

PS 1.2

TECH-EMPOWERED HEALTH WORKERS: SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

| BACKGROUND

The rapid advancement of digital health technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), telemedicine, mobile health, and data analytics, is transforming healthcare delivery worldwide. These technologies hold immense potential to improve efficiency, quality, and access to care, especially in resource-limited settings. This transformation necessitates a corresponding evolution in the skills and competencies required of the entire health workforce, from specialists in urban centers to community health workers (CHWs) in remote areas.

Community health workers, who play a vital role in delivering primary healthcare and preventive services, have proven to be indispensable, especially during public health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic. Empowering CHWs with digital tools and knowledge is crucial to extending the reach of healthcare systems and achieving universal health coverage (UHC). Additionally, ensuring that all health workers are equipped to leverage technology for patient-centered care, professional development, and data-driven decision-making is essential for maximizing the impact of these innovations.

The emergence of large language models (LLMs) and other AI tools presents a unique opportunity to not only revolutionize health workforce training but also to raise the overall standard of care by democratizing access to specialized knowledge and decision support. By leveraging AI, we can potentially equip health workers at all levels with tools that augment their skills, enhance their decision-making capabilities, and enable them to deliver more consistent, high-quality care, even in resource-constrained settings.

| OBJECTIVES

Objectives:

- **To identify the evolving skill sets needed by the entire health workforce**, with a particular focus on the unique needs of CHWs, to effectively utilize and integrate digital health technologies into their practice.
- To discuss the strategies for massively scaling up upskilling and reskilling efforts for the health workforce across all levels, leveraging AI-powered tools and platforms to meet the demands of the digital health era, achieve equitable access to training resources, and raise the overall standard of care.
- To explore the potential of LLMs and other AI tools to empower individuals with personalized health information and guidance, fostering a culture of self-care and preventive health.
- To highlight innovative approaches to training and education, such as AI-powered tutoring, mentorship platforms, and personalized health assistants, that democratize healthcare knowledge and skills and promote continuous professional development.
- To facilitate dialogue between stakeholders, including policymakers, educators, health workers, technology developers, and ethicists, to foster collaboration and address challenges in workforce development at all levels, ensuring that the integration of AI is ethical, equitable, and patient-centered.
- To identify key metrics and indicators to measure and monitor the impact of AI-powered tools on health worker performance, patient outcomes, and overall health system strengthening, ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of these interventions.

Additional points

- burnout intervention? counseling/mental health application
- Platform to communicate between healthcare workers (including PHC)

migration of workforce



Speaker

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Dr. Hong Wang has over 30 years of experience in health economics, financing, and systems in developing countries. He is a Senior Policy Advisor/Senior Program Officer at BMGF. Currently, he manages healthcare care financing, integrated healthcare, health service purchasing and provider incentives, and poverty reduction (including women and children's health) related investment at foundation's Beijing office, as well as some PHC financing and system strengthening investment in South-East Asia. Dr. Wang also holds a position of Affiliate Professor at the Department of Global Health, University of Washington, USA.

Before joined BMGF, Dr. Wang was a Principal Associate/Senior Health Economist in Abt Associates Inc. as the technical lead on health financing-related projects in Asia and Africa countries, such as in India, Indonesia, Philippines, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Nigeria, Liberia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda, Senegal, Mali, and other LMICs. Dr. Wang was an Assistant/Associate Professor at Yale School of Public Health, an Associate Professor/Acting Director in the Health Economics Department at Beijing Medical University, and an Adjunct Professor/Deputy Director at National Health Economics Institute, China. Dr. Wang graduated from Beijing Medical University (Public Health) and The University of Wisconsin/Madison (Ph.D. in Population Health and Health Economics).