SUMMARY

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are a major global cause of illness, infertility, long-term disability and death, with severe medical and psychological consequences for millions of men, women and infants. WHO’s global annual incidence of curable STDs (Syphilis, Gonorrhea, Chlamydia and Trichomoniasis) has been put at 340million. The most serious complications and long term consequences of untreated STDs tend to affect women and their newborn babies. STDs cause infertility in nearly half of all affected women in parts of Africa and in addition they face the personal cost of divorce and ostracism. Apart from being serious diseases in their own right, STDs enhance sexual transmission of HIV infection. The highest rates of STDs are generally found in urban men and women in their sexually most active years- between the ages of 15 and 35years.

In Africa, STD victims do not go to doctors for treatment but instead buy antibiotics or get injections at the pharmacy while some go to tradomedics. Thus the magnitudes of STD in Africa maybe unknown since so many cases do not enter official health care systems and statistics. There is also paucity
of data in Nigeria among incarcerated individuals especially the female prisoners.

The role of socio economic factors in emergence of skin diseases is a well known phenomenon. In the presence of HIV infection, many skin diseases may present as exacerbations of already existent lesions or as complications arising from the immunosuppressive state.

**Objectives:** To determine the frequency of STD syndromes and skin diseases as well as identify risk factors for STD among female inmates in Lagos state. To determine pattern of skin diseases and STD among the inmates as well as determine the relationship between HIV seropositivity and occurrence of STD/Skin disease.

**Method:** A total of 76 female inmates in Lagos were recruited on whom clinical assessment and relevant laboratory investigations were carried out. Based on etiological / Syndromic diagnosis, patients were classified into the following syndromes- VDS, GUD, LAP and HIV/AIDS. Skin diseases were categorized as infective and non-infective. A control population of 80 drawn from the Kirikiri village in Apapa Lagos was also screened for both STDs and skin diseases.

**Results:** STD syndromes present were as follows- VDS 47/(61.8%) for the inmates and 33(41.3%) for the controls, p=0.0078(fisher exact), GUD
1(1.3%) inmates and 0(0%) controls, \( p = 0.487 \) (fisher exact), LAP 4(5.3%) inmates and 5 (6.3%) controls \( p = 0.532 \) (fisher exact), HIV 9 (11.8%) inmates and 3(3.8%) controls \( p = 0.054 \) (fisher exact). Of the STD syndromes, the difference between the inmate and control populations, was statistically significant in VDS and HIV, \( p = 0.008 \) and 0.05 respectively. For the pattern of STDs, Chlamydia was the highest with a prevalence of 17 (22%) for inmates and 5 (6.3%) for control, Bacterial vaginosis 12 (15 %) for the inmates and 14 (17.5%) for the control, \( p = 0.472 \) fisher exact. Candida infection was present in 8 (10.5%) inmates and 22 (27%) for the control, \( p = 0.472 \) (fisher exact). Gonorrhoea was present in 1 (1.3%) inmate and 0(0%) in the control group, \( p = 0.487 \) (fisher exact). While looking at the aetiologic basis of STDs, there was a statistically significant difference between the inmate and control populations for chlamydia and HIV, \( p = 0.003 \) and 0.05 respectively.

Skin diseases were present in 29(38.2 %) of inmates and 24(30.0%) control population. Non-infective dermatoses were present in the ratio of 17(22.4%): 6 (7.9%) for the inmates but had an equal distribution in the control population – 10 (12.5%) in all. In the presence of HIV infection, there was an increase in both STDs and skin diseases.

**Conclusion:** A higher prevalence of HIV was recorded in the inmate population compared with the general population. This was 11.8% prevalence against 5.8% and 5.0% in the 2001 and 2003 national sentinel
reports respectively. While VDS was the most common syndrome in the study, Chlamydia was the most commonly identified etiologic agent in both symptomatic and asymptomatic inmates. No case of syphilis was identified in the study. While candida and BV were present in both cases and control, only one case of gonorrhea was isolated. There was a higher prevalence of non-infective skin conditions among the inmates whereas the control population had an equal distribution of both infective and non-infective skin conditions.