

BOOK REVIEW: NARD'S *WE ARE EARLY CAREER DOCTORS, WE ARE NARD*

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Who are the “Early career doctors (ECDs)”? How did thousands of ECDs come together to form an independent and influential association such as NARD? How has the association been sustained over the years? How have they overcome series of internal and external hurdles? NARD's “***WE ARE EARLY CAREER DOCTORS, WE ARE NARD***” contains a well-informed historical exposition in fifteen chapters. The book was edited by Olaopa O & Adebayo O. The full citation can be found below. The beginning of the book has the definition of the ECDs. It goes on to describe the stages of residency training, the clinical activities and job description of every level of the ECDs.

Chapter five gives a glimpse into one of the concerns of the ECDs, which is supervision in residency training. There are reports of studies conducted among the resident doctors in some parts of the country that revealed how well the resident

doctors were satisfied with the level of consultant participation in their training. It highlighted that: “*A study conducted among residents in western Nigeria showed that 75% were satisfied with the level of supervision rendered by their consultants, yet they decried the negative impact of excessive workload on their overall learning and training, while another study reported a dire need for increased consultant supervision*”.

Chapter six gives a detailed account of the series of events in NARD from the inception in 1978 till date, her struggles as well as victories. One of the struggles was when the association was declared illegal by the military government in February 1985, and the government decided to arrest the national leaders of the association. This struggle warranted the NARD president at the time – Dr F. A Adewole going into hiding for months, and many other leaders, including resident doctors losing their jobs. Since then, NARD has also suffered a

series of the mass sacking of resident doctors, the most recent being in 2014.

In 2006, there was separation into the northern and southern factions of the association following years of mistrust and antagonism which continued with several futile attempts made at reunification, till 2011. The reunification took place during the NARD AGM which was held at the University of Abuja teaching hospital in Gwagwalada. The terms of reconciliation which included but not limited to the fact that “the NARD secretariat shall rotate yearly and alternately between the northern and southern part of Nigeria. Within the parts, it shall be rotated amongst the six geopolitical zones with no zone hosting the secretariat more than once in six years”.

In 2019, there was a meeting with the leadership of NARD, Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), committee of Chief Medical Directors (CMDs), Federal Ministry of Health, Federal Ministry of Finance, leadership of the House of Representatives of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to address the challenges facing residency training in Nigeria. At the end of the meeting, it was agreed that, for the sake of uniformity, the provisions of the Residency Training Act should be strictly adhered to, and should not be subjected to individual hospital interpretation by the CMDs.

There are other pertinent issues discussed in this book; one of which is the issue of the brain drain in the health sector. Many residents have left the residency training programme to continue in other countries within and outside Africa to seek greener pastures for various reasons including the harsh work environment, inadequate training facilities e.t.c, and are thriving in their endeavours in the international space.

The importance of research activities during the residency training was also highlighted; asides giving one a better presence in the international space, it opens doors for international collaborations. However, this wouldn't be possible without good mentorship by the trainers.

The book gave an expositive look into the ECDs in all their cadres and why not all early-career doctors are members of NARD. The history of NARD was smooth and quite easy to follow with the help of the illustration provided. More light was shed on the residency training program and residency training act, the expectations, struggles and proffered solutions. References and acknowledgements were provided after each chapter.

This book is an ingenious effort by the NARD under the auspices of the pioneer Research & Statistics Committee (RSC), and it is an essential read for all ECDs most especially those who are members of the association. In short, the book is a pleasure to read, and it is remarkable for its attention to detail, balance and sense of history. I strongly recommend it.

Citation of the book: Adebayo Oladimeji, Fagbule Omotayo Francis, Omololu Ayanfe, Abdumajid IY, Isibor Efosa, Olaopa Olusegun, et al. We are Early Career Doctors, We are NARD. Olaopa O, Adebayo O, editors. Abuja: National Association of Resident Doctors of Nigeria; 2019.