



CPME/AD/Brd/140309/025 final/EN

At the CPME Board Meeting in Prague on 14 March 2009, CPME adopted the following document “**Achieving healthcare information for all by 2015**” (CPME 2009/025 final EN/Fr)” (referring to CPME 2009/025 EN/Fr)

Achieving healthcare information for all by 2015 CPME Policy statement

Introduction: the crisis in focus

Every day, tens of thousands of children, women and men die needlessly for want of simple, low-cost interventions - interventions that are often already locally available. The CPME is aware that a major contributing factor to this crisis is that the mother, family caregiver or health worker often does not have access to the information and knowledge they need, when they need it, to make appropriate decisions and save lives. For example, recent studies have shown:

- 8 in 10 caregivers in the developing world did not know the two key symptoms of severe pneumonia (only 20% of cases receive antibiotics despite wide availability, and 2 million die every year)
- 4 in 10 mothers in India believed that they should withhold fluids if their baby develops diarrhoea
- 3 in 4 doctors responsible for sick children in district hospitals in Bangladesh, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Philippines, Tanzania, and Uganda had poor basic knowledge of common killers such as childhood pneumonia, severe malnutrition, and sepsis
- Over 4 in 10 doctors in Pakistan used tranquilisers as their treatment of choice for hypertension.

The CPME recognises that improving the availability of relevant, reliable information will prevent death and suffering, and will promote more appropriate and timely referral to secondary and tertiary care. It will improve the cost-effectiveness of drug prescribing and use of diagnostic and other facilities, thereby increasing the efficiency of health systems and bringing social and economic benefits for communities and countries.

At the meeting of the CPME Public Health, Prevention and Environment Subcommittee in London on 24 October 2008, the British Medical Association gave an oral presentation, introducing Healthcare Information for All by 2015 (HIFA2015), a rapidly growing campaign and knowledge network with more than 2000 professionals from 135 countries worldwide, representing healthcare providers, librarians, publishers, researchers and policymakers among others. Via two dynamic e-mail forums, the HIFA2015 community exchanges ideas, experience and expertise on ways to improve the availability of relevant, reliable healthcare information in low-income countries. The



British Medical Association provided financial support for HIFA2015 during 2008, and will do so again in 2009.

The CPME welcomed the major contribution being made by the HIFA2015 community to improving access to accurate healthcare information worldwide. It also recognised the potential for HIFA2015 to save thousands of dollars on the production, exchange and delivery of healthcare information projects and services worldwide, and the potential to save many lives.

The CPME endorses the programme of work which is set out in this paper and believes that achieving the objectives identified within it will represent a major step towards achieving the goal of healthcare information for all by 2015. The CPME does however recognise that the success of this programme will depend upon the engagement of its own members, other European medical and health professionals' representative organisations, national governments and other stakeholders. A number of recommendations for action are given at the end of the paper and the BMA is asked to provide a report on progress with these actions at the 2010 meeting of the CPME.

Building the HIFA2015 community

During 2008, the campaign firmly established two dynamic and rapidly growing fully moderated email forums - HIFA2015 and CHILD2015 - and engaged all members in the development of the campaign strategy. Member engagement has also generated high-quality discussions around health information issues, which, in turn, have broken down barriers to communication between primary health workers and senior international health executives. This has also promoted sharing of experience and expertise between countries and across disciplines, thereby catalysing new collaborations. Another major achievement during 2008 was the engagement of medical, nursing, midwifery and allied health students to implement the HIFA 2008 Challenge: addressing the information needs of health students in low-income countries.

Objectives in 2009:

- Expand HIFA2015 membership to at least 3000, with particular emphasis on increasing the proportion of mid-level health workers in low-income countries. European doctors and health professionals have a vital role to play on the forums – their perspectives on quality standards and composition of medical training would, for example, be invaluable.
- Launch HIFA2015 forums in other languages (eg French, Portuguese and/or Spanish).
- Implement the HIFA 2009 Challenge to address the information needs of nurses and midwives, in collaboration with the International Council of Nurses, International Confederation of Midwives, Royal College of Midwives, Royal College of Nurses, WHO and others.



Building the HIFA2015 Knowledge Base

HIFA2015 launched a dedicated website in June 2008 – www.hifa2015.org - including the prototype of the HIFA2015 Knowledge Base, which presents an evolving picture of health information needs and how to meet them.

Objectives in 2009:

- HIFA2015 will seek to systematically harness the knowledge and expertise of HIFA2015 members and others, to build the HIFA2015 Knowledge Base. This will address three critical questions:
 - *What are the needs of different healthcare providers in different settings?*
 - *What are the barriers and drivers to meeting those needs?*
 - *What must be done - and how - to improve access to health information?*
- *Human rights and healthcare information.* The HIFA2015 campaign is grounded in the right to health, and there have been substantial HIFA2015 forum discussions on the right of access to healthcare information. HIFA2015 members from the New York Law School, University of Hawaii, Global Health Workforce Alliance and Physicians for Human Rights have formed a HIFA2015 human rights working group which will explore issues around the right to access healthcare information. It is anticipated that this debate will extend beyond the HIFA2015 membership, raising public awareness of health information issues worldwide.

Advocacy

During 2008, HIFA2015 gave presentations and workshops at leading national and international conferences (AHILA 11 Congress, Maputo; Medsin Global Health Conference, Oxford; Rockefeller eHealth Conference, Bellagio; WHO, Geneva). The campaign also organised a web conference at the Global Forum on Human Resources for Health, Kampala, Uganda, in collaboration with WHO and the University of Iowa. The increased profile of HIFA2015 has led to official declarations of support from 41 leading health and development organisations, including the British Medical Association, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Royal College of Midwives, and Royal College of Nursing (18 added during 2008). For a full list, please see Appendix 1.

Objectives in 2009:

- We aim to double the number of HIFA2015 Supporting Organisations, and to engage these organisations actively in campaign activities.
- We will work with HINARI¹ users and representatives to promote inclusion of electronic textbooks and practical manuals for nurses and midwives within the resources provided free or at low-cost by HINARI to developing countries.

Recommendations

¹ The Health Internetwork Access to Research Initiative provides free or very low cost online access to the major journals in biomedical and related social sciences to local, not-for-profit institutions in developing countries.



To ensure the achievement of the above objectives, the CPME makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: That the CPME joins the list of supporting organisations of HIFA2015 and it calls upon other European medical and health professional representative organisations and scientific societies to do the same.

Recommendation 2: That individual CPME member organisations and members are encouraged to join the HIFA2015 email community and actively contribute to international dialogue

Recommendation 3: That individual CPME member organisations are encouraged to consider how they may be able to help to raise awareness of HIFA2015 by publicly endorsing the campaign on their websites.

Recommendation 4: That individual CPME member organisations alert their own national governments to the existence of HIFA2015 and encourage them to support the campaign.

Recommendation 5: That the CPME supports efforts to improve the availability of healthcare information for professionally isolated healthcare providers in Europe, particularly in poorer areas of Central and Eastern Europe.

Appendix 1 – HIFA2015 Supporting Organisations

Association of Community Pharmacists of India
 Association for Health Information and Libraries in Africa
 Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication
 BioMed Central
 Book Aid International
 British Medical Association
 Community Health Global Network
 Eduhealthcare
 FSG Communications Ltd
 Health Sciences Online
 HealthConnect International
 Hesperian Foundation
 Institution of Engineering and Technology
 International Child Health Group
 International Council of Nurses
 International Federation of Medical Students' Associations
 International Medical Corps
 Kenya Association for Prevention of Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases
 London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
 Medsin
 MIDIRS (Midwives Information and Resource Service)
 NEPAD Council (New Partnership for African Development)



Partnerships in Health Information
Perinatal Education Programme
Philosophy, Ethics and Humanities in Medicine
Pilgrim Projects Ltd
ProCOR
QMed Knowledge Foundation
Royal College of Midwives
Royal College of Nursing
Southern Ethiopia Gwent Health Link
Strategies for Hope Trust
Tanzania Medical Students' Association
Teaching-Aids at Low Cost
Toitomboor
Tropical Health and Education Trust
Virtual Development
WHO African Regional Office Library
WikiProfessional