

Brief CV For WPA

Prof. Taiwo Lateef Sheikh is a Professor of Psychiatry/Chief Consultant Psychiatrist at the Department of Psychiatry, College of Medical Sciences, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital, Zaria, Nigeria respectively. He served as the Head of Department of Psychiatry, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria from 2003 to 2009 and as the Medical Director/CEO of the Federal Neuropsychiatric Hospital, Kaduna Nigeria from March 2010 to March 2018. His tenure was marked by massive infrastructural development (wards, outpatient, laboratory, occupational therapy, library, child/adolescent center, day care center for children with psychological disorders, improved water system, road network, landscaping, parks and gardens, interlocked walkways, sports arena, electronic health information system, automated incinerator, ambulances, buses and utility vehicles) increased and improved human capacity, and impressive growth of school of post basic psychiatric nursing.

As a Trainer and Examiner at the Faculty of Psychiatry, West African College of Physicians and an External Examiner at Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons where he is engaged in the training, supervision and mentoring of young Psychiatrists, postgraduate doctors in Nigeria and the West African sub region. He is an International Faculty Member at Harvard Global Mental Health Course; Harvard Program on Refugee Trauma Masters Certificate of Harvard Medical School, where he is involved in training, supervision and mentoring of multidisciplinary international students in public health aspects of mental health, leadership, policy, and legislation, especially in areas of psychological trauma, displacement, migration and refugee across all continents of the world.

Prof. TL Sheikh served as the President of the Association of Psychiatrists in Nigeria (APN) from January 2018 to December 2021, a tenure that witnessed the established of Early Career Psychiatrists group in Nigeria among others. He is presently the President of Biological Psychiatry Society of Nigeria and a member of World Federation of Biological Psychiatry Societies. Working with colleague researchers in UK, Malawi, Ethiopia and South Africa, Prof. Sheikh successfully secured a five year Wellcome Trust Grant to study the genetics of depression among Africans, this has created a rare opportunity to deepen the interest of our young Psychiatrists in the field of psychiatric genomics. Prof. TL Sheikh is the President of Psychosocial Relief Society of Nigeria (NGO) and the Chairman of Psycho-trauma working group of the Association of Psychiatrists in Nigeria. He led a research on the needs assessment of the internally displaced persons in Kaduna state following the 2011 election violence in Nigeria. He led a group of Early Career Psychiatrists to develop and deploy culturally sensitive training manual for “trauma informed mental health and psychosocial interventions for clinicians and non-clinicians” in North East of Nigeria (2017) to manage victims of “boko haram” insurgency in the North East and intervention guide for victims of trafficking and insurgency in Borno State of Nigeria (2017).

He is a member of the National Mental Health Action Committee, the highest mental health policy committee in Nigeria, where he participated in the development of National Mental Health Service Delivery Policy for Nigeria (2013). He led mental health professionals, NGOs, CSOs, Human right Organizations and other stakeholders in drafting, advocacy and eventual push for the actualization of the National Mental Health Act (2021) for Nigeria, it was signed into law by the President of Nigeria on 28th December, 2022. He worked with West African Health Organization (WAHO) in the drafting, validation and deployment of mental health strategic plan for West Africa.

With the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic, and being aware of the limitations in the capacity of the Nigeria health system in tackling the imminent and potentially overwhelming demand for mental services due to Covid-19 pandemic, he mobilized the formation of the “Covid-19 Partners in Mental Health in Nigeria”. A coalition of mental health professional associations, non governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), service users and individuals with interests in mental health and psychosocial disabilities with the aim to mount a coordinated mental health response to Covid-19 in Nigeria, ensure optimum mental health promotion, reliable mental illness prevention among Nigerians, and provide quality intervention and referral for those with existing mental health and psychosocial issues both remotely and physically. He has continued to provide coherent leadership for the group.

In March 2022 he was appointed by the African Union into the high-level advisory committee to provide strategic guidance to Africa CDC in the implementation of the Non-Communicable Diseases, injuries and Mental health (ncdi/mh) strategy for a five year term. He has participated in the validation the Africa cdc ncdi/mh strategy which was launched in Addis Ababa on 25th – 28th, April 2022.

Prof. TL Sheikh is a passionate mental health advocate; he has demonstrated high quality mental health leadership capacity Nationally and Internationally, a policy maker and columnist with the National daily Vanguard Newspapers, where he coordinates the “mental health chat room”.