

Summary of the 15th Biennial AHILA Congress



Theme: Access to and utilisation of health information in Africa. New Challenges. New Solutions.

Dates: 17 – 21 October 2016

Venue: Makerere University School of Food Technology, Nutrition and Bioengineering

Welcome remarks by **UGAHILA President:** Ms Jane Amongi, **AHILA President:** Dr. Rehema Chande Mallya and **Acting Dean:** Dr. Archileo Kaaya, School of Food Technology, Nutrition and Bioengineering.

Guest of Honor: Dr. Edward Mukooyo, Assistant Commissioner – Health Information Services – Ministry of Health, Uganda.

Keynote Speaker: Ms. Kimberly Parker – Hinari Programme Manager – World Health Organisation, Switzerland.

Papers presented: 20 papers were presented under these Sub-themes (18 oral presentations, 2 poster presentations)

- i. Health information and rural communities
- ii. Librarians and Evidence Based Healthcare
- iii. Evolving Medical education curriculum
- iv. Capacity building of Health Information Professionals: the role of LIS education in Africa (Curricular design and instruction)
- v. Communicable and non-communicable diseases
- vi. Preservation of rare medical records
- vii. ICTs and health information provision and access

Workshops conducted: 2

- 1. UptoDate – database for clinical information.
- 2. Scholarly writing

Exhibitors: Research for Life, ITOCA/Phi, Jaypee digital, Wolters Kluwer.

Number of delegates: 90

Countries represented: 19 (Botswana, Central African Republic, Congo Brazzaville, Egypt, Eritrea, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of South African, Switzerland, Tanzania, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States of America, Zambia and Zimbabwe).

General Assembly and elections: 21st October 2016.

New cabinet:

President: Ms. Jane Amongi (Uganda)

Vice President 1: Dr. Grace Ajuwon (Nigeria)

Vice President 2: Mr. Augustin Dibert (Central African Republic)

Treasurer – Ms. Blessing Chataira (South Africa)

General Secretary: Ms. Jesca Karungi (Uganda)

Vice General Secretary: Mrs. Selam Berhane (Eritrea)

Editor: Ms. Chipso Msengezi (South Africa)

Executive Council: Mr. Solomon Suleiman (Ghana), Mr. Richard Ssenono (Uganda), Mr. Charles Marwa (Tanzania).

Resolutions:

- 1. Health Information professionals need to be more proactive in inter-professional collaboration so that their presence is felt and their expertise appreciated. For example, in research during Systematic

reviews, information dissemination in communities through use of ICT, mass or social media and development of materials to enable health workers perform their duties better. This can also be done through subscribing to authentic databases with Evidence Based information such as Hinari, Elsevier, Jaypee Digital and MEDBOX.

2. Improve the rigor of research within the health information field and improve on skills in scholarly writing and publication. This will improve on the quality of papers presented during such congresses.
3. Health information workers need to engage more in Continued Professional Education programmes to increase their knowledge, enable them to be more dynamic or versatile and therefore remain relevant. Scan for new opportunities and put emphasis on specialization such as training in Health Sciences Librarianship.
4. There is need to build and maintain more collaboration with other Associations, consortiums or programmes such as US National Library of Medicine and University of Winchester – Partnerships in Health Information.
5. While strengthening Country Chapters, Regional collaboration should be introduced so that countries within the same region work together to share experiences and good practices. Alongside this there should be creation of a mailing list for all members to foster inter-country/member collaboration.
6. Emphasis should be placed on continued ease of communication and information sharing amongst the English Speaking, French Speaking and Portuguese speaking health information professionals in Africa. All future Congresses to have translators during the proceedings.

Hosts for the next AHILA (2018)

1st Choice: Central African Republic

Back up 1: Nigeria

Back up 2: Mozambique

Deadline for confirmation to host: 1st December 2016

Major Sponsors: Elsevier, ITOCA, WHO, Makerere University, Wolters Kluwer.