NATIONAL HEALTH RESEARCH
PRIORITIES & IMPLICATIONS
FOR PROVINCES

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2 November 2012
Legislative Framework of National Health Research Committee (NHRC)

- Established in terms of section 69(1) of the National Health Act (2003)
- The Act gives the NHRC the mandate to:
  - determine the health research to be carried out by public health authorities
  - ensure that health research agendas and research resources focus on priority health problems
NHRC mandate cont:

– develop and advise the Minister on the application and implementation of an integrated national strategy for health research

– coordinate the research activities of public health authorities
SA Health Research Policy 2001 mandate on PHRCs

Based on this policy the NHRC has mandated the PHRCs to:

• Co-ordinate health research
• Manage the process of priority-setting in the province;
• Review preliminary and final research reports and to give advice on policy implications of completed research projects.
NHRC Summit (July 2011)

Main Objective

- Identification of what was needed to:
  - strengthen research, innovation and development to achieve health outcomes of the Negotiated Service Delivery Agreement (NSDA)
NSDA

• Increasing life expectancy
• Reducing maternal & child mortality rates
• Combating HIV, AIDS and TB
• Strengthening effectiveness of the health system
• (Within the framework of the 10 Point Plan)
RELEVANCE OF RESEARCH

• HOW RELEVANT IS THE RESEARCH PROMOTED IN HEALTH RELATED DISCIPLINES AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING?
PRIORITIZED HEALTH RESEARCH is therefore:
An ongoing, and rational process aimed at achieving optimal allocation of resources in order to further the aims of health research
WHY PRIORITIZE?

• “Gross mismatch between the burden of illness which is overwhelmingly so in the 3rd world and Investment in health research which is focused on health problems of industrial countries”

• Further, many countries seriously neglect health research needed to make informed health policy decisions

(Bradshaw, D 2001)
PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA

• Must undergo examination and weighting of:
  - the health problem
  - the target group
  - the intervention benefits
  - the system perspectives,

• Paramount to this process are issues of equity, efficiency and sustainability of resources
NATIONAL DRIVERS FOR HEALTH RESEARCH PRIORITIES

• BURDEN OF DISEASE

• HEALTH SYSTEMS

• MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS
HEALTH RESEARCH PRIORITY SETTING PROCESS IN SA

• 1994 - First meeting of the Essential National Health Research (ENHR)
• 1995 - First workshop to formulate health goals and objectives using the RDP framework
• 1996 - Development of criteria and process of prioritization. 1st ENHR Congress
HEALTH RESEARCH PRIORITY SETTING cont:

• 2001 Development of the National health Research Policy by the ENHR Committee
• 2002 – Second ENHR Congress to popularize the National Health Research Policy
• 2006 – National Health Research Priority Setting Conference (landmark)
SUMMIT FINDINGS

- Inadequate funding
- Shortage of research capacity
- Lack of health research infrastructure
- Need to identify priority research fields
- Cumbersome regulatory frameworks
- Absence of national planning for research
- Lack of national mechanisms for M & E
NHR Summit
Recommendations

1. **Budget:** funding for health research should be 2% of health budget (presently 0.37%)

2. **Development of Human Resources for Health Research:** double the number of health researchers through a National Health Scholars Programme – across board
NHR Summit
Recommendations

3. **Infrastructure for Health Research:** revitalization of hospitals should provide for Clinical Research Centres in Academic Health Complexes

4. **Priority Research Fields/Targets:** surveillance, translation, diagnostics, therapeutics, and prevention
NHR Summit
Recommendations

5. **Regulation**: improve efficiency and effectiveness of the MCC

6. **Planning and Translation**: to develop + strengthen the system of health research (Health Research Policy)

7. **Monitoring and Evaluation**: to develop + strengthen the system of health research (Health Research Policy)
National Research Priorities Identified at the NHR Summit

(REFER TO PAGE 6 OF THE 2011 NHR SUMMIT REPORT)

• Research required to achieve an increase in life expectancy

• Research priorities to reduce Maternal Mortality

• Research priorities to reduce Child Mortality
• Research required to Combat HIV&AIDS and TB

• Research required to Strengthen the Effectiveness of Health system
WAY FORWARD

• ACTION RESEARCH
  – Baseline establishment
  – Intervention measures
  – Evaluation
THANK YOU!