Welcome to the Human Resources for Health (HRH) Exchange (The Exchange). As Executive Director of the Global Health Workforce Alliance (The Alliance), I envisage The Exchange, our virtual discussion centre, as that vital connection for inter-action of health professionals at all levels, and in all regions of the world. This project of establishing and maintaining Communities of Practice (CoPs) is designed to keep human resources for health issues at the foreground of health policy development in countries worldwide.

The Exchange is an additional resource in the knowledge brokering effort of The Alliance; another avenue through which multiple stakeholders can be brought together to contemplate the critical international shortage of health workers and to seek innovative ways to solve this challenge. I envision good quality dialogue between individuals - north-south talks, south-south discussion, experienced-newly-skilled feedback, all with the aim of learning, motivating and creating new innovations towards reduction of the health worker crisis. Health workers are necessary in effecting good public health and I believe that your experiences and ideas, can influence worldwide health development and effectively support the thrust towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

On these pages, I encourage you to discuss the essential role of education and training, management and leadership, primary health care, finance, technology, migration and equitable distribution, to name a few, and its effects on the health professionals and public health in general. Each discussion will be guided by a team of expert advisors, all with extensive years of practical experience and a keen interest in public health and the role of the health professionals. I look forward to receiving and adapting your input into a practical workable document that reflects the good practices of the health professionals. This document will be collated and disseminated to countries for use in policy formulation.

What will you gain from it, you may ask? Through interaction with professionals from all over the world, you will gain new perspective on ways in which public health issues are viewed and the types of engagements used to overcome challenges identified. Knowledge building and networking are just two additional benefits that you, the participant, will obtain.

I cordially invite and urge your involvement in The Exchange since your body of evidence are the examples which form the foundation for further public health growth. I encourage you to help us sustain The Exchange by sharing your thoughts, ideas, suggestions and most of all your evidence with us. Your enthusiasm will keep the momentum moving forward within The Exchange.

Dr. Mubashar Sheikh
Executive Director
Global Health Workforce Alliance