



## Global Health Education Declaration 1.0

### Document information

This declaration for Global Health Education is an initiative by the European Academic Global Health Alliance ([www.EAGHA.org](http://www.EAGHA.org)) and builds upon students' at meetings in Copenhagen and Berlin.

The aim of the Declaration is to advocate for the establishment of global health education at universities worldwide. The initial target audience would be medical schools offering primary qualifications for physicians.

This version of the Declaration 1.0 is released at the World Health Summit (WHS) 2012 in Berlin. We would now like to extend the consultation to include participation from a wider community of health professionals within and outside Europe to generate version 2.0.

**„The future we want needs to be invented; otherwise we will get one we don't want.“**

*Joseph Beuys*

### Preamble

Our increasingly interconnected and interdependent world is bringing complex challenges and opportunities that affect many aspects of human health. To address the impact of globalisation, medical education needs to ensure a deep understanding of the multifaceted determinants of health. Physicians therefore need to combine knowledge of clinical medicine, public health and social sciences with an understanding of how health systems, public policies and legal rights influence variations in human health locally and globally. As established health and social security systems, economic structures and work environments change rapidly and fundamentally, our understanding of health and healthcare in a highly dynamic globalised world, requires new ways of conceptualizing and solving problems.

To prepare physicians for the coming century, medical curricula need to integrate these themes and apply transformative approaches based on flexible, multidisciplinary thinking [1] and active engagement in learning and practice. It is likely many current students will eventually undertake roles and tasks that do not yet exist.

### What Is Global Health?

Global health is an emerging field encompassing research, policy and practice. The concept implies an understanding of the interdependence and complexity of influences on human health. These transcend or are oblivious to territorial boundaries, and are beyond the capacity of individual nation states' domestic institutions to address but effect health locally and globally[2]. The evolving scope of global health includes recognised challenges to human health: migration; health professional mobility; control of communicable disease; ensuring food and water security; demographic change; the burden of non-communicable disease;

global environmental change; conflict and civil strife; economic development and financial stability, and growing inequities - within and between countries. The field of global health includes understanding the potential of inter-professional and multi-sectoral teams, new modes of communication, collaborations and networks, as well as effects of multi-national corporations on markets, trade and politics.

Consequently global health combines approaches from different disciplines (social sciences, clinical medicine, epidemiology and public health, economics, politics, ecology, engineering, ethics and law) drawing from social movements and corporate management. Through trans-disciplinary approaches factors modulating global health can be most fully explored and understood.

### **Why is Global Health Education Needed?**

Global health is everybody's business – it is wider than healthcare. All health professionals, regardless of their location, specialty or role, practice in an interdependent world. It is therefore the responsibility of educational institutions, individual educators and students to ensure that physicians are well equipped for the complex challenges of the coming decades.

This requires revised and reorganised course content to reflect the global processes and health challenges outlined above to ensure graduates can meet the needs of individual patients, populations and health systems. Approaches to learning that complement competency-based strategies are needed to address misconceptions about global health and foster lateral thinking, critical reflection, agency, and inter-professional teamwork. Transformative methods actively engage learners and promote abilities of social responsibility, advocacy and leadership. Despite much progress in many schools, in some faculties static curricula persist which do not prepare students for their uncertain future roles and responsibilities, and about its nature. Such reforms are supported by students who welcome opportunities to participate directly and creatively in shaping solutions to local and global health challenges.

### **We propose the incorporation of global health into core medical curricula through**

- Integration of the scientifically oriented human health model with a deeper knowledge of the global and social determinants of health (worldwide interconnectedness, global burden of disease; socioeconomic and environmental factors; comparative health systems; global health governance; and cultural diversity. See for example Johnson et al. [3])
- Focus on capabilities to manage complexity and uncertainty, critical thinking and reflection; synthesise and application of evidence from a wide range of disciplines
- Increase emphasis on teamwork, advocacy, agency, entrepreneurship and engagement with civil society;
- Involving role models so students understand global health career opportunities.

## **We recommend educational methods appropriate for Global Health**

### **Core curriculum**

- apply transformative methods to the core curriculum that actively engage the learner and increase their sense of agency, social responsibility and leadership skills (through group discussions and inter-professional projects, critical reflection and significant event exercises; evaluation of conflicting evidence, and case-based simulations)
- use early community orientation and regular primary care placements to make local manifestations of global health challenges immediately relevant to all students
- ensuring senior students take responsibility for patient care and service improvement
- link education on global health with research

### **Optional or elective curriculum**

- expand optional opportunities such as local and international peer tutoring joint learning across academic and clinical disciplines, working with voluntary and civil society groups, and exploring art and literature
- incorporate overseas student electives into the global health curriculum
- develop links with international students and agencies via a virtual learning environment and social networks
- encourage and recognise the contribution of international staff and students and support them financially

### **Assessments**

- use assessments that are consistent with the learning outcomes for global health such as integrated clinical simulations, portfolios with written reflections, case studies of international electives, group projects and presentations

## **We need institutional mission statements that include global health by**

- making the education of physicians for a globalised professional role a key priority
- linking medical education with the health needs of the population
- stating their position on institutional social accountability especially in the international endeavours (along the lines of the Global Consensus Statement on Social Accountability of Medical Schools [4]).
- providing students, patients and civil society groups with a voice in learning and the development of the institutional mission
- facilitating interdisciplinary integration in medical education through administrative and funding mechanisms that overcome specialised silos
- encouraging cooperation between institutions and regulatory bodies to foster quality of teaching and to avoid duplication of work across disciplines and countries
- undertaking research and programme evaluation to monitor achievement of global health learning outcomes, implementation of transformative learning, and compliance with the social accountability policy

## Therefore,

members of the European Academic Global Health Alliance, the M8 Alliance, student organisations, and supporters of the World Health Summit call

- on all university deans to develop and implement the above outlined institutional policy recommendations
- on all university deans to include multi-disciplinary global health education as part of their mission statements
- on student medical organizations and to advocate and lobby for global health education as part of their core curricula
- for the establishment of an international platform advising, monitoring and reporting on institutions' progress in implementing Global Health education programmes.

[1] Frenk, J., Chen, L., Bhutta, Z., Cohen, J., Crisp, N., Evans, T., Fineberg, H., Garcia, P., Ke, Y., Kelley, P., Kistnasamy, B., Meleis, A., Naylor, D., Pablos-Mendez, A., Reddy, S., Scrimshaw, S., Sepulveda, J., Serwadda, D. and Zurayk, H. (2010) 'Health professionals for a new century: transforming education to strengthen health systems in an interdependent world', *The Lancet*, 376: 1923-58.

[2] Lee K., Collin J., eds. (2005) *Global Change and Health*, Open University Press Milton Keynes.

[3] Johnson O., Bailey S.L., Willot C., Crocker-Buque T., Jessop V., Birch M., Ward H., Yudkin J.S. on behalf of the Global Health Learning Outcomes Working Group (2012) Global health learning outcomes for medical students in the UK. *The Lancet*, 379: 2033-2035.

[4] Global Consensus for Social Accountability of Medical Schools. Available at <http://healthsocialaccountability.org>