

Translating Policy into Plans

In this issue, a thematic focus on policies underscores their pivotal role in shaping the success or failure of health systems. The importance of translating policies into actionable plans cannot be overstated, as it directly impacts the effectiveness of healthcare delivery. The articles either directly discuss how translation of policy into plans is a major contributor to success or how the lack of policy translation contributes to the failure of health systems. The relation between Policy formulation and translation can only be ignored at the detriment of the system.

The opinion is by Francis Omaswa, who has spent almost his entire life working in the area of Health Workforce. He notes that the Global Health Workforce (GHWF Crisis) which is characterized by widespread shortages, maldistribution, poor working conditions and which was described by the Joint Learning Initiative in 2004, still persists up to now and appears to be getting worse. He describes the efforts that have been made over the years to address the issue and states that the solutions to the GHWF crisis are well known but their implementation is hindered by the multisectoral action that is required in countries which makes it difficult for the leadership of the health sector to take appropriate action.

There is an article on a conference held by the Network: Towards Unity for Health (TUFH) which took place at the University of Sharjah, UAE. Its theme was "Beyond Boundaries: Health Equity through a culture of Learning. It explored how healthcare practitioners, students, policymakers and communities learn. It was attended by people from all over the world and gave an opportunity for some to attend virtually. At the end of the conference, The Network TUFH came up with a consensus statement to advance its strategies through 2024-2027.

An article by Wilford Kalungi and Joshua Musinguzi describes the results of an analytical method that involved triangulation and synthesis of HIV surveillance, epidemiological and routine HIV services data reported by health facilities in Uganda. It defines the advances towards HIV Epidemic Control and ending the epidemic as a public health problem. It gives the cost estimates for scaling up the optimised priority package of services to achieve the target set by WHO and highlight ways of using the innovative financing of the expanded HIV Response.

A short article by Dr. Henry Ddungu highlights the dangers of long –distance travel and gives advice on how to avoid them.

Two review articles on Sickle Cell Disease authored by Dr. Deogratias Munube (Uganda) and Dr. Nyambura Kariuki (Kenya) provide an overview of SCD in Sub-Saharan Africa and advocate for early diagnosis, comprehensive care, and treatment in the region. The articles highlight the similarities between the 2 countries regarding SCD and show the importance of addressing challenges and embracing opportunities such as newly

developed Interventions to contribute to better outcomes for individuals living with SCD in Africa.

Sabaatu Elizabeth and Danladi Nahuta et al in their article on policy formulation in Nigeria narrate the trend of health policy formulation in Nigeria going back to dates during the colonial times up to 2016. They identify the challenges faced in their implementation especially the lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the documents. This article gives a good example to ministries of health in Africa and may be instrumental in improving health policy formulation in the region.

Mamudo Rafik Ismail gives insights into the state of pathology in Africa based on examples from the Pathology Department of Maputo, Faculty of Medicine, University Eduardo Mondlane/Central Hospital of Maputo . He tells us about the Pathology infrastructure in Africa with specific examples from Mozambique. And gives the reasons why urgent action is needed to improve pathology and medical technology education and capacity in Africa.

There is a policy brief by the African Forum for Research and Education in Health based on work done by a group of scientists. It is a must read for those doing research in Africa. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, delineating and prioritizing research agendas is pivotal for bolstering Sub Saharan Africa's (SSA's) health systems against potential future pandemics. The aim of this brief is to give an overview of the work and its results to help focus the SSA post pandemic research agenda.

Multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) remains a big challenge in Africa, Dr. Kizito Omona has written an article giving us an overview of the treatment for multi-drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) in Uganda. This article is relevant for practitioners across Africa.

The issue contains the obituary of our colleague and friend Alfred Mteta MD MMed MSc who passed on suddenly on November 21, 2023. Professor Mteta was Professor in the Kilimanjaro Christian Medical University College (KCMU College) and served as its Deputy Provost for Academic Affairs. He is dearly missed in Tanzania, Africa and beyond.

There's our usual medicine digest and quiz, along with plenty of news and advertisements. The AHJ is available online as an open-access web-based publication (Africa-health.com). This website is active daily, sharing current affairs and engaging through social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook, drawing a large audience. Those interested in advertising are welcome to utilize both the print and electronic channels of the AHJ, following the guidelines provided in the journal.

Together, we aim to illuminate the path toward improved healthcare and well-being for all Africans.



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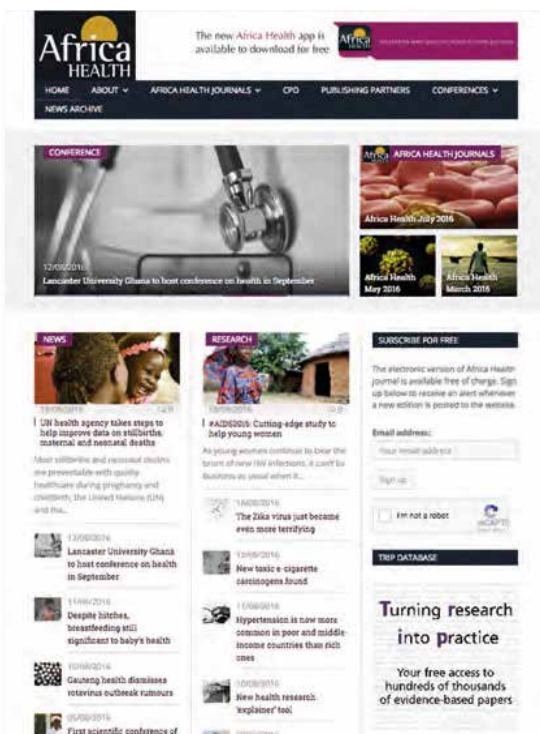
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