

NURSES AND MIDWIVES FOR UHC.

Nurses and midwives play a crucial role in the healthcare system. They make up half of the health workforce from primary health to hospitals, they are close to people, they face many challenges, and disease patterns are changing, more people with cancer, heart diseases and diabetes. People are living longer with diverse care needs

Nurses and midwives are critical to health care teams, during emergencies, they are on the frontline and so let us ensure quality training, career-long learning, good working conditions and recognition because they promote health among families and communities. We also need more of nurses in numbers because of their critical role in healthcare.

Nurses sit at the Centre of healthcare sector and in terms of numbers they outnumber all other cadres and are pivotal in achieving UHC. Being who they are in terms of numbers it is important that they are brought on the decision table to discuss how primary healthcare should be managed for the success of the presidential decree on the four agendas more especially UHC.

To achieve UHC and the sustainable development goals by 2030, the world will need nine million more nurses and midwives, Kenya not left out. We therefore require to fill this critical gap as a country.

We need to ensure that nurses have a voice in the development and implementation of health policy, it is fundamental to ensure that these policies are effective and meet the needs of patients, families and communities across the world around us.

There are three important messages for nurses and policy makers:

- Nurses and Midwives save lives and improve, protect and promote health and wellbeing.
- Nurses and Midwives are a vital access point for 24/7, birth to death, emergency to ongoing care.
- Nurses and Midwives are the foundation to high quality, affordable and accessible care.

It is in this regard that as Nurses and Midwives we petition the Ministry of health to relook at the organogram of Ministry at every level to ensure that Nurses and Midwives have an opportunity to offer leadership in healthcare because this is the impetus for the success of UHC and beyond. The health act 2017 has placed nursing as a directorate and we pray that the same be implemented to the latter.

Kenyan population require quality care in the spirit of UHC. This can only be replicated by the level and quality of training of Nurses and Midwives. We have come of age to an extent that we put strategies as a country that certificate level of training for nurses would have ended in the year 2017. As an association and as gate keepers of our profession we regret this course. It is neither in the interest of nurses nor patients for us as a country to revert to certificate training. It negates the spirit of UHC and the gains we've made as country.