

The birth of an association: Creating African leaders in health professions education

The 2022 World Health Organization Global Competency and Outcomes Framework for Universal Health Coverage emphasises the global health crisis, which includes a continuously increasing burden of disease and a shortage of competent healthcare professionals.^[1] Consequently, recommendations spotlight the need for competency-based education of healthcare professionals to improve service delivery, overcome population-specific health system challenges, and prevent and treat diseases.^[1] Health professions educators are crucial in developing competent health professionals, particularly in Africa, and therefore must have sufficient educational knowledge and leadership abilities to ensure the quality of health professions education (HPE).

The sub-Saharan Africa-FAIMER Regional Institute (SAFRI) fellowship capacitated health professions educators from the sub-Saharan region in education, research, and leadership with the specific aim of improving the quality of health sciences graduates.^[2-5] However, the sustainability of the SAFRI fellowship was threatened following a shift in the strategic focus of the international partner which resulted in an opportunity for reflection and renewal for HPE. In response to the call from SAFRI fellows to maintain this network in the region, a strategic team developed the Association for Health Professions Education and Leadership (AHPPEL). With the vision "to advance leadership in health professions education and research", AHPPEL intends to advance HPE and leadership to meet the healthcare needs of the region through a fellowship that will emphasise education, research, and leadership.

Fundamental to the existence of AHPPEL is the acknowledgement of the strength and passion of an existing community of practice of fellows in Africa, the need for professionalisation of HPE,^[6] and the need for leadership skills in HPE in Africa. Operationally, AHPPEL provides an opportunity for health professions educators in Africa to be part of a locally-developed fellowship in Health Professions Education and Leadership, an online Post-Graduate Diploma in Health Professions Education and Leadership (PG Dip HPEL), discourse in HPE, a consultancy network on the translation of HPE research into practice in African settings, and a vibrant community of HPE scholars passionate about advancing the HPE agenda (www.ahpel.org).

We, as Africans, must lead the process of creating solutions to our health challenges guided by the maxim 'nothing about us, without us'.

W Cordier

Department of Pharmacology, School of Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Pretoria, South Africa
Werner.cordier@up.ac.za

A Dreyer

Department of Family Medicine and Primary Care, School of Clinical Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa
Abigail.Dreyer@wits.ac.za

L Keiller

Academic ICT, Information and Communication Technology, Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch, South Africa
lkeiller@sun.ac.za

D Manning

Office of the Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Pretoria, South Africa
Dianne.manning@up.ac.za

C N Nyoni

School of Nursing, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa
Nyonic@ufs.ac.za

J van Wyk

Department of Health Sciences Education, University of Cape Town, South Africa
Jacky.vanwyk@uct.ac.za

J E Wolvaardt

School of Health Systems and Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Pretoria, South Africa
Liz.wolvaardt@up.ac.za

1. Rawls J. Political Liberalism. New York: Columbia University P World Health Organization. Global Competency and Outcomes Framework for Universal Health Coverage. WHO: Geneva, 2022.
2. Frantz J, Rhoda A, Murdoch-Eaton D, Sandars J, Marshall M, Burch VC. Understanding faculty development as capacity development: A case study from South Africa. *Afr J Health Prof Educ* 2019;11(2):53-56. <https://doi.org/10.7196/AJHPE.2019.v11i2.1120>
3. Frantz JM, Bezuidenhout J, Burch VC, et al. The impact of a faculty development programme for health professions educators in sub-Saharan Africa: an archival study. *BMC Med Educ* 2015;28. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-015-0320-7>
4. van Wyk J, Wolvaardt JE, Nyoni CN. Evaluating the outcomes of a faculty capacity development programme on nurse educators in sub-Saharan Africa. *Afr J Health Prof Educ* 2020;12(4):201-205. <https://doi.org/10.7196/AJHPE.2020.v12i4.1389>
5. Keiller L, Nyoni CN, van Wyk C. Online faculty development in low- and middle-income countries for health professions educators: a rapid realist review. *Human Resources for Health* 2022;20:12.
6. Burch V, Norcini J. Professionalising health professions education. *African Journal of Health Professions Education* 2019;11(1):1-2. <https://doi.org/10.7196/AJHPE.2019.v11i1.1209>

Afr J Health Professions Educ 2022;14(2):42. <https://doi.org/10.7196/AJHPE.2022.v14i2.1676>