



HIFA SURVEY 2018

1. Aims of the survey

Since it was launched in 2006, HIFA has rapidly evolved to become what it is today: a dynamic global health network of 19,000 members across 180 countries. This survey helps us to improve HIFA so that it benefits you and your organization, and so that we accelerate progress towards our vision of Healthcare Information For All: A world where every person and every health worker has access to the healthcare information they need to protect their own health and the health of others. The survey was coordinated by HIFA Steering Group member Martin Carroll with support from the HIFA Steering Group.

2. Headline statistics

- 104 responses
- 100% of respondents say “The messages/discussions on the HIFA forum are always (23%), often (54%), sometimes (16%) or occasionally (7%) relevant to my professional activities/interests”
- 30% of respondents share messages from the forum with others.
- 93% of respondents encourage others to join HIFA

3. How has your membership of HIFA benefited your work?

- 81% say 'HIFA helps me to understand global health issues'
- 85% say 'HIFA helps me to learn about publications, services and organizations'
- 45% say 'HIFA has enabled me to make at least one new contact (with an individual and/or organisation)'

Really helps me to understand global health issues thereby appreciating the power that we have collectively to make the world a better place; especially the power in networking, collaborations, information dissemination. (Anon)

HIFA helps me to gain a broad update of global public health issues. (Khalilu Muhammad, Nigeria)

HIFA keeps me informed and in learning mode about health issues in other countries. (Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, Jordan)

HIFA is my number one source of health information and resource center for teaching my students. (Beyene Meressa Adhena, Ethiopia)

HIFA is an excellent forum for alerting me to current issues in global health. I review every update as it always has pertinent information about our projects. (Susan L Stasi, USA)

I have improved my knowledge on health issues since I joined HIFA. I have also met and networked with people through HIFA. These people have added value to my work through their collaboration, recommendations and support. (Ngozi Osuchukwu, Nigeria)

I connected with a compatriot who introduced me to AuthorAID. I've since completed courses with AuthorAID, been a volunteer facilitator for their MOOCs and presently running a local course at my institution with their course materials. (Zainab Yunusa-Kaltungo, Nigeria)

As a result of HIFA I have been able to contact people with similar interests. This has been a

tremendous help. (Michele Meltzer, USA)

The HIFA network has helped us identify people who can provide feedback on our health messages and our new materials (Clare Hanbury, UK)

I maintain an E-mail distribution list for doctors, nurses and allied health professionals in the Pacific Islands and often repost HIFA postings to my list. (Arlene G Cohen, USA)

4. Specific examples of how HIFA has benefited your work

I was able to contact people who have set up visiting professor programs in resource limited areas. I contacted them and they gave me excellent advice on how to do this for my own program. (Michele Meltzer, USA)

I think HIFA is a wonderful organisation. It has enabled me to make contact with organizations with which we would never normally had the opportunity to make connections. (Anon)

I joined the CHW working group, and was connected with people working on systematic reviews of CHWs. This greatly helped my own work within my organization, as we are considering what kinds of CHW work to fund. (Anon)

I became aware that some persons that work in the same place as I do are also members of HIFA and serious networking began. Exposure to the developed world has been the driving force I get from belonging to HIFA (Obiageli Emelumadu, Nigeria)

Sharing some of my ideas and concerns on global health; Learn what others have to say on many relevant issues; Access to news, views, publications and citations that would have been impossible to see without HIFA. (Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, Jordan)

I recently concluded a postgraduate study in Public Health and HIFA email summaries were the greatest source of up-to-date materials for my thesis. (Khalilu Muhammad, Nigeria)

I share recent and important research articles to academic staff and other healthcare providers in our hospital. For example we initiated the process of adding Carbetocin to our hospitals' drug list based on the evidence I got from the HIFA. (Beyene Meressa Adhena, Ethiopia)

I've used discussions in HIFA to teach students and residents and in community discussions. (Dan Mayer, USA)

It is a constant valuable stream of information - real time, relevant and topical. Hugely useful for supporting country health systems and understanding the global health system (Anon)

I believe in many ways it has expanded my horizons and introduced me to many topics I knew little about. I think joining HIFA was and still is an exciting journey of learning and understanding in a respectful and enthusiastic environment, connecting with colleagues and getting updated on issues of global concern and promoted to contribute and participate in important discussions as well as learn about different events and courses. (Amal Abbas, Sudan)

Being able to send messages to HIFA and getting feedback makes me feel more confident about the work we are doing (Clare Hanbury, UK)

HIFA helps me keep updated and open-minded. The arguments and free communication of info and opinions provide an excellent chance that I am keen to know and share with colleagues and students. (Ghaiath MA Hussein, Sudan)

5. How could HIFA be improved to be more relevant and more useful to you?

It would be helpful if the discussions were grouped, i.e. chronic disease, maternal health, infectious disease, etc. (Michelle Meltzer, USA)

Themes within HIFA could be helpful. That would allow individuals to subscribe to their areas of interest. (Joel Francis, USA)

HIFA should pay more attention to Equity on health, U.H.C., SDOH, and Sustainable Development 2030. (Anon)

More lessons learned. More language versions. More involvement by colleagues from LMICs. More engagement of librarians and other information intermediaries. More success stories on knowledge translation (Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, Jordan)

If we could opt-in for messages with certain tags, it would be more useful to our own professional interests, rather than receiving a plethora of messages for health issues we do not necessarily work on. (Anon)

I don't usually know how to participate in discussions... Maybe there is a guide to how to use the discussion forums that I haven't found?! (Amal Abbas, Sudan)

I cannot search the threads so I cannot find useful information at a later date. This can be frustrating. (Alison Nicholls, UK)

I like the fact that it is very participatory and where ideas and discussions are well respected and are always enriching and enjoyable to follow. (Amal Abbas, Sudan)

I think that HIFA could take advantage of the current push for UHC and move upstream to ask governments whether they have a National Information Strategy. (Anon)

Maybe a global conference, or a meeting for HIFA at the World Health Assembly and WHO regional meetings (Noha Salah, Egypt)

6. What organisations in your country do you think HIFA should work with to help improve access to healthcare information?

Numerous specific examples were given and these will be followed up with the individuals concerned.

7. Possible next steps (for discussion)

- Create guide on how to engage more effectively with HIFA
- Explore potential for tagging messages
- Reach out to new organisations...