

PROFESSOR TEMITOPE ALONGE: THE NEW CHIEF MEDICAL DIRECTOR (CMD) OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE HOSPITAL (UCH) IBADAN

When I heard of the appointment of Prof Temitope Alonge as the new Chief Medical Director (CMD) of University College Hospital (UCH), Ibadan, I could not contain my pleasure. For once, I believe that the Government has put a round peg in a fitting round hole! I congratulate the Government, UCH and all Nigerians that will need the services of UCH. I also congratulate Professor Alonge for becoming the boss of his alma mater. He now has the opportunity of improving the institution that nurtured him.

Academically, Prof Alonge is eminently qualified for the post because he is an outstanding academic. As a medical student, he won a prize in Surgery in 1983. And during his surgical career, he won the First British Association for Surgery of the Knee (BASK); Fellowship of Leicester, UK; and the University of Ibadan Advancement Centre Research Grant. These are just a few of his many awards.

In addition to his specialist qualification, he obtained the Doctor of Medicine degree (MD) from the University of Leicester, UK. This is considered to be the highest academic degree in medical profession. The mere fact that he obtained this degree just 17 years after graduating from the medical school speaks volumes about his academic endowment. Many people in Medicine don't obtain this until about 25 to 30 years of graduation, and many more still don't obtain it at all until retirement. Prof Alonge is the first Professor of Orthopaedics since UCH came into existence. And he became a Professor of Orthopaedics at the University of Ibadan just after 22 years of graduating as a medical student.

Before this appointment, he has won many honours and distinction which are not limited to his area of discipline alone as a result of his service and contribution to the nation. Among these are: Meritorious Service Award by the Provost College of Medicine; Merit Award, 2008 Federal Service Commission Special Marshals; and Appreciation Award by the National Institute for Sports in Nigeria.

Professor Alonge has held many medical administrative positions in University of Ibadan. He was a Sub-dean (undergraduate); Sub-dean postgraduate; pioneer head hospital Department of Orthopaedics and Trauma; and Deputy Chairman, Medical Advisory Committee, UCH (Special Duties). He took an active part in the adoption of mobile phones in the UCH as a bleep system; he was actively involved in the establishment

of UCH private suites; revolving funding, and energy matters.

It is obvious that even before this appointment, the inner workings of UCH are not strange to him, and he has been a part and parcel of the growth of UCH. Having being a resident here himself, the problems and the aspirations of Residents are not new to him, and I am sure he will address these problems for the benefit of the Residents. Because of his humility, and an unassuming disposition, despite all his enviable achievements, Professor Alonge has shown himself to be a good and a listening administrator. He relates very well with the "low" cadre as well as the "high" cadre of workers successfully.

Despite all his other activities, Professor Alonge still had time to conduct high-powered medical research resulting in over 63 academic publications in peer-reviewed, highly rated international and local medical journals. In addition to these, he edited a book with some other top consultants titled, "*Basic Trauma Care*". This book is a must-have for all emergency rooms and outpatients departments of all good hospitals in the country. He has also modified a cheap local material for use as a cervical collar in cases of trauma to the neck. This has been well accepted and referred to as *Alonge Cervical Collar*.

Prof Alonge is a member of many international organizations and associations and he is well-known for his publications in international journals. All these will be a great advantage to UCH when the help of international donors are needed and solicited. In fact during the time he was in UK, on the basis of one of his publications, a dean of a medical school in Saudi Arabia offered him an appointment which he turned down because he wanted to come back home to his *alma mater*. This is during the period we doctors were falling over one another to get an employment in Saudi Arabia.

Having Professor Alonge as the CMD of UCH, can be regarded as one of the best things that had happened to UCH for a long time. Let us pray for his success, because his success is the success of all of us who will need the services of UCH, including when we will need the services even of its mortuary!

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