

Govt reviews curriculum for health workers

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KAMPALA. Government has launched new curricula for nurses, pharmacists, anesthetic officers and theatre technicians to equip them with updated relevant skills in advancing health services.

According to Dr Vicent Oketcho, the chief of party of the Strengthening Human Resources for Health project (Intrahealth International), the review of the various curricula was informed by the changing health needs that include; new diseases and changes in treatment methods.

"Most of these curricula are more than 10 years old ever since they were last reviewed," Dr Oketcho said.

He also added that the old curricula were outdated and is no longer addressing the career growth needs of the health professionals.

"For example the Public health nurses got just a diploma after getting

two previous diplomas and needed to upgrade their academic qualification. At this time, we need an advanced diploma so that they can be paid appropriate salaries," Dr Oketcho added.

Over the past four years, Dr Oketcho said the USAID Strengthening Human Resources for Health Activity has supported the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health to improve quality of pre-service training in Uganda by reviewing and updating curricula of critical cadres of health workers and make them competence-based and relevant to meet the changing needs of the population and provide quality health care.

While officiating at an event to launch the new curricula held in Kampala yesterday, the State Minister for Sports, Mr Charles Bakkabulindi, said the curriculum review is meant to provide quality assurance in the delivery of health services by the various health workers.

"The new curricula is meant to

strengthen the skills for nurses and other allied health professionals," Mr Bakkabulindi observed as he appealed to nurses to stop wearing gloomy faces' while attending to patients."

The minister said the curricula will contribute to training of healthcare workers in both the Public and Private Health Training Institutions across the country.

REVIEWED COURSES

- Curriculum for Diploma in Pharmacy
- Curriculum for Higher Diploma in Anaesthesia
- Curriculum for Certificate in Nursing
- Curriculum for Advanced Diploma in Public Health Nursing
- Curriculum for Certificate in Medical Theatre Techniques

He said the absence of a doctor at a health facility should not stall delivery services as nursing should be empowered to offer nursing services to a patient as they wait for a medical doctor over consultation services.

The courses whose curricula have been reviewed include; diploma in pharmacy, advanced diploma in public health nursing, higher diploma in anesthesia, certificate in nursing and the curriculum for the certificate in medical theatre technicians.

Other curricula being reviewed are for Clinical Medicine and Community Health training programmes; Curriculum for Diploma Nursing (Direct), Curriculum for Diploma Nursing (Extension) along with their teachers' guides and student logbooks.

Mr Charles Isabirye, a senior advisor on pre-service training based at Intrahealth International, said there have been some gaps in terms of professional content, thus the review.