



COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE **32ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE** **ASSOCIATION OF HEALTH SERVICES** **ADMINISTRATORS, GHANA (AHSAG)**

Preamble

The Association of Health Services Administrators, Ghana (AHSAG), at its 32nd Annual General Meeting and Continuing Professional Education held at the Eusbett Hotel, Sunyani from 12th to 14th November, 2008 on the theme ‘**The Challenging Phase of Health Delivery in Ghana: Human Resource Issues**’ and having deliberated on related topical issues adopted the following communiqué:

1. Health Human Resource Management

The Association acknowledges the enormous investment made by the state and her development partners in the health sector over the years. Nevertheless it is of serious concern to us that as a country we have not made significant gains in attaining some of our health goals, especially MDG 4 and 5 (i.e. reducing infant and child mortality and improving maternal health respectively). The Association further observes that the mode of human resource production, inequitable distribution and retention has contributed significantly to this state of affairs.

The Association therefore calls on the Ministry of Health (MOH) as the major employer of health professionals, to move swiftly to regulate the establishment of health training institutions in the country. We also insist on an effective collaboration between user agencies of health professionals and the training institutions in respect of the content of training and the numbers.

Again, the Association calls on the MOH to institute the right incentives to attract health professionals to the deprived areas as a way of ensuring equitable distribution and retention across regions. There should also be the conscious effort to properly equip health facilities in the deprived areas to provide a conducive environment for health care.

2. The Single Spine Salary Structure of the New Public Sector Pay Reform

The Association acknowledges Government’s effort at harmonizing the public sector salary structure. However, the Association has noted with concern the disparity in the placement levels of the grade of Health Service Administrator and that of the analogous health professionals within the Ministry of Health (MOH)

In the light of this, the Association appeals to the MOH to as a matter of urgency take steps to ensure that the grade of Health Services Administrators is appropriately placed on the new Single Spine Salary structure. We further call on the Ministry to accord the Health Service Administrator his rightful place in the health sector as defined in the Ghana Health Service and Teaching Hospitals Act, 1996, Act 525.

3. Occupational Health and Safety

The Association has observed with much concern the escalation of preventable work place acquired diseases and disabilities and in some cases, death among health workers, patients and other users of our facilities arising out of inadequacy of occupational health and safety measures.

On this, the Association urgently appeals to the MOH to quickly complete the development of health and safety policy and operational programmes, disseminate them at all levels of health service delivery and provide the required resources for effective implementation.

4. Road Traffic Crashes (RTC's)

The Association has also noted that Road Traffic Crashes have and continue to assume a Public Health dimension. While this may be a matter of public knowledge, the Association is restating it at this time due especially to the forth-coming general elections, the Christmas and the Eid-ul-Adha festivities.

Accordingly, it is advised that all the various agencies responsible for road safety should be well resourced and strengthened to effectively manage the situation before, during and beyond the election period.

5. National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS)

The Association acknowledges that the NHIS is among the best of pro-poor policies introduced in the history of the country and commends government for this bold initiative. At the same time the Association wishes to highlight the increased workload which the NHIS has placed on health workers due to the overwhelming increase in service utilization. Besides, the Association is worried with the long delay in reimbursing the health facilities for claims submitted to the various schemes.

To sustain the NHIS and to also improve quality health services, the MOH should take steps to appropriately staff the health institutions with the right caliber of professionals.

The various Health insurance schemes should release 70% of the total claim upon submission and hold the remaining 30% against vetting. This is important to enable the health institutions to continue to provide services to the scheme beneficiaries. This call is made against the background that funding is never a problem of the schemes.

6. Upcoming 2008 General Election

The Association notes with pride the progress made so far by the good people of Ghana in the advancement of our democracy under the fourth Republican Constitution. At the same time there are certain happenings on the political scene that could jeopardize the relative peace we are currently enjoying.

The Association therefore calls on all political parties and their followers to refrain from actions and activities that will inflame passions and subsequently disturb the peace of the nation. We also call on chiefs, opinion leaders, the civil society in general to uphold and preserve the unity of the nation at all times.

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(President, AHSAG)

Rita Acquah
(General Secretary, AHSAG)

