

**2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on**

# DEMENTIA AND DEMENTIA CARE

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Caregiving is not a common term in Africa. No one talks about caregiving in Africa even though it is taking place on behalf of children, disabled and the elderly. Africans are yet to realise that anyone who is involved in providing care is a caregiver. Being a professional caregiver in Africa, I saw the need to advocate for the people in my society who are incapacitated especially the elderly. Unfortunately, the journey has not been easy as so many factors affect the job or caregiving in Africa – from cultural believes, government neglect, caregiver burn out, poverty, security problems, and religious believes. In 2016 when I was posted to a rural community in Rivers State of Nigeria, I realised that no attention is given to the elderly in our society, no care plans, no assisted living facilities or care homes, no retirement benefits or assistance. There has been increased untimely death among the elderly in Nigeria and Africa due to lack of the above. You can simply put that Africans do not age well especially those who cannot

afford to travel abroad. The focus should be in Africa to rekindle hope for the elderly and everyone that needs assistance with the activities of daily living by advocating for care plans for the elderly in Africa so that people will no longer be afraid of getting old. Nanny agencies exist but those that operate such agencies are more concerned with making money and pay no attention to the quality of caregivers that they employ to people's homes. Hence the increasing rate of abuse, neglect and irresolvable misunderstanding. Africa needs investors and government to look into the care industry for a total overhauling and revolution. Assisted living facilities and care communities should be established at least in every states of every country in Africa. Retirement plans should be put in place and Caregiver Institutes/colleges should be established to produce new generations of African caregivers.

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