Ministry of Health
CALL FOR ABSTRACTS
THE 4TH NATIONAL HEALTH AND RESEARCH CONFERENCE
8-10 NOVEMBER 2017
ROYAL SWAZI CONVENTION CENTRE

THEME:
RESEARCH-BASED EVIDENCE
FOR IMPROVED POLICY, PROGRAMMING, AND PRACTICE

Submission Deadline:
18 August 2017 at 5PM SAST

Introduction
The Ministry of Health will be holding the 4th National Health Research Conference towards on November 8-10, 2017. This is a forum where experts in the field of health and related disciplines within and outside the borders of Swaziland come together to share scientific knowledge on cutting edge research, programmes, and projects whose findings are instrumental in shaping health policy, programming, and practice. The conference is therefore a must-attend event for leaders, policy makers, change agents, health and development practitioners, scientists, researchers and members of the public who have an interest in health. To this end the Ministry of Health is calling on individual researchers, scholars, organisations, and institutions who have carried out research between 2012 and 2017 to submit for high quality oral or poster presentation abstracts relating to any of the conference subthemes.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

i. To bring together experts, policy leaders, health programmers, economists, and service providers to interrogate existing evidence and experiences on the importance of health research in improving the health system;

ii. To disseminate the most recent research and best practices on health efficiency models in addressing the health burden of diseases;

iii. To enhance scientific and strategic collaborations for resource mobilization towards sustainable health financing;

iv. To promote effective action through leadership and shared responsibility at all levels of all sectors (government, private, civil society) to invest in health and achieve Vision 2022;
v. To promote accountability among all stakeholders in equitable financing and health investment for sustainable development.

THE CONFERENCE WILL HAVE FOUR SUBTHEMES AS FOLLOWS:

1. Advancing clinical and biomedical research for improved health outcome
2. Health systems strengthening: A journey towards policy-research connection
3. Social, environmental and population research: Advancing research and science in partnership with consumers of health services
4. Health research financing, innovation, and resource for sustainable development

1. ADVANCING CLINICAL AND BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH FOR IMPROVED HEALTH OUTCOMES

Biomedical research is research with the goal of understanding normal and abnormal human functioning, at the molecular, cellular, organ system and whole body levels, including development of tools and techniques to be applied for this purpose; developing new therapies or devices that improve health or the quality of life of individuals, up to the point where they are tested on human subjects. Biomedical research may also include studies on human subjects that do not have a diagnostic or therapeutic orientation. Clinical research is research with the goal of improving the diagnosis, and treatment (including rehabilitation and palliation) of disease and injury; improving the health and quality of life of individuals as they pass through normal life stages. Clinical research usually encompasses research on, or for the treatment of, patients.

Abstracts for this sub-theme can be submitted under the following tracks:

Track 1a: Health across the lifespan
Track 1b: Prevention, control and management of communicable diseases
Track 1c: Prevention, control and management of non-communicable diseases
Track 1d: HIV prevention, antiretroviral treatment & HIV care
Track 1e: Sexual & reproductive health and rights

2. HEALTH SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING: A JOURNEY TOWARDS POLICY-RESEARCH CONNECTION

This sub-theme focuses on analysing, engaging, and challenging power and politics, in health systems research (HSR), health systems development or learning strategies, in relation to the broad conference theme of Research-Based Evidence for Improved Policy, Programming and Practice. Health systems research includes health services research which focus on research with the goal of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of health professionals and the health care system, through changes to practice and policy. Health systems research is a
multidisciplinary field of scientific investigation that studies how social factors, financing systems, organizational structures and processes, health technologies, and personal behaviors affect access to health care, the quality and cost of health care, and, ultimately, health and well-being. This sub-theme incorporates research and experience from different settings, that explore the nature of, and strategies for building, resilience to unexpected shocks and in the face of the ongoing daily demands of every health system (such as funding, human resources and data for decision-making needs). Submissions under this sub-theme can address areas of ongoing and/or emerging and as-yet unidentified future needs (e.g. climate change, urbanization, unforeseen outbreaks), as well as efforts to improve health care access and intersectoral action on the social determinants of health related to unfinished and emerging needs, sustaining gains and absorbing (or averting) shocks. They may also present innovative research approaches around these issues or relevant experience of learning communities.

Abstracts for this sub-theme can be submitted under the following tracks:

Track 2a: Health governance: power and politics of health systems
Track 2b: Human resource for health-staffing norms
Track 2c: Continuous quality improvement for better health outcomes
Track 2d: Organisational culture and system performance
Track 2e: Health system response to changing demographics
Track 2f: Health access for key and vulnerable populations

3. SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND POPULATION RESEARCH: ADVANCING RESEARCH AND SCIENCE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CONSUMERS OF HEALTH SERVICES

Population and public health research comprises research with the goal of improving the health of the population, or of defined sub-populations, through a better understanding of the ways in which social, cultural, environmental, occupational and economic factors determine health status including the priorities and realities of populations facing vulnerability and marginalization in order to put into practice and sustain our value base of gender, social and health equity, social inclusion, and ethics in policy, practice and research. This sub-theme also proposes new partnerships and collaborations through which the symposium themes can be advanced.

Abstracts for this sub-theme can be submitted under the following tracks:

Track 3a: Developing system-focused multi-actor partnerships to increase availability, access, affordability, and use of medicines and services
Track 3b: Communication, negotiation, and mediation skills and processes for effective partnerships
Track 3c: New mechanisms and approaches to enhancing research use by communities and health systems practitioners
Track 3d: Community/civil society engagement
Track 3e: Innovative ways and strategies to address Stigma & discrimination
Track 3f: Ensuring quality and socially responsive health services for key and vulnerable populations

4. HEALTH RESEARCH FINANCING, INNOVATION AND RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Fiscal space is commonly defined as the budgetary room that allows a government to provide resources for public purposes without undermining fiscal sustainability. Macroeconomic conditions, budget reprioritization towards health and measures to improve efficiency are the three most important drivers for enlarging fiscal space for health. Health research needs to be prioritized within the fiscal space. Funding of the national health agenda and synergy to ensure availability of research funding aligned with the principles of responsible innovation, creating value for society in an ethical and responsible way. Responsible innovation in health service delivery is a process that seeks to promote creativity and opportunities for service delivery science and innovation that are socially desirable and undertaken in the public interest. Successful research projects, pilots and innovations need to be scaled up but often time, financial resources are limited. Abstracts in a given sub-theme may address any of funding and resource mobilization for, cutting-edge research, innovative research approaches and measures, Novel strategies for developing capacity, Learning communities and knowledge translation, Innovative practice in health systems development.

Abstracts for this sub-theme can be submitted under the following tracks:

- Track 4a: Economics, financing, policy, regulatory and ethical issues
- Track 4b: Sustainable development through Health research Financing
- Track 4c: Resource mobilization for health investments
- Track 4d: Sustainable public, private, and civil society partnerships
- Track 4e: Health and Research Finance and Regulatory Mechanisms

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Abstracts can be submitted based on option 1 or option 2 submission guidelines

Author(s) can submit at most five (5) abstracts for presentation at the conference.

OPTION 1: Focus on original descriptive or analytic studies using quantitative or qualitative methods. Option 1 is most suited for scientific research

Authors are urged to follow the guidelines when developing and submitting their abstracts:

1. The abstract should not exceed 300 words.
2. Have a title, name(s) of author(s), author(s) affiliation, maximum five (5) key words and contacts (preferably email address) of the corresponding author.
3. Structured with introduction/background, aim/objective, methods, key findings, conclusion, and recommendation.
4. Should be in English.
5. Abstracts submitted before and presented at international conferences cannot be resubmitted. However, abstracts that have been submitted to other conference and not accepted can be submitted to the NHRC as long as they are in line with the conference theme and tracks.

**OPTION 2:** Describe best practices/innovative practices and policy issues in the general field of investing in health. Option 2 is most suited for presenting best practices, new knowledge or analyses that are important for understanding and responding to the investments in health for development and its future implications. It is suited for information that was gained through systematic forms of knowledge production/management, by means other than scientific research or evaluation. This process must include some evidence provided through some data obtained. Abstracts presented under the second option should contain concise statements of:

- **Background/Issues:** a summary of the issue(s) addressed by the abstract, or a description of the problem being analysed or evaluated.

- **Description:** a description of the intervention, project, experience, service and/or advocacy including the setting/location, design, affected population, data collection and methods of evaluation used.

- **Lessons learned:** conclusions and implications of the intervention or project. Data that support the lessons learned and provide evidence must be included. A clear and succinct statement of its relevance to police change and intervention is essential.

- **Conclusion/Recommendations:** possible next steps for implementation. Clearly state how the best practice/intervention/study can influence policy and identify the priority health areas results can be useful.

**SPECIAL SESSION, SYMPOSIA AND SATELLITE CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

Any interested person may submit a proposal to host a special session, symposia or workshop at the conference. All sessions should relate to the theme of the conference. Deadline for submission of special sessions is August 15, 2017

- Each session will be allocated a maximum of 2 hours
- Available space is for 50-100 persons. Bigger space can be arranged on special request
- Each sessions must have at least 2 facilitators and a rapporteur
- Submit a proposal/concept of 1-2 page outlining:
  - Title of the session, symposia, satellite workshop
  - Target audience
  - Background and learning objectives
  - Linkage of the topic to the objectives of the conference
  - Learning objectives of the session, symposia/satellite workshop
  - List of topics to be discussed/presented
  - List of presenters/facilitators for each topic and their qualifications
Only a limited number of slots are available for special sessions, symposia or satellite workshops will be available. The submitted proposals will be evaluated by the Abstract Review Committee.

**Electronic Abstract Submission**

Authors are urged to submit abstracts can be submitted electronically via an online form that can be found on the following websites:

**MOH Health Research Unit Website**
Log in http://shrswaziland.com
Steps to follow:
1. Conferences and workshops
3. Click here to submit Abstract submission form
4. Click here to load registration form.
5. Click to submit evidence to payment

**UNISWA Website**
UNISWA: Link http://www.uniswa.sz/academics/healthsciences/nhrc2017
Steps to follow:
1. Login www.uniswa.sz
2. Academics
3. Faculty of health Sciences
4. Conferences and workshops
5. National Health Research Conference 2017
6. Abstract submission form

**Government Website**
Swazi government: http://www.gov.sz
Steps to follow:
1. Login www.gov.sz
2. Ministry of Health
3. 4rd National Health Research Conference
4. Click here to load registration form.
5. Click to submit registration form and abstract form.

**Manual Abstract Submission**

In the event that it is not possible to submit electronically, hard copies can be delivered in a sealed envelope and clearly marked “4th National Health Research Conference 2017 Abstract” to secretariat at the following address:
The Secretariat
Health Research Unit, Ministry of Health
Swaziland Christian University Building, Mbabane next to MVA building
Mbhilibhi Street,
P. O. Box 5
Mbabane
Tel: 2404 7253/5469
Authors are urged to clearly mark whether the submitted abstract is for oral or poster presentation. An author can submit a maximum of five abstracts.

PRESENTATION DURING THE CONFERENCE

The author(s) will be responsible for the preparation of an oral and/or poster presentation during the conference as determined by the Abstract Review Committee (ARC). However, the author(s) can indicate the type of presentation they wish to make (Oral or Poster, Poster only). However, ARC reserves the right to re-allocate the chosen format. Abstracts that are highly rated in the review process but not accepted for a formal Oral presentation will be invited as a poster presentation.

Oral presentations
Oral presentations shall be made in a 15 minute time limit.

Poster Presentations
Space will be reserved to display poster presentations. Poster presentation will occur in a marketplace fashion, where all posters will be presented in a separate poster presentation session. Poster presentation sessions will be included in the conference programme, and the author will be requested to be present during the allocated session. The poster size should be 60cmx 85cm, landscape orientation. Authors will be responsible for mounting posters, being available to discuss their exhibit, and removing posters.

Detailed guidelines for abstract development & submission
Detailed abstract guidelines can be found at the Ministry of Health website [www.gov.sz](http://www.gov.sz) or Ministry of Health, Health Research Unit

Registration details:
1. Registration opens on 23, March 1, 2017
2. Conference delegates are encouraged to register on line and also take advantage of the early registration discounts:
3. Early bird registration: May 1- August 31, 2017. Early bird registration is E500
4. Regular registration: September 1-October 31st, 2017. Regular registration fee is E600
5. Onsite registration will open on November 6-9, 2017. Onsite registration fee is E850
6. Students in Tertiary institutions of learning will have a special discounted rate of E300. However, students must provide proof of a valid Student ID card. Working class and doctoral students and will not benefit from this discounted rate.
7. International Delegates: US$100
8. Symposia/Special sessions are available and abstracts/concepts will be approved as indicated in the call for abstracts: E15,000