SUMMARY

Anxiety and Depression are common mental disorders affecting patients that attend primary care clinics. They have negative impact on the patient, the family and the society.

This study was a cross-sectional study designed to screen for the prevalence of anxiety and depression among patients attending the General Outpatient Clinic of the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital between January and March 2011.

Two hundred and forty five (245) eligible participants were recruited through systematic random sampling. An adapted semi structured Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale questionnaire was administered after a signed consent was obtained from them. The questionnaire assessed socio-demographic characteristics, medical illnesses and their score on the scale.

The result obtained showed the prevalence of anxiety and depression to be 36.7% and 24.5% respectively while 17.5% of the respondents had mixed anxiety and depression. Anxiety was high among respondents aged 30-39 years (30%), female respondents (70%) and married respondents (55%). Educational level, ethnic group and occupation had no statistically significant relationship with anxiety in this study.

There was no statistically significant relationship between religious affiliation and income earned by the respondent and anxiety. However, there was a statistically significant relationship between anxiety symptoms and hypertensive respondents with $P < 0.044$. 
Respondents aged 50 - 59 years and females (65%) showed more depressive symptoms, more females were depressed but there was no statistically significant relationship between educational level, marital status and depression.

Farmers and traders were more likely to have depression with P < 0.035 and P< 0.034 respectively. Respondents that were hypertensive and those that had retroviral disease were likely to be depressed with P < 0.043 and p<0.016 respectively.

This study has buttressed the fact that there is a need for Family Physicians being the first-line medical practitioners to possess the skills needed to manage patients with anxiety and depression as many patients that attend our clinics have these disorders.