

THE EXIT OF A GREAT MEDICAL ACADEMIC: PROFESSOR LINUS NWACHUKWU AJABOR

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The demise of Professor LN Ajabor JP; OON; PHF; FRCOG; DSc (Hon. Causa), on August 8, 2022, came as a rude shock to all those who had a close encounter with him, particularly his numerous mentees and patients. He will no doubt be remembered for his monumental contribution to medical education and health care delivery in Nigeria.

Birth, Education and Career Progression:

Prof. Ajabor was born on September 23, 1931. He had his early education at Christ the King College, Onitsha before proceeding to the United Kingdom, where he gained admission to study Medicine at the University of Bristol. He graduated with MB, BS in 1960 and remained in the UK for his Postgraduate studies, which he completed in 1965/66, earning the Membership of the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (MRCOG). Prof. Ajabor returned to Nigeria in 1966 to take up appointment, first as a Senior Registrar in Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, University College Hospital (UCH) , before joining mainstream academia at University of Ibadan, where he attained the rank of Senior Lecturer in 1972. By special request, he had to relocate to Benin in 1972 to assist in laying a firm foundation for a new department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, at University of Benin/University of Benin Teaching Hospital. Within a period of four years after relocating to Benin, Linus Nwachukwu Ajabor attained the pinnacle of his academic career as he was promoted to the rank of Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, which was well earned.

Special Contribution to the Department of O & G, UNIBEN/UBTH:

The history of the Specialty of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Benin and University of Benin Teaching Hospital will not be complete without mention of Professor Ajabor's name. He ensured that a solid foundation was laid for both undergraduate and Postgraduate training programs as well as meaningful research work in the department. He was head of Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, UNIBEN/UBTH from 1975 – 1980 and Directed the Fertility Research, Counselling and Training Center till 1983. For the period he served till his retirement in 1983, he stood as a colossus in academic and clinical practice delivery in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. He was a source of inspiration to most young Medics who entertained thoughts of making a career in academic Medicine. Mere mention of his name could open most 'shut doors' in many circles.

Academic and Professional Services Rendered Nationally and Internationally:

Prof. Ajabor served as an External Examiner to various universities in Nigeria, Ghana and Saudi Arabia.

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He served as Overseas Examiner to the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and for many years Examiner/Chief Examiner and Resource person to National Postgraduate Medical Examining Boards in Saudi Arabia, Nigeria and West Africa.

At various times, he served as National President, Society of Gynaecology and Obstetrics of Nigeria (SOGON), Chairman, Faculty of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, West African College of Surgeons and Member, Executive Board, International Federation of Gynaecology and Obstetrics (FIGO).

Contribution towards Planning of Medical Institutions :

Professor Ajobor served as Chairman of planning Committees prior to the creation of a number Medical Institutions. These include, Bendel State University(Now AAU) College of Medical Sciences , Delta State University College of Health Sciences and the first Private Medical University – PAMO.

Honours:

Prof. Ajobor received several honours during his life time.

In 2009 University of Benin Teaching Hospital Management Board renamed Ward M1 as “PROFESSOR L.N. AJABOR MATERNITY WARD” in recognition of his immense contribution to the growth and development of the Hospital and Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology. In the same year he was inducted a recipient of the American Biographic Institute MAGNA CUM LAUDE. In 2015, The Council of Society of Gynaecology and Obstetrics of Nigeria(SOGON) established an annual Guest Lecture Series titled: FRONTIERS IN MEDICAL EDUCATION in honour of Prof L.N. Ajobor.

CONCLUSION:

Anything with a beginning must also have an end, so is life itself. Professor Ajobor has run a commendable and victorious race and it is time for him to have eternal rest. His selfless services to the College of Medical Sciences in particular, University of Benin and the Nigerian Nation in general, will forever be missed.

Adieu 'Teacher of Teachers'.