

Concurrent session 5-4

Room: 208/209
Tools for Determining Capacity in Resource-Limited Settings:
Lessons from the Rapid Scale up of Medical Students in Ethiopia

Statement of the Issue: The lack of adequate health care workers is a major public health problem in Sub-Saharan Africa. Currently, Ethiopia is experiencing a severe shortage with approximately 1 physician for every 40,000 persons. In response, the Ministry of Health implemented a “flood and retain” policy that entailed “flooding” medical schools with students in order to increase the overall number of physicians in the country. However, in most medical schools, the influx of students is not matched with adequate resources. The Addis Ababa University (AAU), School of Medicine requested for the development of a tool to assess the school’s capacity and resources to determine the amount of students it can accommodate and influence policy decisions regarding the numbers of new medical students coming to the school.

Policy Resolution: A tool was developed for the school and policy makers to use in determining the medical school’s capacity for students. Factors to consider are the quality of medical education and quality of life of medical students. This metric consists of three determinations: 1. Primary determination- Physical Capacity, 2. Secondary determination- Academic Capacity, 3. Tertiary determination- Technological Capacity.

To make a final determination, the levels are to be evaluated in order. This metric can be thought of as a pyramid, in which the physical capacity is the foundation on which the other capacity measures should be built. This type of prioritization strategy can be adapted for use in settings with limited capability to expand resources to accommodate growing demands on existing resources.

Development of a District Environmental Health Report

The goal of the Environmental Health Section in the North Central Health District (NCHD) is to provide control and prevention for the public through assessment, continuous surveillance, education, and program (regulatory) enforcement, structured to analyze and moderate environmental conditions that could potentially bring harm to the public. Over the course of nine weeks, Mercer University Master of Public Health (MPH) candidates were able to compose the first, completed Environmental Health Report for the NCHD which contained detailed information on past and present environmental health functions of the District. The MPH candidates were able to gather and evaluate data from each environmental health program within the NCHD by accompanying Environmental Health Specialists during their course of work and reviewing data from the Environmental Health Information System (EHIS). Programs utilized and assessed by students included food service, on-site sewage management systems, non-public water, public swimming pools, tourist accommodations, chemical hazards, healthy homes and lead poisoning prevention, rabies control, and the recently implemented tattoo studios program. Additionally, the report provided data demonstrating the need for more environmental health specialists in the NCHD to maintain the health and wellness of NCHD residents from environmental conditions that could bring harm to the public. The report will be used as a baseline reference for measuring change in processes and outcomes for the Environmental Health Section of the NCHD and can be replicated in other public health districts of Georgia.

Presenter/Learning Objectives

Daphne McGee, CHES, JD/MPHC,
2015

Explain the rationale for the implementation of the “flood and retain” policy to increase the number of physicians in Ethiopia.

Identify three ways governmental policy has affected the quality of medical education at AAU.

Recognize the challenges with building medical or public health education capacity.

Apply recommendations to build educational and training capacity in resource limited settings.

Jalisa Brown, MPHc
Abraham Deng, MPHc, Carla Coley

Describe the process utilized to create a comprehensive environmental health report for a District public health office.

Discuss the achievements, barriers, and challenges encountered with the development of a District environmental health report.

Discuss the environmental health specialist’s responsibilities in the area of general environmental health and program evaluation.

Correction to Syllabus: Concurrent Session 5-4