

KADUNA YOUTH SUMMIT SPOTLIGHTS AI, DRUG PREVENTION, AND LEADERSHIP AT NPRW 2026



By: Ezra Bature

Students and young leaders from across Kaduna State convened at Kaduna State University on Monday for the Kaduna Youth Summit, a flagship event held alongside the Nigerian Public Relations Week (NPRW) 2026. The summit brought youth development, artificial intelligence, and substance abuse prevention into sharp focus, while celebrating student excellence and leadership potential.

Delivering a keynote address, Kaduna State Deputy Governor, Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe, urged young people to embrace their roles as catalysts for societal transformation. She stressed that youths must move beyond passive participation and actively shape the future through innovation, discipline, and responsible choices. She also warned against the dangers of substance abuse, calling for a redirection of youthful energy into productive ventures.

A central highlight of the summit was a session on artificial intelligence and youth empowerment led by Dr. Monday Asibogwu. He examined the expanding role of AI in the global economy and encouraged participants to harness emerging technologies as tools for creativity, entrepreneurship, and personal development.

Public health concerns were also prominent, with the Director General of the Kaduna State Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agency (KADSAMHSA), Mr. Joseph O. Ike, outlining factors contributing to youth vulnerability to drug abuse. He emphasized preventive strategies and called for a collaborative approach involving families, schools, religious institutions, and community leaders.

The summit featured remarks from key dignitaries, including Chairman of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (Kaduna State Chapter), Malam, Haroun Malami, and Chairman of the NPRW 2026 National Planning Committee, Chief Yomi Badejo-Okusanya, who officially declared the event open. The Honourable Commissioner for Information and Culture, Malam Ahmed Maiyaki, also addressed participants, while the Vice Chancellor of Kaduna State University, Abdullahi Ibrahim Musa, was represented by Yusha'u Ibrahim Ango. The summit also featured the presence and contributions of Dr. Ike Neliaku, President and Chairman of Council of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), whose participation underscored the national importance of the gathering and its alignment with broader professional and developmental goals.

In addition to policy discussions, the event recognized outstanding students from various tertiary institutions, presenting awards for best CVs and exceptional responses. The recognition segment added a celebratory dimension to the gathering, reinforcing the value of academic and personal excellence.

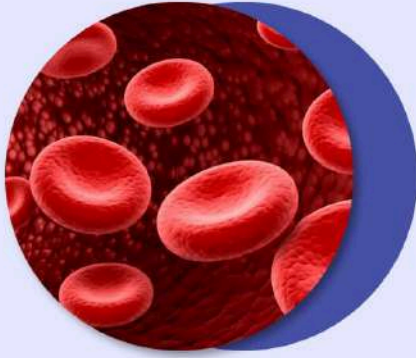




CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME TO STRENGTHEN NEWBORN SCREENING AGAINST SICKLE CELL DISEASE OPENS AT BARAU DIKKO TEACHING HOSPITAL, KADUNA

The Role of a Haematologist

Understanding Blood Disorders and Their Treatment.



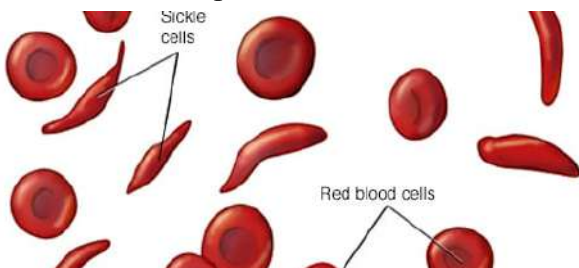
By: *Abigail Emmanuel Dankande*

The training is jointly organized through a collaboration between the Department of Hematology and Blood Transfusion in partnership with the Consortium on Newborn Screening in Africa (CONSA) and the Sickle Cell Cohort Research Foundation (SCCRF). The program is part of the collaboration aimed at strengthening newborn screening and improving community-based management of sickle cell disease.

Ms. Monica Steven Shuaibu, one of the resource persons, said strengthening primary healthcare capacity is essential for improving the management of sickle cell disease under the newborn screening program for sickle cell disease.

Ms. Shuaibu explained that the initiative was necessary due to the increasing number of newborns diagnosed through the ongoing screening program and the need to decentralize care to primary healthcare facilities. She noted that many caregivers are more comfortable accessing care at community-level health centres, making it important to equip these facilities to manage mild to moderate sickle cell crises effectively.

The training which received presentation from other speakers including Prof. Livingstone Dogara and Associate Prof. Halliru Lawal and others combines both theoretical and practical components. Participants are involved in pediatric sickle cell enrollment clinics, where newly diagnosed cases are registered and caregivers receive health education on the causes, symptoms, management, and complications of sickle cell disease.



Photos: *Niger Zion Abui*

Community Health Extension Workers (CHEWs) and other healthcare participants are also undergoing clinical shadowing sessions, where they observe patient care from triaging to consultation and follow-up scheduling. This hands-on exposure is designed to strengthen their practical skills in managing sickle cell disease at the primary healthcare level.

In addition, the program includes structured lectures delivered by senior specialists in hematology, alongside clinical rotations in both pediatric and adult sickle cell clinics to provide broader exposure to case management across age groups.

The training is scheduled to run for four days, after which a review meeting will be held with key stakeholders involved in the newborn screening program. The meeting will assess progress, identify challenges, and develop strategies for improving service delivery.



Layout and Design: *Ezra Bature*