



ENGAGING PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS TO MITIGATE THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC EFFECTS IN CHILDREN IN KENYA

THE KENYA MOH EXPERIENCE

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"None of us, including me, ever do great things.
But we can all do small things, with great love,
and together we can do something wonderful."

– **Mother Teresa**





TEAMWORK = SUCCESS

1. Division of Neonatal and Child health collaborates with a number of strategic partners and stakeholders to achieve the milestones set to reduce mortality and morbidity in infants and children in Kenya
2. Different partners/stakeholders have different strengths and by collating our efforts and supporting each other we are able to make great strides
3. However in our journey(of quality health service delivery for children), we were faced with a mountain that we were not adequately prepared to climb but had not option to climb



COVID 19 PANDEMIC

- i. Early data shared globally, this was an “adult’s” disease and the initial COVID 19 response in Kenya was focused on adult case management and infection prevention
- ii. UNICEF shared literature on the Ebola epidemic and how pediatric health services were disrupted with dire consequences on the gains made in Child survival
- iii. The DNCH team reviewed its partners and stakeholders, looked at each of their strengths and through dialogue got was aware of their levels of engagement in the National COVID 19 response
- iv. One major gap seen during our review was that Pediatricians and the pediatric health community was not at the fore of the response. (*DNCH had done an informal telephone survey of a few facilities and the responses revealed that essential health service delivery was being affected*)



COVID 19 EFFECTS ON CHILDREN IN KENYA

NATIONAL LEVEL

1. Division of Neonatal and Child health staff were involved in the National COVID 19 response leaving a gap in officers availability to give guidance and leadership to counties and partners

COUNTY LEVEL

1. Each county adopted an individualized plan on how health services were to be delivered in the face of the pandemic – Fragmented and not well coordinated
2. PPEs were not widely available affecting service delivery by HCW
3. Lack of guidance for CHWs who play a role in iCCM of childhood illnesses.

COMMUNITY LEVEL

1. Reduced health seeking behaviors in parents and caregivers
2. Reduced attendance to ANC clinics, CWC, OPD etc
3. Increases reliance on over the counter (OTC) treatment
4. Schools closed, children movement restricted, information overload on COVID 19 in all media channels
5. Parents/caregivers income affected with ripple effect on availability of food in the affected households



KENYA PAEDIATRIC ASSOCIATION

- The Kenya Paediatric Association (KPA) is an association whose principal members are paediatricians practicing in Kenya but includes researchers, paediatricians in training and any other cadres of health workers as associates
- **VISION - Optimal healthcare environment for children.**
- **Mission** - To be the guide and leader in comprehensive child healthcare delivery through promotion of best practice in pediatrics training, research, policy formulation and capacity building of members.



KPA KEY STRENGTHS

1. KPA top leadership is made up of distinguished Paediatricians with a **wealth of experience and expertise** having been involved in local, regional and global decision making
2. KPA has **good political goodwill** in the country
3. KPA has a **very effective network** for reaching out to its members in any part of the country and at the shortest time possible

With this 3 key strengths, DNCH reached out to KPA

We discussed the results of the informal survey conducted by DNCH, brainstormed on the pediatric service delivery points that needed guidance on how health services were to be run and formed a committee that was tasked to develop guidance with a timeframe.



MOH-KPA COLLABORATION

1. A formal survey on COVID 19 and health practitioners views was done by KPA and the results provided good information on the gaps and challenges counties were facing
2. The taskforce team together with DNCH developed the “Guidance on the management of Pediatric patients during the COVID19 pandemic”
3. DNCH with KPA held a virtual sensitization session to all county child health focal persons on the guidance. KPA members were also in attendance.
4. Currently county level dissemination is on going with support of partners and from the feedback received we shall update our information in due course.



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3. Director general of health – Dr. Patrick Amoth
4. UNICEF Kenya country office
5. WHO
6. Save the Children
7. County child health focal persons