**NHRC Summit 2018 - Concept Note (Final Draft)**

The National Health Research Committee (NHRC) is statutory committee under the auspices of the National Health Act of 2003. The mandate of the NHRC as per clause 69 (3) of the National Health Act, 2003 is to:

* determine the health research to be carried out by public health authorities;
* ensure health research agendas and research resources focus on priority health problems;
* develop and advise the Minister on the application; implementation of an integrated national strategy for health research; and
* Coordinate the research activities of public health authorities.

Clause 70 of the National Health Act, 2003 prescribes that the Committee must identify and advise the Minister on health research priorities. In identifying health research priorities, the NHRC must have regards to the: -

* burden of disease;
* the cost-effectiveness of interventions aimed at reducing the burden of disease;
* the availability of human and institutional resources for implementation of an intervention at the level closest to the affected communities;
* the health needs of vulnerable groups such as woman, older persons, children and people with disabilities; and
* the health needs of the communities.

To deliver optimally on its mandate, the NHRC needs to take into account the views of different stakeholders in research for health. A national consultative summit early in the term of the Committee is the ideal strategy to solicit divergent views from stakeholders, which are then debated to a point where the Committee can get an indication of what is generally the views of key stakeholders with regards to research for health.

One such summit was held in 2011, the first year of the Committee of the time. Since then, the NHRC has been implementing some of the recommendations of that summit, but there has never been a follow up forum to report back on the implementation thereof. The current Committee (2017 – 2020) was established in May 2017, and it became evident as it started its work that a renewed consultation with key stakeholders was necessary for it to report on its current activities and engage key stakeholders on the way forward.

The NHRC has 5 sub-committees through which it intends to deliver on the different aspects of its mandate. These include sub-committees for:

* Priority Setting of Research for Health
* Policy and Strategy
* Health Research Financing
* Resources for health research, and
* Monitoring and evaluation

The next summit has been proposed for September 2018, with the theme being “Research for Health”. Sub-themes will be the sub-committee thematic areas, on which each sub-committee will give a state of affairs on its mandate and activities thus far, and challenges being faced in the area. The summit is meant to be a mini-observatory for the Committee to get current information needed to inform its mandate and future activities.

The objectives of the proposed Summit are to address the following questions: -

* What is the state of affairs in research for health in the country?
* What is the status of funding flows in research for health, i.e. the gaps, fragmentations, where priority should be, and where the funding is going;
* What are the priorities for research for health in South Africa, and what informs them?
* What issues need to be addressed around policy and strategy for research for health?
* What is the landscape on the infrastructure for research for health: human resources, equipment, capital infrastructure etc.;
* What monitoring and evaluation is needed to ensure a research for health system that addresses the needs?

The summit is expected to attract 200 – 250 delegates from key health research stakeholder groups. There is a need to ensure that the list of people invited to the Summit covers a broader multi-disciplinary/transdisciplinary approach to health.

Care has been taken to ensure the presence of high ranking politicians and administrative officials, from national to municipal levels.

Key note speakers on research funding and priority setting for the plenary sessions will be invited. Over and above, experts and other stakeholders for all 5 sub-themes will have in-depth discussions at break-away sessions per sub-theme. These key note experts will be expected to share current information and thinking in each of the 2 areas, i.e. research funding and priority setting. Break away sessions will be followed by a feedback plenary session where delegates will further enrich inputs from break-away groups and formulate advice for the NHRC on each sub-theme.

The view is that this advice will influence the NHRC’s way forward till the next consultative summit.