Developing a Plan for a Sustainable Workforce

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[also WHO CC, UTS]
Developing a Plan for a Sustainable Workforce

• Why is it important: Questions from policy makers
• ...it’s not a level playing field
• The evidence base on staffing and outcomes
• “Scaling up”
• 6 points to developing a workforce plan
• Resources and Tools
• Planning- key messages
Common questions from/ for Stakeholders and Policy makers

- How do we plan how many nurses - and other health workers - to educate, and employ?
- How can we improve recruitment, retention and return? - which incentives are effective in motivating nurses?
- How can we determine and deploy the most effective skill mix of nurses and other staff?
Nursing staff:pop, and physician:pop ratios, selected Commonwealth countries

(WHO 2010, most recent available year data)
The Evidence Base on Staffing and Outcomes

Of 2897 titles and abstracts of interest, 490 articles were retrieved, and 43 met the inclusion criteria...all adjusted for case mix and skill mix....... Patient outcomes were limited to in-hospital, adverse events. Evidence suggests that richer nurse staffing is associated with lower failure-to-rescue rates, lower inpatient mortality rates, and shorter hospital stays.

The driver: “Scaling Up”

• Key message- need to massively scale up health workforce if MDGs, other health goals were to be met (e.g global shortage of 4 million plus health workers)
• Scaling up is about skills not just numbers
• Scaling up is not just for “formal’/ employed workforce- need to extend concept into volunteers, local NGOs etc
Scaling Up: Critical success factors

• High level commitment

• Clear vision of the health workforce

• 10 year workforce plan

• Education/ training sector linked to workforce planning/ requirements
6 Steps to a plan (1-3)

• **1. Defining the Plan** - Identify why a workforce plan is needed and for whom it is intended.

• **2. Mapping Service Change** - Identify the purpose and shape of any proposed service change that will impact on future workforce requirements.

• **3. Defining the Required Workforce** - Identify the skills required and the type/number of staff to deliver the new service model (workforce demand).
6 Steps to a Plan (4-6)

• 4. Understanding Workforce Availability - Identify current and future staff availability based on current profile and deployment (workforce supply)

• 5. Developing an Action Plan - Plan to deliver the required workforce (new skills in new locations) and manage the change

• 6. Implementation, Monitoring and Refresh - Implement the plan, measure progress and refresh the plan as required
Resources and Tools

• Commonwealth, CNF

• WHO: http://www.wpro.who.int/health_topics/workforce_planning_and_management/

• Capacity : http://www.hrhresourcecenter.org/

• ICN: www.ichrn.org
Key messages

• The choice of a workforce planning strategy is **value-based** and depends on service objectives

• Assessing future health workers needs is more than projections of numbers (skills-mix, working conditions, productivity and quality)

• It does not need to be complicated, it may not need a computer, but it does need some data!
Key messages

• Health workforce planning and development is a process which is country-specific and can engage many stakeholders

• It is an investment: requires commitment and continuity

• Monitoring (and adaptability/ flexibility) is essential
Workforce Planning: summary

• Clarity of purpose: monitoring, allocating, projecting, forecasting, predicting...

• Flexible, integrated and inclusive planning, involving the education sector, based on service delivery plans

• Include employers/private sector in the planning process—“bottom up” planning

• Planning is not sufficient to prevent shortages, but it highlights where and when shortages are likely to occur (and what can be done to intervene)