

G-I-N 2016 Conference Grant Recipient Report

Patrick Mbah Okwen was one of the 2016 LMIC conference participation support grant recipients. Below is an account of his experience at G-I-N 2016 and what he gained from attending the conference.

Summary

G-I-N 2016 conference provided me with a unique opportunity to showcase the challenges faced by clinicians, policy makers, patients and development agencies in making healthcare more effective in Africa. The LMIC grant made it possible for me to attend the conference which would have been otherwise impossible for me to cover the cost of the trip.

During the conference results from 58 countries on quality of hypertension guidelines were presented and how this affects practice and policy, discussions on performance based financing and use of guidelines was presented and a workshop on using the McMaster guidelines development checklist was done. In addition, we were able to have a LMIC meeting. Several networks were created which will be useful for future collaborations on guidelines for Africa including with the WHO, McMaster University, University of South Australia and BBmHealth.

The travel grant has significantly boosted my ability to take a leadership role in advocating guidelines adaptation and development within the region.

Context

Healthcare practice globally is challenged by limited resources but this problem is acute in LMIC and especially so in Africa. Getting research evidence in to practice and policy is a challenge and requires multiple stakeholders. In Africa, the WHO has collaborated with ministries of health to develop guidelines for malaria, HIV and TB – outside these 3 topics, the quality of guidelines being used is questionable.

In the past 3 years G-I-N has stimulated discussions on guidelines for LMIC and this is currently picking pace and yielding some early fruits. The G-I-N LMIC WG, African and Arab communities have been created; in Africa work has been done to evaluate quality of hypertension guidelines and use of guidelines within performance based financing – all being directly resulting from activities inspired by collaborations in G-I-N.

Objectives

My main objective for attending the G-I-N conference was stimulate discussions and collaborations on healthcare guidance in Africa.

Specifically, I aimed to achieve:

- Contribute to a successful G-I-N conference through participation in scientific committee activities, moderating sessions and organizing LMIC activities.
- Present two (2) papers with findings on state of healthcare guidance in Africa on hypertension and performance based financing
- Participate in LMIC regional meetings including LMIC, Africa and Arab communities' meetings.

- Networking with other healthcare guidance organizations, experts and stakeholders
- Organise one workshop on guidelines development for LMIC

Outcomes

All above objectives were achieved during this period and particularly:

- Presented 2 papers on hypertension guidelines and performance based financing with over 60 delegates attending both sessions
- Moderated 1 panel session on leveraging technology for guidelines implementation
- Networked with key organisations for healthcare guidance including WHO, McMaster University, BBmHealth, University of South Australia, Joanna Briggs Institute, Therapeutic Guidelines Ltd amongst others.
- Organised a workshop on McMaster Guidelines development checklist for LMIC with 16 delegates from 8 different countries.
- Participated in LMIC meetings (incorporating African community meeting) and Arab community meeting.
- Created network to getting involved in the Global Evidence Summit 2017.
- Gained insight on alternative approaches for healthcare guidance including use of apps, use of audits and feedback, using evidence summaries, guidelines and performance measures, patient oriented tools, WikiRecs
- Created network to using WikiRecs for guidelines dissemination and implementation to healthcare stakeholders in Africa.

Perspectives

The G-I-N conference inspired new objectives for 2017

- Prepare and participate in Global Evidence Summit 2017 with work I am currently doing with the Joanna Briggs Institute on using audits and feedback to promote the use of guidelines in the management uncomplicated malaria in children under 5 years of age
- Contribute to the GES to ensure mainstreaming of LMIC in themes, sessions and discussions
- Collaborate with McMaster University on guidelines development
- Collaborate with WikiRecs and MagicApp to increase access to evidence for doctors and other healthcare stakeholders in Africa
- Create a more vibrant African Community of G-I-N

Discussions

The G-I-N grant provided an invaluable opportunity for me to continue the work on guidelines research and leadership in Africa. This grant has enabled me to do the work I have been doing for the past 3 years which is currently the first of its kind within the region.

The G-I-N grants can potentially stimulate leadership in individuals within the LMIC and this will be able to start a regional movement to make healthcare more effective through use of evidence based guidance.

However, there is need for more individuals to be assisted to attend conference and develop new objectives from conferences as well as for the G-I-N board to continually provide support for activities within the LMIC working group to achieve these objectives.



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