

## Lessons in the care of Chronic myeloid leukemia in Africa

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The care of Nigerian and indeed many African patients with chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) has experienced significant improvement in the last decade alone. Long-term overall survival (OS) has shot up from as low as 10% to >60%; in addition to equally impressive changes in the quality of life of surviving patients. In spite of these, our outcomes lag behind those reported from more resource-rich settings. A critical review of our patient population has revealed certain fundamental differences in the epidemiology of our cohort, leading us to consider the possibilities of differences in disease biology and process; and indeed a need for a change of therapeutic strategy. We have found that our patients are more than 2 decades younger. Consequently, several of them are within the very active reproductive years, coupled with the fact that the average number of offspring in African societies is still as much as five, the concern for procreation seem to play a role in poorer adherence to medication regimes. Additionally, only one tyrosine kinase inhibitor is readily available, limiting the options available when inevitably drug resistance develops. Early detection of resistance is also hampered by the cost and availability of molecular testing; made worse by lack of health insurance coverage. Can we then truly follow treatment guidelines as formulated in the more affluent economies? Should we not define different and probably earlier triggers for treatment escalation? Is it not time to seriously examine combined chemotherapy for all but the mildest forms of CML in developing countries?

### Biography

Anthony Oyekunle completed his Hematology residency in 2006. He has also completed fellowships in HSCT (Hamburg, Germany) and Molecular Diagnostics (Chicago, USA). During his more than 10 years experience in clinical and laboratory hematology, he has published more than 25 papers, many of which are in reputable journals. He also serves as manuscript reviewer and is on the editorial board member of a number of journals.

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