



HIFA-EHS: Leveraging the HIFA community of practice to help maintain essential health services during the pandemic and beyond

1. COVID-19 Health Services Learning Hub

'WHO is developing the COVID19: Health Services Learning Hub (HLH), a dynamic and responsive, state-of-the-art learning architecture that will support Member States in maintaining essential health services during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, including the recovery and postpandemic phase.'

'At its core, the HLH will comprise of dynamic communities of practice that will focus on sharing approaches and common strategies to health service challenges in the context of COVID-19.'

2. HIFA

HIFA is the leading community of practice for dynamic discussion of global health issues, with more than 20,000 members from 180 countries, including frontline health workers, public health professionals, librarians, publishers, researchers, policymakers, human rights activists, and others. Members interact in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish on six global forums, in collaboration with the World Health Organization which has three WHO staff members on the HIFA steering group. The primary focus of HIFA is to improve the availability and use of reliable healthcare information among all users (general public, health workers, policymakers...). www.hifa.org

It is proposed that the new project will complement and liaise with other current HIFA projects, especially an ongoing COVID-related project that is looking at COVID-19 in general and information-related issues in particular (www.hifa.org/projects/covid-19). This project is currently analyzing the longest thread in the history of HIFA (nearly 1000 substantive messages to date, from more than 200 contributors worldwide). The analysis is being undertaken by medical students and faculty at the Universities of Toronto and Edinburgh, and the Christian Medical College, Vellore, India. Further activities are planned. The University of Edinburgh has awarded HIFA £10k to support the group for 1 year (July 2020-June 2021).

3. Purpose

Sharing and learning of experience and expertise around the maintenance of essential health services during and after the pandemic in a spirit of solidarity and codevelopment. In particular, to include country level experience, responses, and solutions and thereby develop a shared understanding from a range of countries worldwide.

4. Outcomes

1. Strengthen development, dissemination, awareness, engagement and understanding of:
 - a. WHO guidance: Maintaining essential health services: operational guidance for the COVID-19 context interim guidance. June 2020 <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/covid-19-operational-guidance-for-maintaining-essential-health-services-during-an-outbreak>
 - b. HLH Country Action Briefs (CABs) and Learning Briefs (LBs)
2. Strengthen uptake of WHO Guidance and briefs, including contextualization, implementation and problem-solving of challenges.
3. Identify and harness country practices and solutions to help inform the collective global response to COVID-19.
4. Disseminate emerging COVID-related research (in liaison with the WHO Science Division, IMST and HIFA)

partners), particularly that which is relevant to the current project

5. Outputs

1. Three collections of discussion output from HIFA Thematic Discussions, each including compilation, long edit, short edit, and blog highlights.
2. Three Learning Briefs (lessons learned from thematic discussions, highlights, Lessons learned, interpretation, illustrative quotes from HIFA messages) plus contributions to other Learning Briefs as required
3. >10 CABS catalysed by HIFA and/or explored on HIFA
3. Archive of all messages on HIFA Voices 2.0 database (in development)
4. Multilingual outputs: HIFA has six forums (HIFA-English, CHIFA-English [child health and rights]; HIFA-Portuguese; HIFA- French; HIFA-Spanish, and HIFA-Zambia). We would promote discussion around essential health services on all forums in the above languages.

6. Activities

	Phase 1						Phase 2					
	2020			2021								
	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S
Convene working group												
Planning												
Engagement of key stakeholders												
Publicity												
Thematic discussions												
Discussion seeding												
HIFA Voices 2.0												
Working Group meetings	X	X	X			X			X			X

Convene working group: The working group will include current COVID-19 working group members plus HLH representatives + regional/country learning points

Planning: The current proposal provides a starting outline for the project, but this will need to be developed further, in particular to ensure synergy with the evolving strategy of the wider HLH project/architecture.

Engagement of key stakeholders: We shall proactively engage the primary target audiences ('national COVID-19 incident management teams, service planners at national, subnational and facility levels, and service providers, as well as WHO and technical partners supporting delivery of national health services'). Stakeholders will be invited to join the forums and working group.

Publicity: We shall publicise the initiative widely on the HIFA forums; other global health communities of practice (see: <https://leadernet.org/resource/communities-of-practice-for-global-health/>); social media (HIFA Twitter/Facebook) and partner publications/websites.

Thematic discussions: The working group will plan and hold three thematic discussions (each up to 6 weeks). The theme for the first discussion will likely be closely related to the WHO Guidance, and the second and third to follow as needed (D2 might focus on Country Action Briefs and Learning Briefs; D3 might look at challenges and next steps - the themes for D2/3 will be decided 1-2 months before each discussion, depending on progress and working group priorities). Each discussion will include 5-6 discussion questions. The discussion will begin with a discussion starter (up to 300 words with links to further information) introducing the questions for discussion. On each successive week there will be a focus on one or two specific questions, introduced by a short background description of the issue(s). For each thematic

discussion, outputs will be produced as described above.

Discussion seeding: The group will be active continuously during the project, promoting and facilitating discussion, and engaging new voices, particularly from groups that are typically underrepresented.

HIFA Voices 2.0: A version of the HIFA archive is currently in prototype stage and will be ready to include all HIFA messages exchanged during this project, thereby providing a searchable and tagworded archive.

Working group meetings: The working group will meet frequently at the beginning of the project to develop consensus and understanding on the project objectives, scope and process. Subsequent meetings will be at approximately 2-3-month intervals as needed.

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