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HWR Skills building workshop

**Researching the health workforce:
a framework for action**

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Section Health Workforce Research
<https://eupha.org/health-workforce-research>

The background

- Across countries the need for a sustainable future health workforce is increasingly recognised.
- The health workforce moved up on the policy agenda.
- Data and monitoring systems have improved.
- Frameworks have been agreed to strengthen capacity building for a future health workforce.

What, then, is the problem?

Implementation of new health workforce policies and changes to the existing 'silo approaches' of health professional groups are still challenging.

What can research do?

Research 'enables us to transform HRH [Human Resources for Health] from being faceless numbers of units of health producers to the heart and soul of health systems and vital change agents in our communities and societies' .

(George, Campbell et al., Human Resources for Health, 2018, 16:35)

Introducing a research agenda

Six major research topics

The full article is available at: <https://rdcu.be/1hZv>

Kuhlmann E, Batenburg R, Wismar M, Dussault G, Maier CB, Glinos IA, Azzopardi-Muscat N, Bond C, Burau V, Correia T, Groenewegen PP, Hansen J, Hunter D, Khan U, Kluge H, Kroezen M, Leone C, Santic-Milicevic M, Sermeus W, Ungureanu M (for the EUPHA section Health Workforce Research) (2018) 'A call for action to establish a research agenda for building a future health workforce in Europe', *Health Research Policy and Systems*, 16:52

- Develop frameworks that align health systems/ healthcare governance and health workforce policy and planning.

Examples

‘Workforce policy and planning, regulation and management are aligned with service planning and delivery, and support integrated teams rather than isolated individual health professionals, effectively addressing NCDs at all levels of service’.

WHO, 2018; High-level regional meeting on NCDs;

http://www.euro.who.int/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/366766/HSS_NCD_briefing_note_eng.pdf?ua=1

Examples

‘Systems thinking includes the capacity to promote dynamic networks of diverse stakeholders, to inspire continued learning, and to foster more system-wide planning, evaluation and research... Research on the connections between health systems and governance models and the health workforce is ... an important factor to enhance **policy learning and translation between countries**’.

Kuhlmann et al., 2018, Call for action; <https://rdcu.be/1hZv>

- Explore the effects of changing skill mixes and competences across sectors and occupational groups.

Example: research evidence

‘... while a higher proportion of nurses in the health workforce is associated with better health outcomes, there is a deficit of studies on the **relationship of skill-mix, scope of practice and the resulting economic outcomes**’.

(UN High-level Commission, 2016: 27).

Examples

‘...existing skills assessment instruments do not readily enable differentiation between the skills mismatch caused, on the one hand by the inadequacies of the education and training system or, on the other hand by the inadequacies of competing pressures in the health system’.

Maeda and Socha-Dietrich, OECD, 2018;

<http://www.oecd.org/els/health-systems/Feasibility-Study-On-Health-Workforce-Skills-Assessment-Feb2018.pdf>

- Map how education and health workforce governance can be better integrated.

Examples

Interprofessional education is still not fully and meaningfully integrated into current educational and continuous professional development/ learning programmes; instead, uni-professional competency frameworks often remain influential.

Kuhlmann et al., 2018, Call for action; <https://rdcu.be/1hZv>

Examples

Europe's gender mainstreaming policy is poorly connected to health workforce education and research.

Academic health centres in different EU countries show a persisting gender gap in leadership and management positions, which is bigger in academia than in hospital.

Kuhlmann et al., 2017; Human Resources for Health;

<http://rdcu.be/om5k>

See also The Lancet, Thematic Issue, 9 February 2019

- Analyse the impact of health workforce mobility on health systems.

Examples

‘A major challenge is to reduce inequality between EU Member States and counterbalance the risks of push-pull factors that benefit the resource-rich countries and threaten the healthcare systems in some Eastern and Southern European countries’... growing inequity concerns in the EU call for solidarity-based HW governance across countries while respecting free mobility.

Kuhlmann et al., 2018, Call for action; <https://rdcu.be/1hZv>

- Optimise the use of international/ EU, national and regional health workforce data and monitoring.

Examples

There is still wide variation in indicator definitions, registration methodologies and data availability.

Qualitative health workforce indicators are overall in a developmental stage and usually not measured, as for instance, competencies and team-based skills.

Kuhlmann et al., 2018, Call for action; <https://rdcu.be/1hZv>

Examples

Regional health labour market monitoring is often more comprehensive, flexible and effective due to established networks of stakeholders.

However, it is not adequately integrated in national/ international data sources, and often not comparable.

Kuhlmann et al., 2016, Human Resources for Health, 14:71; <http://rdcu.be/m4UI>

➤ Build capacity for policy implementation.

Examples

Innovation in HW governance calls for understanding of professional stakeholder involvement, and the role of professions as change agents and policy experts.

Greater attention must be paid to the development of knowledge brokering and leadership to support effective implementation of research.

Kuhlmann et al., 2018, Call for action; <https://rdcu.be/1hZv>

See also, WHO, 2016, WHO Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030; <http://who.int/hrh/resources/globstrathrh-2030/en>

The way forward

To understand that health workforce challenges cannot be solved solely on the level of human resources; there is a need for intersectoral action.

The way forward

**A people-centred sustainable health
workforce as policy priority across all
systems and sectors of policymaking.**



Join us on

<https://eupha.org/health-workforce-research>

Thank you!