

NATIONAL HEALTH RESEARCH PRIORITIES & IMPLICATIONS FOR PROVINCES

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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?



PRIORITY DEFINED

- RIGHT TO TAKE PRECEDENCE IN OBTAINING: Supplies, Services, Facilities etc. especially during shortage

PRIORITIZING 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



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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



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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!**

