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THE RISING TIDE OF LASSA FEVER IN NIGERIA

ANY ROLE FOR LIBRARIES?

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Abstract

Lassa fever, a zoonotic disease, endemic in parts of Nigeria, is caused by the Lassa virus. It is a haemorrhagic fever, caused by the Lassa virus. The animal host is *Mastomynatalensis*. This paper presents a state of knowledge report through literature search, newspaper report and oral communication. The virus is fairly easily transmitted from human to human. The symptoms are varied and non-specific, making clinical diagnosis of the disease difficult in the early stages. The fever was first reported in Nigeria in 1969 in Bornu State. Up to date, it has been clinically confirmed in 21 states. Nigerians especially in rural areas are oblivious of the disease and there are only two hospitals in the country with the capacity to screen the blood for Lassa virus. The best strategy for control of the emerging disease is prevention through an intensive awareness campaign and libraries all over Nigeria has a role to play in the control and reduction of cases of the disease.

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