



**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH**

Division of the National Health Laboratory Service

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING FOR HEALTH WORKERS WITHOUT FORMAL OHS QUALIFICATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Muzimkhulu Zungu

30 November 2017



**UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA**

Denklelers • Leading Minds • Dikgopolo tša Dihlalefi

Background

- Health is **labour intensive industry** - & more so in South Africa (SA)
 - Health system prioritises clinical services & individual ‘personal health’ services (Zweigenthal, 2016)
- Health systems globally & in SA experience **health worker (HW) shortages** estimated at 7.2 million and 80 000 HWs, respectively (WHO, 2017; DOH, 2012)

Importance of Health Workers

- The World Health Organization (WHO) lists HWs as **one of the six building blocks of a health system**, and emphasises their importance in strengthening health system
- Achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC)
 - Reliable, adequate supply & retention of HWs

Contributory factors to health worker shortages

- occupational and environmental health and safety (OEHS) exposures causing injury & diseases (Senthil, 2015; WHO 2016)
- Inequitable distribution of health resources (Day, 2017)
- complex array of forces from aging population, new diseases, escalating conflicts and violence (WHO, 2006)

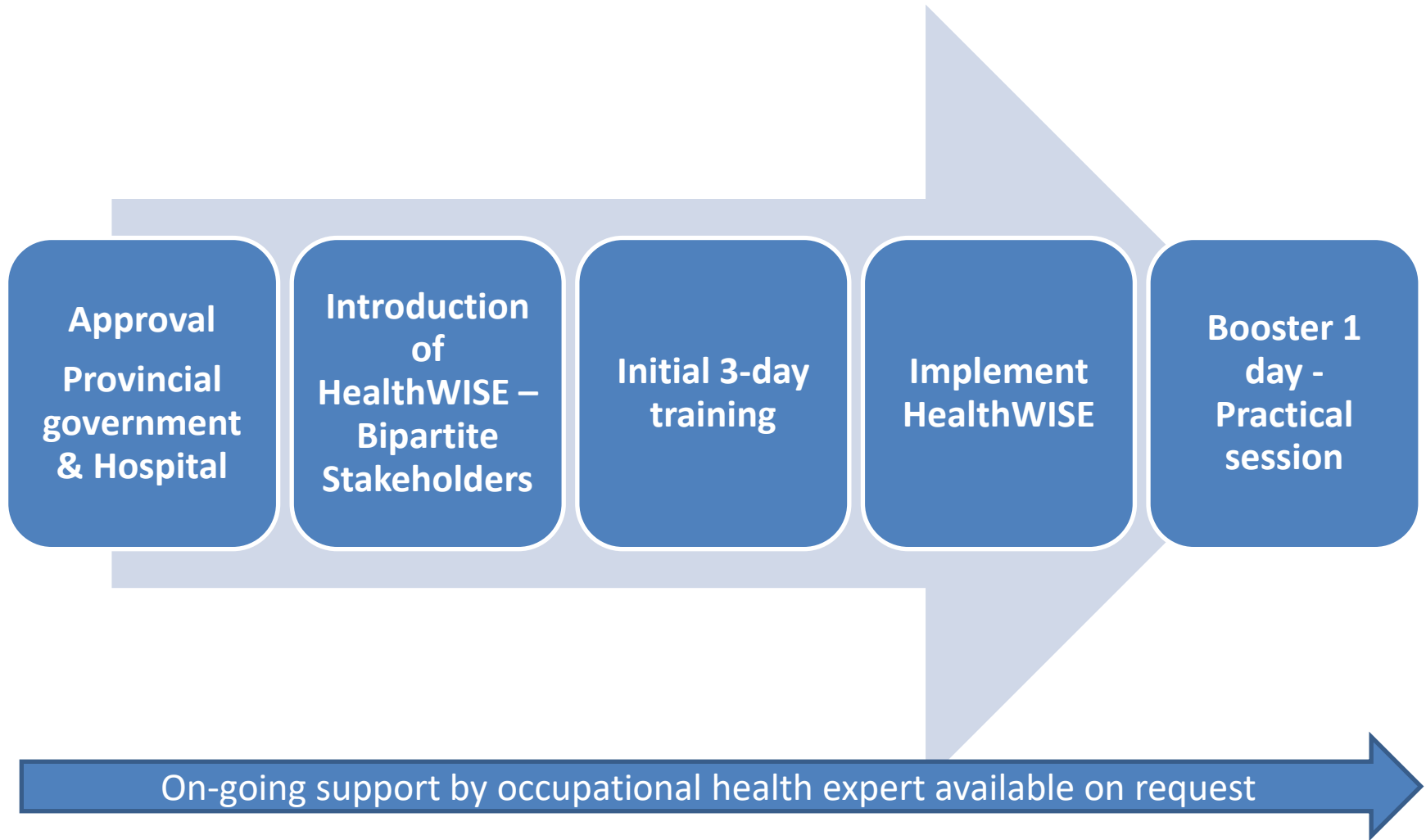
Project AIM

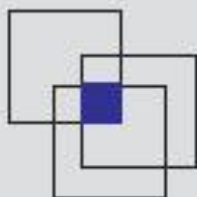
- **Describe an OEHS training of health workers of all levels in protecting their health in the work place in resource constrained environments**
 - Knowledge
 - Skill
- **Contribute to implementation:**
 - WHO Global Plan of Action on Workers Health
 - SA's OEHS legislation in health sector

Methods

- Action research project – two teaching hospitals
Gauteng Province, SA
- Approval & Ethics – University of Pretoria & Gauteng
Department of Health
- Intervention - ILO & WHO's HealthWISE
 - Workers (support – managers; trade unions)
 - **Basic HRA; biological hazards; & harassment,
violence & discrimination**
 - Presentations, pictures, drawings, facilitated and
unfacilitated discussions

Training process





International Labour Organization

HealthWISE Work Improvement in Health Services Action Manual



Module 1:

Controlling occupational hazards and improving workplace safety

Module 2:

Musculoskeletal hazards and ergonomic solutions

Module 3:

Biological hazards and infection control,
with special reference to HIV and TB.

Module 4:

Tackling discrimination, harassment
and violence at the workplace

Module 5:

Towards a green and healthy workplace.....]

Module 6:

The key role of staff: Recruitment, support,
management, retention

Module 7:

Working time and family-friendly measures.....]

Module 8:

Selecting, storing and managing equipment and supplies.....]

Results

- Facilitators (education, social science & occupational health specialists)
- Training supported & endorsed by CEOs
- Twenty six participants (OEHS & non-OEHS HWs including managers, trade unions and all levels of workers) from three hospitals & provincial government
- Issues raised by participants on OHS:
 - Power dynamics
 - Incident under reporting
 - Lack of OEHS policy implementation



Checkpoints

- 1 Take action to protect staff from violence
- 2 Take specific measures to tackle stigma and discrimination
- 3 Raise awareness and provide training about workplace violence
- 4 Create institutional commitment to a fair and respectful workplace

Development of action plans developed by participants

Technical area	Description of problem	Proposed improvement	Date of completion	Who is responsible?	What s needed?
2. Waste management	Proper waste disposal	Raise awareness (dangers of improper disposal)	Jan 2017, and ongoing	Cleaning department.	Safety reps
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can result in increase infection 	Conduct training to new (induction) and old employees		EHP (environmental health practitioners)	CEO Union





Discussion

- OEHS training of non-OEHS professionals in healthcare an option for scaling up services
- Initial investment in training skills a key factor
- Participation of management & trade unions
- Possibility of reaching a wider audience
- Improving the work environment
- Working with and within available resources

Acknowledgements

- National Institute for Occupational Health - South Africa
- Gauteng Department of Health, SA
- Mozambique Ministry of Health
- Zimbabwe Ministry of Health
- University of British Columbia – Canada
- Canadian Institute of Health Research
- ILO – Mozambique, South Africa & Zimbabwe
- University of Pretoria - South Africa

Thank you