



# HIFA Working Group: Evaluating the Impact of Healthcare Information

## Terms of Reference

(Revised March 2016)

### 1. Purpose

This document describes the terms of reference, membership and methods of communication for the HIFA Working Group on Evaluating the Impact of Healthcare Information.

### 2. Background

**HIFA.** HIFA is a global campaign to reduce avoidable death and suffering due to lack of availability and use of relevant, reliable healthcare information in low- and middle-income settings. Our vision is: "Every person and every health worker will have access to the healthcare information they need to protect their own health and the health of others". HIFA has more than 15,000 professional members from 2500 organisations in 175 countries worldwide. Members interact via five global email forums in three languages - HIFA, CHIFA, HIFA-Portuguese, HIFA-French, HIFA-Zambia.

#### **Evaluating the impact of healthcare information**

Evaluating the impact of healthcare information activities (organisations, services, products, publications) is challenging but necessary to:

- identify what works and what doesn't in different contexts
- enable providers and users of healthcare information to continually improve their effectiveness
- persuade funders, governments and others to invest in future healthcare information activities.

HIFA has previously been involved in related work, including:

- Major external evaluation of HIFA (2011) (Paul Duignan - evaluation planner: visual outcomes mapping)
- Informal discussions on the HIFA forums
- mHIFA Working Group (2015-6) (Geoff Royston - traffic light evaluation of mHealth products)

More recently, the activities of the mHIFA Working Group (and especially an ongoing survey of mHealth audio-visual projects for citizens in LMICs) have highlighted the importance of (and yet lack of funding for) impact evaluation.

**Evaluation of WHO Publications:** An external evaluation of WHO publications is under way in 2016, led by the consulting firm TDV Global. Paul, Ian and Neil had previously had discussions in

2014 and 2015 leading to a preliminary DoView visual outcomes plan. Ian has introduced Neil to the contact at TDV Global, Michael Ellis, who has joined HIFA with a view to see how HIFA might contribute to the evaluation.

**Scope of activities** (for discussion):

*Primary topic:*

Evaluating the impact of healthcare information on measurable outcomes (knowledge, practice, morbidity, mortality)

Evaluating the impact of lack of healthcare information

*Secondary topics:*

Evaluating processes, barriers and drivers in the production, exchange and use of healthcare information

Evaluating appropriateness and reliability of individual healthcare information products and services.

### **3. Terms of Reference**

The HIFA Working Group on Evaluating the Impact of Healthcare Information is an informal voluntary group:

- To raise global awareness on HIFA and beyond of issues relating to the evaluation and impact of healthcare information
- To promote discussion on the HIFA forums with a view to shared learning, exchange of experience, and collective understanding
- To identify and integrate relevant HIFA Quotations and HIFA Citations into the HIFA Voices database
- To identify key publications to describe the current state of knowledge about evaluation of impact of healthcare information.
- To explore/review candidate indicators of impact of HI (in liaison with Chris Zielinski's academic work in this area)
- To attract more people with an interest in evaluation of impact to join and participate in the HIFA forums
- To undertake any other related activities' that the group may choose to engage with (for example, outputs of practical value (below), literature review, survey)
- To include commitment to outputs of practical value (outputs that will empower HIFA members, communication tools to help others measure impact, tools to help organisations with their advocacy, tools to help organisations identify funding for evaluation, best practice guidelines for funders)
- To include exploration of different approaches to evaluation of impact (visual outcomes mapping; indicator-based models)
- To monitor progress on the above.

The group would meet approximately once every 2 months, by skype, for 1 hour maximum, and will communicate by email in-between. The group provides quarterly updates to the HIFA Steering Group, which meets every 3 months, usually in London, with teleconferencing for members outside the UK.

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