




**THE MEMORANDUM BY THE NIGERIAN PHYSICIANS ADVOCACY GROUP FOR THE SENATE AD-HOC
COMMITTEE ON THE REVIEW OF THE 1999 CONSTITUTION (AS AMENDED).**



DATE OF SUBMISSION: September 17, 2020

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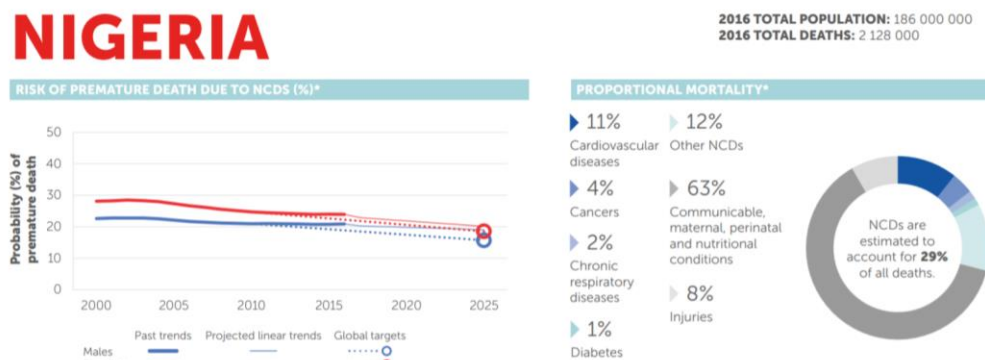


Introduction

The Nigerian Physicians Advocacy Group (NPAG) is a non-partisan organization committed to enhancing healthcare delivery in underrepresented communities. We believe in ONE human race made up of different tribal/ethnic groups and that social problems arise when any one group feels marginalized. We believe that good governance ensures fair representation for all groups, providing basic human rights without discrimination of sex, gender, age, or religious affiliation.

As Nigerian citizens, we genuinely appreciate the call by the Senate Ad-hoc Committee on the Review of the 1999 Constitution. Indeed, there are numerous environmental stressors that contribute to the overall health of Nigeria citizens.

We have studied the list of matters published by the Senate Ad-hoc Committee for amendment. We would like to highlight some key indices related to the health of the nation.



Data adopted from the World Health Organization (WHO)

Overall, women are disproportionately affected. There is also an increasing frequency of death from non-communicable diseases (NCDs).


- 20% of global maternal deaths happen in Nigeria despite strategies that include promoting institution deliveries, training, and deployment of skilled workers.
- A Nigerian woman has a 1 in 22 lifetime risk of dying during pregnancy, childbirth or postpartum compared to 1 in 4900 in developed countries. Risk is higher for teenage pregnancies and women of low socio-economic status.
- These risks are disproportionately higher in Northern Nigeria.



We understand the impact of perceived cultural practices but, as we thrive to elevate our status as a dominant West African force, it is imperative that our policies align with our vision. To that effect, we call for a constitutional reform that protects the girl child, women and vulnerable members of our society.

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Please find our recommendations below:

1. Remove Chapter VII Part I.E and Part II.B; Remove Chapter III Section 29.4b

- a. **Explanation:** Chapter VII describes the Federal and State Courts of the Federation. The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria must not reflect any preferential treatment to any cultural or religious group. The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria must protect all Nigerian citizens with emphasis on protecting the most vulnerable who are not always in the position to assent to important life changing decisions such as marriages. Vulnerable members of our society include children, elderly, disabled, mentally ill and those with developmental delays. There must be provision for the protection of vulnerable members of our society. Each state that has adopted Sharia law can continue to do so within the confines of its' local jurisdiction.

2. Adjust Chapter III Section 26.2a to include: "any man or . . ."

- a. **Explanation:** Chapter III of the constitution addresses the issue of citizenship. Section 26.2a is discriminatory against a Nigerian woman that is married to a non-Nigerian man because it does not grant automatic citizenship to a non-Nigerian man married to a Nigerian woman but grants automatic citizenship to the non-Nigerian woman married to a Nigerian man.

Regarding the issue of "Public Revenue, Fiscal Federation and Revenue Allocation," we are aware of the memorandum submitted by To Build A Nation (TBAN). **We wish to add that the revenue allocation to health in upwards of at least 15% of total budget should be protected within the confines of the constitution.**

Again, thank you for the opportunity to participate in this process. We ask that the Senate Ad-hoc committee extend an invitation to the representatives of submitting groups and individuals to participate during deliberations. This way, issues that need clarification may be answered promptly.

Respectfully,


For: Nigerian Physicians Advocacy Group
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