scientific knowledge without recourse to purchasing power. The HSI Journal Volume 1 Issue 2 covers 7 original research articles, 1 opinion paper, 2 case reports and 1 publication on clinical images. The topics covered are broad but interesting and scientifically relevant.

We are very happy to have an excellent team of editors, editorial board members, and reviewers covering all related topics. Therefore, we aim to have the highest standards of quality for published manuscripts. We look forward to publishing high-quality studies and to make the HSI Journal synonymous with top quality in the health sciences research. As the Editor-in-chief, I welcome

suggestions, complaints, discussions and thoughts from authors and readers to help us to maintain high standards with the HSI Journal.

Advice on COVID-19-related health behaviour

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is highly contagious and continues to challenge the world since there is currently no means to break its transmission or treat infected persons besides boosting the immune system. People with ages above 60 years and having pre-existing non-communicable diseases are more vulnerable to the severe form of the disease. World Health Organization (WHO) epidemiological update indicates that the number of new cases and deaths from COVID-19 continue to increase (WHO, 2020).

Currently, there are over 70 million cumulative cases and 1.6 million deaths worldwide. The greatest burden of the pandemic lies in the regions of Europe and America (85% new cases and 86% deaths). In Ghana, 52,622 cases have been reported, with 326 deaths. Many Governments have made efforts to educate their populace on the benefits of adherence to COVID-19 protocols, however, it appears that these efforts have not yielded the desired outcome as the numbers keep rising. According to the WHO, 3 vaccines

have been authorized for use by various national regulatory institutions, however, WHO is yet to approve a vaccine for use. The main approach to combat COVID-19 disease currently is to follow the protocols provided by health professionals which include social or physical distancing, wearing of face masks, avoiding crowded areas, and following the "Stay-at-Home" orders. Thus, behavioural practices are necessary to fight the disease. They are known as COVID-19-related health behaviours and they are the basic protective measures against the virus infection. The positive behaviours include sleeping, healthy diets, and physical activity, whereas negative behaviours include alcohol consumption, tobacco, and drug use, and unhealthy eating habits.

A good understanding of the virus infection, why the COVID-19 protocols must be followed carefully, and why persons with various non-communicable diseases are vulnerable to severe infection among others could cause behavioural changes. Therefore, accurate COVID-19-related information must be shared with the populace consistently, to guide behavioural change. It appears that persons not following the protocol have a perception that they are not vulnerable to the virus infection. In this issue of HSI Journal,

Amankwah-Poku employed a theory/model used in the practice of health psychology to understand COVID-19-related health behaviours. A typical model suggested is the theory of Health Belief Model that depends on the perception of personal health threat by people and their belief that engaging in a particular health practice will reduce the threat of the disease. People will observe COVID-19-related health behaviours if they perceive that the disease is deadly, and everyone is susceptible to it. Bridging the knowledge gap in COVID-19 infection, transmission, and safety protocols are crucial in eliminating the disease from Ghana and possibly the rest of the world.

Acknowledgements

The University of Ghana College of Health Sciences, the copyright owner of HSI Journal, the patron and sponsor of the Journal has always shown a deep interest in the affairs of its constituent schools and institutions. The Journal is indeed grateful to the Reverend Professor Patrick Ferdinand Ayeh-Kumi, the Provost of the University of Ghana College of Health Sciences, for his immense support and leadership.

About the Editor-in-chief

Professor Andrew Anthony Adjei is a Professor of Immunology at the Department of Pathology, University of Ghana Medical School. He is the Coordinator for Worldwide Universities Network and the Australia-Africa Universities Network. He is a Fellow of the following: African Medical Academy of Sciences (AAS), Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the African Sciences Institute. He is a Member of the Ghana Association of Medical Laboratory Scientists; Coordinator, University of Ghana Vice Chancellor's Strategic Teams; Chairman, College of Health Sciences Ethical and Protocol Review Committee; and the Chairman, College of Health Sciences Public Lecture and Scientific Conference Committee.