JULY'S BULLETIN OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION HIGHLIGHTS:
SHORTAGES OF DOCTORS EXPECTED IN AFRICA UNTIL 2015

GENEVA – The number of doctors required and those available globally by the year 2015 will be roughly in balance, but there will be huge disparities in their distribution. Many countries will have a surplus of doctors while most African countries will face shortages, according to a study published today in the international public health journal, the Bulletin of the World Health Organization.

African countries will require an additional 167,000 physicians to meet their health-care needs. Economic growth in these countries may not be enough to increase health expenditure needed to retain doctors, and could lead to their migration to countries offering higher salaries, according to authors Richard M. Scheffler and colleagues.

“Even if low-income countries produce enough doctors or try to import them, they still won’t have the economic capacity to pay a wage to retain them,” said Scheffler of the Global Center for Health Economics and Policy Research, at the University of California at Berkeley.

The retention of health workers in low-income countries will be discussed by the Group of Eight industrialized nations in Japan from 7 to 9 July, where leaders will be encouraged to use WHO guidelines for setting numerical targets to address shortages of health workers in low-income countries. The Bulletin study projected that at least 20 African countries are expected to face these shortages.

Read the study here: http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/7/07-046474/en/index.html

Other key articles this month can be found at: http://www.who.int/bulletin/en/

- WHO calls on surgeons to use safety checklists when they operate on patients
- G8 to discuss global food crisis and dire health consequences
- More and more HIV patients are not returning to antiretroviral treatment centres in poor countries and large treatment centres are not chasing them up
- The return of yaws. How to avoid mistakes of the past and finish yaws elimination properly
- Treatment for schizophrenia could be increased in developing countries using cost-effective interventions
• Active follow-up of cancer patients in India provides the most reliable estimates of cancer survival rates.

The *Bulletin*’s table of contents can be found at: [http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/7/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/7/en/index.html)

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