

winner

# Features

Quality Healthcare Awards

4th Edition 2023

**Dr. Betty Gikonyo**

The first female Cardiologist in Kenya



**Lifetime  
Achievement**

# From our Desk

It is with great pleasure we share with you the fourth volume of our annual publication.

As we mark five years since the inaugural Quality Healthcare Awards held in 2019, we are grateful for the continued support by our multisectoral partners, sponsors and the participation of individuals and organisations who seek to share their outstanding work and best practices within the health sector.

The initiative has been a yardstick of quality and will continue to inspire excellence to ensure improved population health, responsiveness, and efficiency.

The award programme takes a health system strengthening approach to improve health service delivery by inspiring excellence and innovation in the health sector, advocating for high-quality health systems, promoting a culture of continuous quality improvement and empowering people to be co-producers of health through the Patient Voice Initiative.

Quality healthcare is an issue of social justice and human rights, and failing to deliver healthcare services that enhance the desired health outcomes inhibits progress towards a more equitable and just society. The Patient Voice Initiative presents an opportunity to make the voices of patients, their families and caregivers heard by the providers and decision-makers, to inform decision-making, and encourage policy change. The platform amplifies the patients' needs, preferences and expectations from the health system to influence the design and delivery of health services. That empowers people to drive and create an environment that demands and promotes equal access to safe and quality care.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the independent panel of judges who represented various stakeholders to guarantee integrity, inclusion, credibility and transparency in the award evaluation process. In this unique volume, we will showcase the remarkable work of the QHKA 2023 winners and explore more about quality and patient safety.

Happy Reading!



**Ms. Grace W. Ndegwa**  
**Executive Director**  
**Quality Healthcare Kenyan Awards**

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## IMPROVING ACCESS TO PRIMARY CARE SERVICES

### Likoni Sub County, Mombasa County

Likoni Sub County set out to improve access to primary health care (PHC) by strengthening the primary health care network (PCN) in all primary health care facilities in the sub county, which has 41 registered health facilities and a catchment population of 271,441.

#### Primary Health Care Networks

A hub and spoke model is employed for the primary health care network to improve access to primary health care whereby the level 4 sub county health facility serves as the referral facility and hence acts as the hub to the level 3 and level 2 health facilities, which are the spokes (referring facilities). Community health units are further linked with the health facilities to form a primary care network.

The approach entailed sensitizing the community and the health care workers on primary healthcare (PHC) and primary healthcare networks (PCNs), strengthening referral systems in all primary health facilities offering maternal services, ensuring adherence to national referral guidelines, and monitoring and improving PCN indicators.

The team initiated capacity building for all the health facilities on PCN and national referral guidelines, ensured that the health facilities appointed referral coordinators, developed and distributed a referral directory to all the facilities to establish clear communication and linkage between facilities and created a WhatsApp group to coordinate referrals and facilitate prompt feedback and fast-tracking.

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation system tracks the progress of the primary health care network indicators, the referral system and referral data. Monthly monitoring and data review meetings for all the health facilities in the sub county (public, private, and faith-based) occur, and a report on the progress of

the Primary health care network sent to the MoH Department of Primary Health Services through the County Department of Health.

The indicators monitored are the number of active community units linked, number of women accessing family planning services, monthly cervical cancer screening data, number of skilled births, and maternal and neonatal deaths. Whereas for the referral system, the indicators monitored are the number of referrals, complete documentation of referrals in the referral forms, and feedback from receiving facilities, among others.

#### Impact

More than 6,000 vulnerable-households have been reached and registered under the NHIF health insurance cover and thus have access to free primary health services at health facilities within the sub county, where a functional primary healthcare network system exists, improving access. The number of Community Units covering 5,000 people each increased from 34 to 57 after community health services mapping, and all villages in Likoni linked with a community unit served by ten community health volunteers.

The referral system is faster and more responsive with sustainable mechanisms in place per the National Referral Guidelines 2014. The sub county has also seen a reduction in maternal and neonatal deaths.





## ADVANCING MATERNAL, NEWBORN AND CHILD HEALTH

### Likoni Sub County

Maternal and perinatal deaths and complications are a major challenge for reproductive health in Likoni Sub County. According to a routine performance data review conducted by the Sub County health management team, between April 2021 and March 2022, there were 11 maternal deaths; 7 at the facility level and 4 at the community level. 5 out of the 11 maternal deaths were because of non-adherence to maternal referral guidelines by the referring health facility and the receiving health facility. Perinatal deaths reported were 21.

### Strategy

To achieve a systemic effect, the Sub County Quality Improvement Committee embarked on enhancing adherence to referral guidelines for all public and private facilities with a goal of complete adherence to referral guidelines in all facilities offering maternity health care services.

The team set out to increase the number of health facilities adhering to referral guidelines in maternal services to reduce maternal and perinatal deaths and complications by focusing on health workforce capacity building on referral guidelines. The approach was to address the Knowledge gap on referral guidelines; a lack of standard operating procedures and standardized referral guidelines on maternal and neonatal health services; poor linkage between referring and receiving health facilities and poor response from both the referring and receiving health facilities.

The Sub County Quality Improvement Committee customized the National Referral Guidelines as per their need, developed referral Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), customized a referral checklist, created a referral directory, and sensitized all health facilities offering maternal care.

A referral consortium comprising a multidisciplinary team was established, and a monitoring and evaluation system was set up to track the progress. Continuous Medical Education on maternal and perinatal complications and management were conducted during the consortium meetings which were integrated with the Maternal, Perinatal, Death, Surveillance and Response (MPDSR) review meetings that were done quarterly.

### People Engagement and Empowerment

This was achieved by **improving women's health-seeking behaviour** through **community dialogue** to empower them with knowledge on how to identify danger signs during pregnancy; advocating for **referral by Traditional Birth Attendant** by conducting sensitization meetings on birth companionship and how to assist in referral of pregnant women for skilled deliveries in health facilities; **conducting maternity community verbal autopsies** whenever a maternal death occurs in the community; sharing **SMS reminders** to prompt pregnant women on antenatal clinic visits through coordinators in health facilities, **sensitization on Linda Mama benefits** to empower women which are done through community dialogues and chief barazas on the importance of NHIF registration and utilization of Linda-mama in addition to **raising awareness on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Mental health through trained Community Health Volunteers (CHVs).**

### Impact

There was a reduction in maternal deaths from 11 (7 in facilities and 4 at the community level) between April 2021 to March 2022 before the project, to 1 facility death and 2 community deaths; that is an 86% reduction in deaths in facilities and 50% at the community level. The data also indicated a reduction of perinatal deaths from 21 to 19 deaths after initiating the project, a 10% reduction.

# HEALTH FACILITY INNOVATION



## **Ruaraka Uhai Neema Hospital: The Sonomobile Project**

The SonoMobile project was established in 2018 to train qualified nurses and midwives on point-of-care obstetric ultrasound and work closely with primary healthcare facilities in the provision of obstetric ultrasound thus increasing access to ultrasound services. The project also empowered mothers through health education and ensured there was an effective referral system for high-risk mothers.

### **Improved access to point-of-care obstetric ultrasound**

A total of 4,761 scans were conducted from project inception to August 2021 in collaboration with nine health facilities in Ruaraka. The health facilities are

distributed within the informal settlements, which increased access to point-of-care obstetric ultrasound services for marginalized women.

Through the initiative, expectant mothers received affordable ultrasound services and free health education at the nearest healthcare facility. Topics covered during health education included birth preparedness, hygiene, nutrition, and management of minor complications in pregnancy.

The training of nurses and midwives was offered in collaboration with Kenya Medical Training College (KMTC) and the training curriculum was developed by the KMTC in collaboration with Campus Bio-Medico University of Rome and University of Turin.





## ADVANCING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

### Chiromo Hospital Group

Chiromo Hospital Group (CHG) spearheads various mental health advocacy initiatives on social media and through community engagements. These initiatives are geared towards sensitising and eliminating the stigma through normalising the conversation around mental health.

### Community engagement and empowerment initiatives

The community engagement and empowerment initiatives include Wellness Self-Assessment tools on depression, anxiety, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), burnout and alcohol dependence. The platform which is accessible on their website creates a safe space for patients living with different disorders to run self-assessments and receive real-time feedback, with the option of booking an appointment with a psychologist.

To increase the accessibility of mental health services, e-consultation was established to provide virtual consultations, where bookings, biodata collection and payment are done virtually. This system can work independently or complement some of their other functions, i.e., self-assessment tools.

The group also has an advocacy initiative called 'Tufunguke'. Tufunguke is a Swahili word that translates to 'Let us Open Up'. The initiative seeks to create a safe space for conversations around matters of mental health; to destigmatize and contextualize mental health experiences through shared lived experiences; and to increase access to dignified quality evidence-based mental health services to patients as well as lobby for allocation of needed resources to the mental health sector. The initiative promotes mental health awareness and wellness with activities centred around the public, various government stakeholders and Private stakeholders. The initiatives have included Tufunguke MyStoryCounts for individuals with mental health lived experience encouraging

people to open up about their mental health, Wellness Tournaments, WanaNPS (targeting police officers), WanaSpoti (targeting sportsmen and women), Wanaprison (targeting correctional facility officers) and finally Campus and High School Tours targeting students across the country

The different initiatives have increased awareness of mental health, improved help-seeking behaviour and enhanced partnerships in healthcare, embracing a multisectoral approach to stand against stigma and discrimination and bring dignity to all human beings. Some of the collaborations include a partnership with the National Olympic Committee of Kenya to address the mental health of sportspersons.

The initiatives continue to create safe spaces for the public to seek mental wellness with the support of well-trained professionals.

*The initiative seeks to create a safe space for conversations around matters of mental health; to destigmatize and contextualize mental health experiences through shared lived experiences; and to increase access to dignified quality evidence-based mental health services to patients...*

# STUDENT INNOVATION



## Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Ambassadors Programme

Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Ambassadors Programme is a project for Young People that seeks to improve interdisciplinary engagement and trigger grassroots student-led interventions targeting tertiary students in Kenya and Africa.

The intervention has three phases, and phase one training ran from July 2022. Phase 2 of the program started in January 2023 to reinforce the knowledge, skills, and insights garnered in the first phase.

Students will receive seed funding to develop and implement catalytic AMR projects to serve as a foundation for sustainable engagement in the third phase.

The project promotes student-led interventions at the community level, improves support and engagement of tertiary-level students in AMR within their universities, improves collaborative and interdisciplinary engagement in AMR interventions among tertiary-level students and subsequently nurtures highly skilled and well-informed leaders who can pursue careers in AMR or spearhead AMR mitigation efforts. The project has a ripple effect on AMR awareness in Kenya and other African countries.

“The project promotes student-led interventions at the community level, improves support and engagement of tertiary-level students in AMR within their universities,





# HEALTH PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

## Susan Onyango: The Healthy Woman Project

The Healthy Woman project tackles Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) among People Living with HIV (PLHIV) in Homa Bay County at Marindi Sub County Hospital.

The hospital serves a population of 13,000, where an estimated 2,500 people are living with HIV/AIDS, and most of them are on Antiretroviral treatment.

While HIV is still a global health concern, NCDs are a growing source of morbidity and mortality in low-income countries (LMICs), with an estimated 41 million global deaths annually, 80% of which occur in LMICs.

A baseline survey was conducted with 1,595 people living with HIV in Marindi Sub County Hospital, using the WHO Stepwise approach to surveillance. The prevalence of diabetes mellitus (DM), hypertension, and obesity were 10.3%, 9.8%, and 32.7%, with a low level of knowledge of risk factors for hypertension and Diabetes Mellitus at an average of 0.9 and 0.3 out of 8 risk factors. The survey also indicated that 90.8%, 78%, and 66% of the patients had never screened for Diabetes Mellitus, hypertension, and women for cervical cancer. The results also depicted lack of a healthy and diverse diet, limited land access and use by women, and high prevalence of other risk factors.

### Innovation

The initiative addressed the complex issues encountered in an economically deprived environment among people living with HIV, like unequal gender roles in agricultural land use, unhealthy diet, poor knowledge of NCDs, and a high prevalence of obesity, hypertension and diabetes.

Through health education and hands-on training in agri-nutrition, there was empowerment to regain control of the land, grow various crops and make healthy food and nutrition-related decisions for themselves and their families.



Farming meetings held every two weeks encompassed health education. Other activities included dispensing ARVs, quarterly food demonstration days where they showcased their farm produce, cooked healthy meals from their produce, and dissemination of information to the public on NCD risk factors through songs, skits, and folklores.

The initiative also worked with male champions who supported the campaign by allowing women to access and use agricultural land to produce various short-maturity climate-resilient food crops.

### Results achieved

Results indicate improved knowledge of risk factors from 2.1% to 57.1% after eight weeks of conducting health education. There was also an increased nutrition and food security in several participating households, allowing for the sale of surplus produce.

The project saw 522 individuals with obesity referred to the nutrition clinic and 353 new cases referred to the NCD clinic for further assessment and monitoring.

# LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

## Dr. Betty Gikonyo

Dr. Betty Gikonyo is a renowned paediatric cardiologist with over 45 years of experience. Dr. Betty was the first Kenyan Paediatric Cardiologist, and she has been instrumental in training and mentoring most of the Paediatric Cardiologists in Kenya.

She is a Post-Doctoral Fellow in Paediatric Cardiology from the University of Minnesota, USA. She also holds a Master's of Medicine in Paediatrics from the University of Nairobi, Kenya; a Master's in Business Administration from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology; a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery from the University of Nairobi and a Diploma in Tropical Medicine from the same university.

Dr. Betty Gikonyo is the Founder, chairman and immediate former CEO of The Karen Hospital in Nairobi. It is a multi-specialty tertiary care private hospital with eight branches, employing over 500 staff. As the CEO, she led the institution to grow steadily over the years into one of the largest private hospitals in Kenya.



She is also the co-founder of Heart-to-Heart Foundation, a charity organization that assists children from needy backgrounds to get open heart surgery.

Dr. Betty Gikonyo is a recipient of the Silver Star Award (SS) 1998 and the Moran of Burning Spear Award (MBS) 2008 presidential awards. She also won the CEO Global Limited East Africa Regional Awards- Most Influential Woman (Medical category) 2016. She has written an autobiography, *The Girl Who Dared to Dream*.

Dr. Betty mentors and inspires young people, particularly women in medicine. She is involved in efforts to encourage young people pursue careers in healthcare and to support the professional development of healthcare providers in Kenya.

She is a professional member of the Kenya Medical Association, Kenya Cardiac Society, Kenya Paediatric Association, Kenya Medical Women Association, and Founding chair and member of the University of Nairobi Alumni Association. She was also the Chairperson of the Nairobi Health Management Board for seven years and a member of the University Council for 14 years before rising to the role of Deputy Chair of the University of Nairobi Council.



## USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE PATIENT CARE IN BOKOLE, MOMBASA COUNTY



### Non-Communicable Diseases Clinic Project

Bokole CDF Health Centre is a level 3 health facility with a catchment population of 30,000 people situated in Mombasa County, Changamwe Sub County. The health facility has a total of 32 health professionals in addition to 62 Community Health Volunteers, who serve 6 Community Health Units.

### The Non-Communicable Diseases Clinic Project

The Non-Communicable Diseases Clinic Project set out to serve people with diabetes mellitus and hypertension effectively and to ensure timely care for better health outcomes. By embracing technology to improve the quality of care, the project increased the number of individuals served during clinics from 70 to 400 and enhanced efficient follow-up on patients by community health volunteers at the community level through the innovative system.

The facility also has two active support groups that hold monthly meetings.

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN HEALTHCARE

### NCDs 365 PROJECT

NCDs 365 project focuses on improving health awareness and literacy for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). Implemented by Stowelink Inc., the project recognises the need to improve literacy and access to relevant services for NCDs by sharing messages and developing toolkits to create awareness while dispelling myths and misconceptions about NCDs.

The project leverages social media and mobile penetration to share simplified educational materials and collates monthly analytics to monitor impact.

The NCDs 365 phase 1 involved developing and sharing daily messages on NCDs. Phase 2 saw the development and sharing of weekly animated videos on NCDs, while phase 3 involved the development and launch of the NCD 365 mobile app. In the fourth phase, the team curated and shared bi-weekly audio and video podcasts on people with lived experiences of NCDs.



## MEDIA EXCELLENCE IN PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELL BEING



### Leon Lidigu

Leon Lidigu is a Journalist working with the Nation Media Group. He strives to present truthful, fact-oriented and well-researched solution-oriented information for public consumption and be the link that breaks complex and scientific topics into palatable bits for the public's ease of understanding, thus promoting health and well-being while also capturing remarkable contributions by health workers as well as the challenges they encounter.

Leon has won several accolades for his impeccable and impactful work.

## EXCELLENCE IN CLINICAL LEADERSHIP



### **Dr. Washington Njogu**

Dr. Washington Njogu holds a Master's in Public Health from the University of Nairobi and a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery from the University of Perugia, Italy.

Dr Njogu has worked in various health facilities, including Kenyatta National Hospital, Nazareth Mission Hospital, Comitato Collaborazione Medica (CCM) where he worked with marginalized communities in slums within several health facilities, and Ruaraka Uhai Neema Hospital.

Over the years, Dr. Washington Njogu has been instrumental in steering the Neema Ruaraka Uhai Hospital through his leadership. The facility has received several accolades, including retaining Safecare Level 5 status three times and recognition during the Nairobi Metropolitan Services Awards in quality health services as the best performing hospital in supplies management, Infection Prevention Control (IPC) protocol, transport and fleet management, neonatal care and mortuary services.

## HEALTHCARE IN MOMBASA COUNTY

The Department of Health in Mombasa County has developed several policy documents, including the Mombasa County Quality Management Health Policy 2022-2027 (the first Policy on Quality Management in the Country); Mombasa County Costed Gender Based Violence (GBV) strategic plan 2022-2027 and Methadone Assisted Therapy Business Plan.

### **Quality and Health Standards Unit**

Quality is a key focus area for the county. There is a functional Quality and Health Standards Unit with dedicated personnel at the County, Sub-County, Facility and community levels. The team has over 110 active quality improvement personnel with 109 projects ongoing. The unit holds county quarterly quality improvement review meetings, while the quality coordinators at the sub-county have monthly review meetings.

To continuously build capacity in quality improvement, there is a pool of coaches trained to offer 20 coaching sessions per month to the various quality improvement teams. The unit also conducts regular reward and recognition ceremonies.

### **Research unit**

To increase the scope of services and improve effectiveness, the department established a Research Unit. The unit hosts the Mombasa Ethics Review Committee (MERC), chaired by the Minister of Health. The committee has developed Standard Operating Procedures, undergone training in research methodologies and is seeking accreditation to be an independent Ethics and Review Committee.

### **Patient-Centred Health Service Delivery**

One of the strategic priorities included in the Mombasa County Quality Management Health Policy is the provision of patient-centred care. There is client-employee feedback with Grievance Redress Mechanism coordinators at the county, sub-county and health facility who ensure active engagement and feedback mechanisms with both patients and health providers.

### **Public Health Arm**

The Department of Health in Mombasa has a robust public health arm that accounts for the prevention of diseases and health promotion. The Emergency Operating Center (EOC) offers central command, control and response of all emergencies within Mombasa County. The centre hosts a commander responsible for coordinating distress calls received through a toll-free call line, and it's linked with the community surveillance units trained to send signals on notifiable health risks or emergencies. Due to this linkage, the surveillance system at the community level has been effective in mitigating risks (including infectious diseases) right at the source, preventing further community transmission.







Public health surveillance activities in Mombasa have been instrumental in finding active poliovirus in water bodies, which prompted the activation of Polio vaccination rapid response initiative for Mombasa and neighboring counties.

The vector control team sets up mosquito traps at various locations within the island and studies them to inform on breeds of mosquitoes and form correlations with the prevalence of mosquito-borne illnesses like Chikungunya and Dengue fever.

In the quest to eliminate malaria in the county, the vector control team does regular fogging of mosquito breeding sites. The vector control team uses ZAP Application to map all mosquito breeding sites in Mombasa County. The app colour codes the mapped bodies based on whether they are safe(green), due for treatment(yellow) or overdue for treatment(red). There has been a marked reduction in malaria positivity as a result.

#### Innovations in Healthcare Financing

Mombasa has been strategic in health financing and creating resilient and sustainable health systems that it has hosted other county health management teams for benchmarking. The Department of Health Services established a ring-fencing policy for Facility Improvement Funds (FIF), meaning that the money a facility makes for providing services goes directly to the individual facility account rather than the county revenue account, ensuring timely disbursement of funds.

#### Health Products and Technology

Mombasa County has taken various measures to ensure the availability of quality health products, and it is the first county to develop its own Health Products and Technologies formulary list. The department has also established a Health Products and Technology unit.





# HEALTHCARE FINANCING INNOVATION



## Makueni County Government

Makueni County Government set out to improve the participation of public facilities in the NHIF Linda Mama scheme in addition to increasing revenue available to facilities for improved service delivery.

### Strategy

The strategy entailed health financing landscape assessment; Setting revenue targets; Development of targeted revenue optimization plans with a focus on Linda Mama scheme (Including facility empanelment status, infrastructure, staff capacity); Sensitizing Sub-County and facility managers on Revenue Optimization plan as well as Supporting NHIF local branch to train facility revenue clerks on the claims system (to understand their roles and responsibilities); Monthly Health tripartite meetings between the department of health, NHIF and partners to address emerging challenges; Tracking revenue performance and holding quarterly performance review meetings.

## Accountability and Transparency

To ensure accountability and transparency, the following measures were taken: Data used for performance measuring was generated by NHIF, and Service delivery data for revenue estimates was derived from the DHIS and corroborated with facility MoH 711 summary books, while the department's leadership drove the strategy.

## People and Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement of providers was carried out across all levels, that is; Sub-County Health Management Teams, County Management Teams and NHIF local branch officers. The community members were also engaged and sensitized during facility outreach meetings and ANC clinics.

## Outcome and impact

- Revenue generated by level 2 and 3 facilities from the Linda Mama scheme increased from only KSHs 4,093,944 in the FY 2018/19 to KSHs 14,485,240 in the FY 2020/21.
- Revenue generated by hospitals from the Linda Mama scheme increased from only KSHs 35,905,370 in the FY 2018/19 to KSHs 77,025,000 in the FY 2020/21.
- Facilities increased their fiscal space to finance local operations, improved commodity availability and staff reported to be motivated to offer services.



## COVID-19 VACCINATION

### Moonlight Project

The Moonlight intervention increased access to COVID-19 Vaccination in Nyali Sub County and Kisauni Sub County by carrying out vaccination of residents at night in their homes, at work, at shopping outlets or at entertainment premises.

The initiative began in February 2022 in Nyali Sub County through the support of the County Department of health before expanding to Kisauni Sub County. This innovative approach created an opportunity to reach more people in the community.

Advocacy and mobilization of the people was carried out through various strategies including mainstream media, Community Health Volunteers, youth champions, village elders, and peer-to-peer mobilization especially for key populations.

The health professionals carrying out vaccination received protection from police officers who accompanied them during the night campaigns. The project team also did sensitization in order to pave the way for the health professionals to carry out vaccination at business premises like nightclubs and supermarkets without challenges.

### Impact

Within twelve months, 51,023 people got vaccinated through the Moonlight Project implemented during weekends between 6 PM and 12 AM, from Friday evening to Sunday. 23.7% of all vaccinated individuals in Mombasa County by 8th February 2023 were through the initiative.



## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTHCARE



### AAR Healthcare (K) Limited: Tree for Health Program

Tree for Health Program (T4H) is the Corporate Social Investment flagship program of AAR Healthcare (K) Limited. Through this initiative, the company aims to provide sustainable healthcare solutions that make a difference in the community. They started the program in 1996 to combat environmental degradation and facilitate improved health status among school children and the community.

The project has a long-term strategy aimed at sustainability in schools and communities. This is achieved through three thematic areas which are environmental, clinical and outreach pillars.



### Environmental Pillar

The environmental pillar aims to ensure the successful restoration of deforested areas, thus creating an ecologically sustainable resource, while mitigating the effects of climate change. Through this pillar, the program seeks to plant one tree for every 10 patients treated in their outpatient centres. The impact of environmental issues such as deforestation, global warming, droughts, and famine as a result of climate change has directly affected the health of every living being. Through the one tree per 10 patients' tree planting campaign, they strive to make a difference in the community through tree planting and creating awareness.

The tree planting is done on school ground, and is accompanied by environmental conservation talks, where students are educated on the importance of tree planting and conservation. This entails encouraging primary school children to plant trees in the school compound and to take care of the trees until they leave to join secondary school.

### Clinical Pillar

The clinical pillar seeks to improve health through basic health education, improving sanitary conditions, and advocating for the provision of water for hand-washing in schools and deworming to reduce worm infestation and re-infection rate in children 2 years and above with the aim of serving 100,000 children each year in both public and private schools.

### Outreach Pillar

The outreach pillar entails reaching students through career talks, mentorship programs, and internships to bridge the gap between school and the workplace to help students make informed choices about their future careers.

The aim is to provide career guidance and mentorship to at least 2,000 students every year through the different mentorship platforms: career talks for primary school students whereby AAR Healthcare staff engage class seven and class eight students on careers in the health industry in a one-hour session; work experience where high school students get a one week monitored session at the outpatient centres to learn from different health professional and finally internship opportunities offered to college students.

### Impact

Over the last five years, the Tree for Health program has planted 124,480 trees, dewormed 323,168 children and mentored 9,300 students.

## PEOPLE'S CHOICE HOSPITAL OF THE YEAR (2023)



### RUAI FAMILY HOSPITAL (RFH)

Ruai Family Hospital emerged as the people's choice healthcare provider for the year 2023. The hospital was the private hospital of choice in 2022, winning two years in a row. The health facility is along Kangundo Road, Ruai, in Nairobi County.

The RFH was founded in 2011 by Dr. Maxwell Okoth, a year after completing his Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery from the University of Nairobi.

The hospital has a bed capacity of 50, while the RFH Specialist Hospital, which is a level 5 health facility, has a bed capacity of 100. The hospital offers a variety of health services ranging from Accident and Emergency, General Medicine, Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Maternity, ICU/HDU, Dialysis, Oncology, Ophthalmology, Dental and Pharmacy.

RFH additionally has a branch in Tala and satellite Medical Centers in Embakasi, Kahawa West, Ruiru, Komarock and Ruaka.

Ruai Family Hospital also offers health financing products to their clients, which includes the Baraka Prepaid Card, a saving plan for any medical services one may seek at RFH Healthcare.



# PATIENT VOICE



A digital health-focused platform that enlightens and empowers patients to drive quality of care and make informed decisions about their health status by sparking conversations on health standards and enhancing access to health information.

An initiative of Quality Healthcare Awards

Link us at: [qualityhealthcareawards.com/patient\\_voice/](https://qualityhealthcareawards.com/patient_voice/)

# Engaging Patients and Their Families for Improved Patient Experience and Safety



Like many LMICs, Kenya is working on solid patient participation during care. The recently launched National Policy and Patient and Health Worker Safety and Quality of Care 2022-2030 aligns with the efforts that ensure that quality of care and patient safety are institutionalised in the Kenyan health sector. Patient-centred care is a crucial action point in the Kenyan Policy while engaging the patient is a means that cannot be over-emphasized.

## Structured Approach to Optimizing Patient Experience

National leadership should make patient experience a strategic consideration. This guidance should be at a National level, influencing the health policy, adapting and implementing this at all levels of care. Hospital leadership should create an enabling environment for patient engagement for safe, right-based and people-centred healthcare.

Engaging Patients and Their Families for Improved Patient Experience and Safety Patient safety is a global public health issue pertinent to all health systems worldwide. Significant strides towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC) can only be made when quality and safety of care is addressed. Harm reduction in healthcare is a key aspect of quality of care that enables us to protect patients from avoidable harm. The World Patient Safety Day, marked on September 17, provides an opportunity to build partnerships and promote all aspects of patient safety by identifying priority areas to be addressed in the journey towards UHC, for which the provision of safe health services is pivotal.

"Engaging patients for patient safety" is the theme of World Patient Safety Day this year, recognizing the important role that patients and families play in advancing safe care. Through the slogan "Elevate the voice of patients!", WHO has called on the stakeholders to take necessary action to ensure that patients are involved in policy formulation, represented in governance structures, engaged in co-designing safety strategies, and are active partners in their care. There is overwhelming evidence that mandates us to take a shift to patient-centredness during care design and process improvement. The Global Patient Safety Action Plan 2021-2030 has included patient and family engagement as one of the seven strategic objectives. It is important to emphasize patient and family engagement while ensuring that the voice of the Patient is elevated.

## Engaging Patients and their Families

Patients, families and healthcare providers are truly at the centre of healthcare. Whereas we have focused on enabling the healthcare providers to be competent and have the right skills, tools, environment and attitude towards care, the patient has long been left to be a passive recipient of care. With increasing care system complexity, patients and their families lack effective involvement which makes them vulnerable. Healthcare is a human experience, and it is essential that we humanize it and put people at the centre of interactions improving outcomes while reducing risks. Engaging patients and their families is a powerful tool for patient safety. Clinicians, managers, and researchers cannot substitute the insights that the patients, families and informal caregivers bring. The Patients are experts in what they feel and they understand their environment and social support; it is only in collaborating with them that we attain the desired outcomes.

Healthcare providers should engage patients and families in designing and co-creating solutions for improving the quality of care. The doctors, nurses, and other healthcare workers should help transform the care systems where patients become collaborators, being engaged in healthcare. The voice of the patients should be considered by asking "what matters most to patients"; to enable adjustments to work with them to meet their expectations, needs and preferences.

**In it together**

**Patient Safety**

Patient advocacy groups should aid in elevating the patient voice at the level of individuals and organised patient support and advocacy groups, thus building their capacity to participate in co-designing health systems. These organised groups should facilitate information sharing and experiences between patients, families and the health system, promoting learning. Engaging patients should always be a strategic consideration, with leaders committed to creating an enabling environment for patient engagement while having structures within institutions to support buy-in for a better patient experience. The health workers and patient advocacy groups all play an essential role in elevating the Patient's voice.

*By Dr. Lydia Okutoyi, Director of Healthcare Quality at Kenyatta National Hospital, President of the Society for Quality Healthcare Kenya and QHKA 2023 Chief Judge.*

# Special Thanks



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Quality Healthcare Awards

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