Positive Practice Environments for Health Care Professionals: Quality Workplaces for Quality Care - the campaign is making headway. Key international organizations in the health sector have formally supported this initiative, putting PPE on the political agenda and creating synergies with other health human resources (HHR) development initiatives.

PPE principles are being presented at major conferences:
- Geneva Health Forum
- Human Resources for Health Conference (Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam)
- Health Care Workforce Crisis: Innovations in improving staff retention and quality of care (International labour Office).

The Campaign website has been launched offering free downloads of the Campaign kit materials and up-dated information on programme activities (see www.ppecampaign.org). A virtual library is being developed to provide effective learning and reference tools to support the creation/maintenance of positive practice environments for health professionals and their patients.
The worsening of the health human resource crisis in most countries is a pressing reality. To complement governments’ efforts in responding to the Human Resources for Health (HRH) crisis, PPE partners have launched this campaign in a spirit of professional cooperation, collaboration and determination to affect a real and positive impact on the working conditions of health care professionals in all organizations. Morocco, Uganda and Zambia are the pioneer countries where activities are taking place.

The aims of the workshops held in Zambia, Uganda and Morocco were to attain at national level common understanding of campaign objectives, structures, strategies, activities and expected outcomes; define operating principles and procedures for PPE implementation in the country; analyze the PPE situation in each country; build strategic alliances and agree on a common advocacy platform for PPE. In all three countries, the need and timeliness of this initiative have been stressed.

While developing countries suffer a critical shortage of employed health care professionals, the economic downturn and consequent underinvestment in health are affecting countries with stronger economies as well. The gains of recent years in terms of staff recruitment are being threatened by budget cuts seriously affecting working conditions and staffing levels. The retention of health care professionals depends on the work environment and has never been as important globally as health needs of the population continue to grow.

International Collaborating Partners thus far include organizations such as:

- CapacityPlus  
  www.capacityplus.org
- Cordaid  
  www.cordaid.nl
- Global Healthcare Information Network  
  www.ghi-net.org
- Health Care Without Harm  
  www.noharm.org
- International Commission on Occupational Health  
  www.icohweb.org
- Public Services International  
  www.world-psi.org
- World Federation of Occupational Therapists  
  wwwwfot.org
- World Health Organization  
  www.who.int

The Lusaka workshop gathered representatives of professional organizations in several health disciplines - physicians, nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists and dentists as well as other Zambian health stakeholders and media professionals. This multi-disciplinary team worked together with a shared concern for the poor state of their welfare, work safety and general working environments. High attrition and migration rates, heavy workloads, low salaries, poor safety conditions and inequity in the distribution of health professionals were identified as gaps in the Zambian health system.

Participants determined the priorities that constitute the core components of their National PPE Strategic Plan:
- Staff recruitment, retention and training
- Improve the working conditions, equipment and infrastructure of the health care system
- Consolidate collaboration and communication among stakeholders
- Improve human resource structure, quality of service delivery and public image

Raising awareness of work environments and their negative impact on patient outcomes as well as staff morale and performance will be the focus of the post-workshop project in Zambia.

The Zambia PPE campaign team intends to:
- Put the outcomes from the PPE workshop into context for reality check
- Enable members to embark on local recruitment of members to help with local PPE campaign
- Help gauge the level of skills, knowledge and techniques required to produce positive outcomes from the PPE campaign in Zambia
- Promote networking for PPE at local levels and gauge the need for capacity building of members to manage these networks in future

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The Zambia PPE workshop Lusaka, 9-11 March 2010

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Organizations represented at the March 2010 PPE workshop
- Hospital Pharmacy Association
- Zambia Society of Physiotherapy
- Churches Health Association
- Zambia School of Medicine
- Pharmaceutical Society of Zambia
- Zambia Union of Nurses organization
- General Nursing Council of Zambia
- Medical Council of Zambia
- Zambia Dental Association
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- University of Zambia, Department of Nursing Sciences
- Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia (CIDRZ)
- Centre for Health Science and Social Research (CHESSORE)
- Media representatives

Positive practice environments (PPEs) are settings that ensure the health, safety and personal well-being of health professionals, improve the motivation, productivity and performance of individuals and organizations, and thus, support the provision of quality patient care.

Global PPE Steering Committee - core partners:
- International Council of Nurses
  www.icn.ch
- International Hospital Federation
  www.ihf-fih.org
- International Pharmaceutical Federation
  www.fip.org
- World Confederation for Physical Therapy
  www.wcpt.org
- FDI World Dental Federation
  www.fdiworldental.org
- World Medical Association
  www.wma.net
Following the pilot experience of the 2008 workshop held during the first Global Forum on Human Resources for Health (Global Health Workforce Alliance) where PPE Campaign materials were piloted, a multidisciplinary group representing five health professions – physicians, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, and physiotherapists, and other health stakeholders, met in Kampala last March and made the commitment to work together to move the PPE Campaign forward in Uganda.

The Minister of Health Dr. Mallinga Stephen in his opening ceremony speech urged all health stakeholders, private and public, to support the PPE campaign so as to ensure its success and thus help Uganda achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

An analysis of the country case study led to the conclusion that poor working environments are compromising quality care in Uganda. Unsatisfactory management practices, inadequate career advancement opportunities and poor occupational health and safety mechanisms were said to undermine the productivity and motivation of health professionals.

Group discussions identified the following priorities to be addressed in the Uganda National PPE Strategic Plan:
- Empower professional associations
- Advocate for improved remuneration packages and conditions of service
- Increase recruitment and encourage retention through incentives
- Reward and recognise health workers’ excellence as a form of motivation
- Identify government programmes that can accommodate PPE activities
- Advocate for more funding to the health budget to improve working environments

The post-workshop PPE project in Uganda will focus on workplace surveys determining the status of PPE elements, raising awareness of health professionals and decision makers and negotiating improvements to the health workplace.

Organizations represented at the March 2010 PPE workshop
- Uganda Medical Association
- Uganda Dental Association
- Pharmaceutical Society of Uganda
- Uganda National Association of Hospitals Administrators
- Uganda Nurses and Midwives Union
- Uganda Association of Physiotherapy
- Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Health Service Commission representatives
- WHO Country Representative
- Infectious Diseases Institute, IDI
- Community Based Rehabilitation Alliance, COMBRA
- Islamic Medical Association of Uganda, IMAU
- Mulago Hospital
- Mukono District
- Action Group for Health, Human rights and HIV/AIDS

Quality Workplaces for Quality Care
Visit our website for more PPE news, materials and resources
www.ppecampaign.org
Positive practice environments for health care professionals

“L’appel de Rabat” and the proposal of a Moroccan Charter on PPE

PPE workshop in Rabat, May 2010

Participants from different areas of the country and several health disciplines (physicians, gynecologists, dentists, pharmacists and nurses), representatives of education centres for health professionals, as well as the World Health Organization delegate and other health stakeholders joined in Rabat during a three day PPE workshop, 5-7 May 2010.

The key health organizations participating at the workshop unanimously recognized the urgent need to create a positive practice environment to motivate health professionals and ultimately improve performance and quality care. Participants stressed the need for wide dissemination of the PPE Campaign message in order to sensitize the public, improve the image of health professionals and mobilize key stakeholders and the public sector, in particular the Ministry of Health.

Participants in the post-workshop phase will collect more data and evidence on the status of working environments in all health disciplines and regions, organize multidisciplinary work groups, raise social awareness using the media and a specific Call to Action paper for Morocco (L'Appel de Rabat) and a National PPE Charter.

Organizations represented at the PPE workshop in Morocco, May 2010

- Association Lalla Salma de Lutte contre le Cancer
- Société Marocaine des Sciences Médicales
- Association Royale de Gynécologie-Obstétriques
- Association Marocaine de Prévention Bucco-dentaire
- Association Marocaine des Sciences Infirmières et Techniques Sanitaires
- Fédération Nationale des Pharmaciens
- Organisation Démocratique de Travail
- Instituts de Formation aux Carrière de Santé du Ministère de la santé
- Representative of WHO-Morocco

Positive Practice Environments in the Canadian Healthcare System

Current HHR practices in Canada focus on recruitment and retention, and how to manage health professionals with limited resources. Policy-makers and other stakeholders are keen to develop solutions to make better strategic utilization of their health human resources. A poster on PPE was presented at the health policy conference held by the Centre for Health Services and Policy Research, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, 29-30 March 2010, by Brenda L. Lovell and Raymond T. Lee.

The promotion of PPE at interprofessional and continuing professional development workshops is considered the ideal venue for policy-makers, practitioners, and researchers to learn the basic tenets of PPE and stimulate discussion, dialogue and research. Many of the Vancouver Conference attendees were unfamiliar with the PPE initiative but wanted to know more about the programme, and how they could implement it in their region or jurisdiction.

Although Canada has a publicly funded health care system, PPE may need to be customized for each health authority or health care institution, as the specific needs and requirements of each are varied across the provinces. Challenges of implementing PPE include resource constraints and political inertia; however, strong clinical and organizational leadership coupled with institutional support will be the driving force for PPEs.

In support of the campaign the researchers have introduced PPE as part of practice management at an international family medicine conference in Cancun, Mexico in late May.
International recruitment of health personnel: global code of practice

The Sixty-third World Health Assembly has unanimously adopted the revised WHO global code of practice on the international recruitment of health personnel.

The code aims to establish and promote voluntary principles and practices for the ethical international recruitment of health personnel. It discourages states from actively recruiting from developing countries that face critical shortages of health workers. Work will now begin on implementation of the code, including the establishment of a framework and identification of the data required to monitor its application and impact.


Responsible governance for improved human resources for health: making the right choices

An international conference was held at the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) 15-16 March 2010, focusing on the contribution that responsible governance can make to improving human resources for health (HRH) policy implementation. There was great interest in the conference: 181 participants attended from 31 countries; authoritative key note speakers reflected the global and local issues pertaining to HRH and governance; and over 30 case studies were presented, addressing experiences with various governance issues in different countries. Positive practice environments was presented as a recommended strategy to improve HRH effectiveness. See www.kit.nl/eCache/FAB/46/258.pdf for a summary of the conference proceedings. Slide presentations are also available on the KIT conference webpages.

In the closing plenary, participants explored the ways in which the results of the conference will be taken forward within the HRH global arena and the wider health systems agenda. This includes a dedicated session on HRH governance at the 2nd Global Forum on Human Resources for Health in Bangkok, January 2011; input into the 2010 summit on Millennium Development Goals; and a special issue in the international journal on health workforce matters, Human Resources for Health (www.human-resources-health.com). Detailed conference proceedings, including implications and intentions for follow-up on this invigorated HRH governance agenda, are forthcoming.

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Second Global Forum on Human Resources for Health
25 - 29 January 2011
Bangkok, Thailand


The Global Health Workforce Alliance in collaboration with the core partners has sponsored the start-up, pilot phase and implementation of the PPE Campaign.

www.who.int/workforcealliance/