SUMMARY

Successful treatment of hypertension is important in reducing morbidity and mortality, as well as controlling health care costs associated with these conditions. Unfortunately, non adherence to antihypertensive medication is wide spread and has resulted to uncontrolled hypertension leading to poor health outcomes and huge medical spending on treatments. The impact that family support has on antihypertensive adherence has not been comprehensively explored. The study therefore, aimed at determining the effect of perceived family support on medication adherence among adult hypertensive patients at the General Out-Patient Clinic (GOPC) of the Federal Medical Centre Makurdi, Benue State.

This was a cross-sectional descriptive study conducted among 304 adult hypertensive respondents. Data were collected from February 2013 to May 2013 using interviewer administered questionnaires. Data analysis used Chi-square test to identify the relationship between categorical variables; and multivariate logistic regression was used to identify the independent factors for adherence. Independent variables entered into the logistic regression model were those that were significant at 0.25% on bivariate analysis.

There were 212 (69.7%) respondents with strong perceived family support; the adherence rate to antihypertensive medication was 194 (63.8%); and 150 (49.3%) respondents had controlled blood pressure. There was a statistically significant relationship between strong perceived family support and adherence \((\chi^2 = 76.71, \text{ df } = 1, \ p<0.001)\). The relationship between strong perceived family support and blood pressure status was also significant \((\chi^2 = 16.76, \text{ df } = 1, \ p<0.001)\). The independent
factors for adherence that were statistically significant included: strong perceived family support (aOR=11.75, 95% CI = 5.97-23.12, p<0.001) and controlled hypertension status (OR = 7.58, 95% CI = 3.93-14.63, p<0.001).

This study demonstrated that strong family support positively influenced adherence to antihypertensive medications leading to controlled hypertension status. It is therefore important for Family Physicians to explore the family dynamics that influence the support system in order to ensure improved medication adherence that will bring about favourable outcomes for their hypertensive patients.