Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage

Virtual Learning Exchange: COVID-19 Human Resources for Health

Call for Expressions of Interest

August 2020

Participation for this learning exchange is limited. Please respond by September 3

Background

The Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage (JLN) brings network members together for productive and high-impact practitioner-to-practitioner exchanges on a variety of health systems topics, often related to health finance or primary health care service delivery. Recent challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the rapid mobilization of resources across countries to counter the pandemic, have heightened interest from countries in cross-border exchanges on immediate responses to the pandemic. With facilitation by Ariadne Labs, a joint center for health systems innovation at Brigham and Women’s Hospital and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, the Human Resources for Health (HRH) Working Group will bring together a group of leaders of health institutions and country representatives through cross-country virtual engagements. Together, they will exchange and advance their strategies and capacity to effectively manage the complex human resources needs during the pandemic.

Human Resources for Health (HRH) and COVID-19

Health care systems have had to urgently develop contingency plans to address a surge in critically ill patients and health care workers becoming infected with SARS-CoV-2. On the front end, this has resulted in shifts like redeploying providers to support the COVID-19 response and reductions in staffing of other essential services. In this working group, we will employ resources developed by Ariadne Labs from a series of interviews with health system leaders from multiple countries to start the initial discussion and prioritization of specific topics related to the effective management of human resources during the many phases of the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, potential topics could include: recruitment, licensing, and onboarding of health care workers to areas of limited health system capacity during surges of infection; redeployment strategies and protocols for COVID-19 frontline needs; and mental health and psychosocial support for health care workers during the pandemic. We will then facilitate virtual engagements around the chosen topics bringing in emerging lessons and expertise from the network of experts through Ariadne Labs and the participants.
**How will the HRH Working Group reach its goals?**

The Working Group will utilize a range of virtual engagements to identify priority topics and stimulate rich discussions and exchange of transferable knowledge and existing resources that countries can adapt and adopt as they respond to various stages of the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. Identifying the priorities: Through an eDelphi survey, the group will identify prioritized topics within HRH.
2. Introductory session (currently planned for the week of September 28): At the introductory session, country participants will discuss and select the top two HRH topics. Following this introductory engagement, the facilitation team will create two sub-working groups focused on each of the two chosen topics (depending on the number of country participants).
3. Knowledge exchange and creation: Subgroups will meet in virtual whiteboarding sessions to identify best practices and key contextual factors for success and failure for their respective topics. Additionally, countries will discuss country-level issues of adaptation and implementation of HRH best practices.
4. Sharing: These sessions will be followed by a virtual “report-out” to the larger working group along with a summary report created by the subgroups and list of key existing resources as well as experts willing to continue the discussions after the close of the working group.
5. Lastly, the working group will close with a final virtual session along with a comprehensive working group report that brings together the subgroup summaries along with exploration of opportunities for future collaboration emerging from the working groups.

**Objectives of the working group**

The objective of the working groups will be to share existing knowledge, prioritize topics, create a set of best practices, and tailor implementation strategies to strengthen and improve each country’s response to unique HRH challenges.

**Level of effort and duration**

Over the course of three months (September to November 2020), participants will engage for ~2-3 hours per week and be expected to:

1. Attend and actively participate in all the virtual meetings (~4 live meetings, 1.5-2 hours each)
2. Complete small assignments such as summarizing and sharing experiences, protocols, and strategies from your institution, health system, and/or country
3. Participate online via discussion board and online polling
4. Engage with, and be responsive to, the technical facilitator(s) via email, MyJLN, Whatsapp groups or other social media platforms previously discussed with the technical facilitator
5. Contribute to the development of sub-working group and working group summary reports
**Expected outcomes**

Through this virtual learning exchange, participants can expect to get the following benefits:

1. Network and collaborate with a variety of implementers, leaders, practitioners, and policymakers from around the world on topics relevant to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Opportunities to receive feedback on your strategies for human resource management from other countries with diverse experiences as well as experts with knowledge of up-to-date guidelines and scientific evidence.
3. Access to a dynamic library of resources on HRH along with a summary of best practices and input on local adaptation with support from the technical facilitation team.

**Participant profile**

All are welcome to apply, but the number of participants will be limited to 2-3 per country for a maximum of 20 total participants in order to encourage small group and focused discussions. The learning exchange would benefit from individuals directly involved in HRH protocol and strategy development and implementation, such as:

- Hospital administrators,
- Health care human resource directors,
- Local/regional public health officials who advise and support health worker deployment,
- Ministry of Health or government public health officials who are actively involved in advising, priority setting, and supporting work on HRH for government health facilities and/or the general public.

**How to submit an Expression of Interest**

The technical facilitation team welcomes all JLN CCGs to submit an Expression of Interest for interested participant(s). Participants from JLN and non-JLN countries are welcome. Countries should submit the EOI application in this link and include the following information:

1. What has been your role in supporting policies and decisions related to the management of HRH in the COVID-19 response in your health system and/or country?
2. Please rank your top five themes by your level of interest (themes detailed in the form)
3. Are there any other themes related to HRH that you would like to recommend for inclusion in the virtual learning exchange?
4. What do you expect to gain from/contribute to the working group discussions, and how do you hope to apply any learnings to your work?
5. We anticipate high demand for participation in this virtual learning exchange. Please explain why you should be considered for participation.

Please submit your response via the MyJLN submission form or email by **September 3**. All applications will be reviewed and decisions communicated within 1-2 weeks after the submission deadline.

In the event that you are not able to access MyJLN, please write to the JLN network manager at jln@msh.org for alternative arrangements to submit your EOI or any questions related to the application.