



CREHS NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2009

This newsletter highlights some recent experiences of CREHS researchers at national and regional events. As the Consortium's 5 year programme draws to an end, efforts to disseminate research findings, strengthen relationships with decision makers and inform health policy and practice have intensified.



IN THIS ISSUE

- Researchers contribute to the National Health Insurance debate at the Public Health Association of South Africa conference.
- In Nigeria, researchers host the inaugural meeting of the Nigeria Health Economics Association.
- Information about new CREHS policy briefs and journal articles.

Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA) conference

In December 2009, CREHS researchers in South Africa participated in the 5th Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA) conference. CREHS was represented by the Centre for Health Policy and the Health Economics Unit. The conference theme was: Millennium Development Goals: Measuring progress in public health in South Africa. CREHS researchers addressed 300 delegates including health professionals and academics from 17 countries. PHASA, which is chaired by the CHP's Professor Laetitia Rispel succeeded in attracting a large contingent from the African continent.

The presentations covered work from all four CREHS research objectives on health sector reform, financial risk protection, health workforce performance and scaling-up. Also, there were presentations from the CREHS-related project, Strategies for Health Insurance for Equity in Less Developed Countries (SHIELD).

The conference presentations were given amidst major health policy announcements aimed at improving health care for South Africa's most vulnerable populations. On World Aids Day, the government announced plans to scale up life-prolonging anti-retroviral drugs to greater numbers of people with HIV/AIDS. Professor Rispel and Bulelwa Ngoma from the CHP participated in newspaper and television media activities thereby informing the larger public on discussions at PHASA.

Contributing to the National Health Insurance debate

The PHASA conference also provided researchers with an opportunity to share preliminary estimates on the cost of rolling out national health insurance for all, undertaken by the Health Economics Unit. These are particularly timely, following the first meeting of the Ministerial task team on national health insurance in South Africa, and at a time when the issue is being widely debated in the media.

A new CREHS policy brief that explores the affordability of equitable access to ART in South Africa by and beyond 2020, within the context of the proposed National Health Insurance system, is now available from the website.

DEVELOPMENTS IN BRIEF

- Researchers from Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania and UK presented findings at the Multilateral Initiative on Malaria Conference in Kenya.
- Members of CREHS participated in a workshop on International Health Research Partnerships, in South Africa with the Global HIV/AIDS Initiatives Network (GHIN).

For more information about these developments and other CREHS outputs go to:

www.crehs.lshtm.ac.uk



The Consortium for Research on Equitable Health Systems aims to generate knowledge about how to strengthen health system policies and interventions in ways that preferentially benefit the poorest. It is funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) UK.

For more information about this newsletter contact Rebecca Wolfe, CREHS Communications Officer: rebecca.wolfe@lshtm.ac.uk

Inaugural meeting of the Nigeria Health Economics Association

In September 2009, the Health Policy Research Group, University of Nigeria Enugu Campus, hosted the inaugural meeting of the Nigeria Health Economics Association (NiHEA). The aim of the association is to promote and sustain the development, knowledge and application of health economics in Nigeria. Activities include: a forum for information sharing and exchange among those working in health economics and related fields; promoting the development of health economics capacity within Nigeria; and the production and dissemination of high quality health economics research. For more information about NiHEA please contact Obinna Onwujekwe. Email: onwujekwe@yahoo.co.uk

West African Health Economics Network

In October 2009, the West African Health Economics Network (WAHEN) held its biannual meeting in Cotonou, Republic of Benin. The meeting highlighted the creation of the Nigeria National Economics Association and it also provided an opportunity for researchers to network and share research findings.

The Health Policy Research Group presented several scientific papers including:

- Informal payment for treatment of malaria: differences in expenditures from consumers and providers perspectives in southeast Nigeria;
- Willingness to pay for rapid diagnostic tests ex-post and ex-ante;
- Elements of costing in health economics.

CREHS POLICY BRIEFS

CREHS policy briefs aim to draw out key research findings that are relevant to current health policies and debates at state, national and international levels, and to suggest practical recommendations for policy and practice. New briefs include:

Increasing access to health services using mobile health units: implementation experiences in Tamil Nadu and Orissa States, India July, 2009
www.crehs.lshtm.ac.uk/downloads/publications/MHU_policy_brief.pdf

Reducing user fees: implementation challenges and a possible solution October, 2009
www.crehs.lshtm.ac.uk/downloads/publications/user_fees.pdf

The need for the active and strategic management of local-level policy implementation October, 2009
www.crehs.lshtm.ac.uk/downloads/publications/SA_objective1.pdf

Nurses attitudes towards living and working in rural areas: initial findings from the CREHS cohort study in South Africa November, 2009
www.crehs.lshtm.ac.uk/downloads/publications/SA_cohort.pdf

Overcoming Apartheid health care to achieve equitable access to ART: exploring resource requirements in South Africa November, 2009
www.crehs.lshtm.ac.uk/downloads/publications/ART_final.pdf

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Our publications are available on the website: www.crehs.lshtm.ac.uk/publications.html

A review of the application and contribution of discrete choice experiments to inform human resources policy interventions Lagarde M and Blaauw D. *Human Resources for Health* 2009, 7:62

This article reviews studies that use discrete choice experiments to investigate human resources issues related to health workers, both in developed and developing countries. Ten studies were found that used discrete choice experiments to investigate the job preferences of health care providers. It finds that discrete choice experiments are a valuable tool for informing decision-makers on how to design strategies to address human resources problems, and that they present various advantages for informing policies in developing countries where longitudinal labour market data are seldom available.

Household ownership and use of insecticide treated nets among target groups after implementation of a national voucher programme in the United Republic of Tanzania

Hanson K et al. *British Medical Journal* 2009;338:B2434

This article evaluates the impact of the Tanzania National Voucher Scheme on the coverage and equitable distribution of insecticide treated nets, used to prevent malaria, to pregnant women and their infants. The researchers find that the Tanzania National Voucher Scheme was associated with impressive increases in the coverage of insecticide treated nets over a two year period. Gaps in coverage remain, however, especially in the poorest groups. A voucher system that facilitates routine delivery of insecticide treated nets is a feasible option to keep up coverage.

