Looking back to look forwards: 25 years of human resources for health in South Africa

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Outline

• Contextualisation and background
• Methodology
• Timeline
• Key observations
• Findings
• Implications going forward
A macro-level overview of 25 years of HRH in South Africa

- **Human Resources for Health**
  - Values and functions for strong institutional capacity and performance of HRH components
- **Governance**
- **Stewardship**
  - Steering, not rowing – strategic collaboration and leadership regulating a wide range of actors
Background and purpose

• HRH a building block of the health system
  • In practice under-prioritised
  • Critical to health systems reforms and NHI

• Taking stock of 25 years of HRH policy
  • A repository of knowledge
  • Chronological and contextual overview

• Ministerial task team for the development of the National HRH Strategy 2019/20 – 2024/25
  • Previous 2012/13-2016/17 HRH strategy expired
  • Opportunity to feed this info into policy
Methodology

Desktop review:

• South African Health Reviews (1995-2018)
• NDoH Annual Reports (2008-2018)
• Snowballing technique used to gather other relevant policy documents
• Literature searches on specific initiatives (e.g. OSD, community service)
Key observations

- Lack of capacity for HRH stewardship
- Major issues with inter-sectoral collaboration & governance
- Lack of continuity between HRH Strategic Plans
National HRH Strategies to date

• National HRH Strategy 2006 – informed by the WHO HR Toolkit as well as the promulgation of the NHA of 2003 and the National Strategic Priorities
• National HRH Strategy 2012/13-2016/17 – informed by NDoH’s 10 point plan, NHI and PHC re-engineering
Changes to HR-related structures at NDoH 2008-2018

2011-2012

2012-2018

Same 6 budget programmes, but various changes to sub-programmes

e.g: Health Facilities Infrastructure Management, Tertiary Health Care Planning & Policy, Hospital Management, Human Resources for Health, Nursing Services, Forensic Chemistry Laboratories, EMS

Source: NDoH Annual Reports
HRH-related interventions

- Over the years several different interventions have been implemented addressing various problem areas:
  - Staffing norms and skills mix
  - Recruitment and retention initiatives
  - Training and educational initiatives and reforms
  - Information for workforce planning
  - Addressing leadership and organisational cultures
<table>
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<th>Recruitment &amp; retention</th>
<th>Staffing norms &amp; skills mix</th>
<th>Training &amp; educational reforms</th>
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<td>HWSETAs &amp; CPD</td>
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HRH Policy evaluation and reviews
Key observations

Overall

- Lack of continuity
- Lack of capacity for HRH stewardship
- Major issues with inter-sectoral governance

Specifically:

- Ad-hoc, single focus interventions and strategies
- Lack of feedback and evaluations
- Lack of reliable information for workforce planning & monitoring

Resulting in:

- Inability to learn from experience
- Fragmented initiatives
- Consequences at the front line, incl fractious labour relations
- Persistent health labour market imbalances
Implications going forward

Strengthening:
• HRH stewardship
• Inter-sectoral cooperation and governance
• Information systems and planning
• Evaluation

In order to:
• Enable significant reforms
• Build an effective, motivated, equitable and retained health workforce
References


THANK YOU

School of Public Health
FACULTY OF COMMUNITY & HEALTH SCIENCES
Report of Activities 2017-2018

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