

# Strange Disease Kills 4 In Benue, Hundreds Infected

By **Tor Vande-Acka** - February 2, 2020

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**MAKURDI** – A strange disease that claimed the lives of four persons in the border town of Oye-Obi, Obi Local Government Area (LGA) of Benue State has claimed another life.

This is even as hundreds of persons in the area had been infected by the disease.

Alicia Eru, chairman, Oju LGA, disclosed this while speaking to newsmen in Makurdi on Saturday.

She called on government at all levels to synergies towards checking the spread of the disease, noting that most of the persons down with the ailment were from the local government.

The council chairman also said some of the victims had been moved to the Benue State University Teaching Hospital (BSUTH) for treatment.

Eru stated that even though the disease was yet to be diagnosed, some of the persons that were down with the symptoms tested positive to Hepatitis B.

Sunday INDEPENDENT also reliably gathered that BSUTH, where some of the patients were referred, might have been overwhelmed by the human traffic to the hospital.

It was gathered that on the directive of the state governor, Samuel Ortom, the state Commissioner for Health and Human Services, Dr. Sunday Ongbabo, was in Oju and Obi LGAs on Thursday, to ascertain the veracity of the outbreak.

It was also learnt that the commissioner who had earlier made a stopover at the General Hospital, Oju, had directed that those affected be moved to BSUTH.

However, competent sources at BSUTH told our correspondent that the case of suspected poisoning was highly possible, as persons under such conditions were likely to test positive to Hepatitis B, which also leads to inflammation of the liver.

He also observed that most of the persons affected with the ailment may end up being moved to Eruwa, Edo state for treatment, due to lack of bed space to handle the cases.

The source stressed that BSUTH lacks the capacity to handle the reported cases because of the number of persons down with the disease, as it would not be able to house the patients.

Efforts to get the state Commissioner for Health and Human Services, Dr. Sunday Ongbabo, to comment on the matter proved abortive.

He did not pick calls, neither did he respond to messages sent to him up to the time of going to the press on Saturday.



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