

THE STORY OF THE NATIONAL PROGRESSIVE PRIMARY HEALTH CARE NETWORK (NPPHCN)

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Introduction

- PPHC was formed in 1987 to oppose the damage Apartheid in health imposed on the people of South Africa
- Health care was fragmented into racial divisions
- Enormous disparities existed in wealth & health
- Unequal access characterised all services
- Tertiary care was promoted at the expense of PHC
- Quality private care was prized, the public sector despised

A Progressive Primary Health Care Approach:

- challenges society to address causes of poor health
- encourages community empowerment
- provides comprehensive quality health care
- demands concerned health worker practice
- prioritises disadvantaged people



International Responses to the New Economic Order
From left: Reno Morar, Martin Coyle, Vincent Biruta, Thabo Sibeko (chairperson),
Irwin Friedman and Danilo Beltran

- recognises the importance of integrated care
- promotes collaboration across sectors & professions

PPHC is a network of organisations and individuals committed to:

- advocating a national primary health care system
- transferring appropriate skills
- encouraging sharing and exchanges
- providing practical support to members

How Did PPHC Start?

A large conference was called nationally, attended by hundreds of delegates. Initially organised in urban centres such as Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban to oppose the propaganda and divisive programmes of the Nationalist Government, the Network sought to promote the concept of PHC as conceived at the Alma Ata Conference.

And then....What Happened?

It soon spread to include participants from neglected and under-resourced areas and being part of the Mass Democratic Movement's drive for democracy. Several PPHC leaders were harassed, questioned and arrested by the Security Police.

From Conflict to Collaboration

The Network has passed through three distinct phases:

- 1987 - 1991 : Resistance - opposition to government
- 1992 - 1994 : Transition - preparation for governing
- 1994 - 1997 : Collaboration - working with government

Early Projects

Some of the activities with which the Network was involved from 1987 to 1991

- Service Development : Seed projects to initiate PHC
- Training : Capacity development to support PHC
- Networking : Bringing members together to share experiences
- Participation in the Mass Democratic Movement

Later Programmes

Activities in which the Network was involved as its reputation grew from 1991 to 1994

- Policy development : preparing policies in anticipation of changing government
- Advocacy : Pre-election advocacy
- National AIDS Programme : a large programme in 14 regions

- Community Health Training Centre: Based in Western Cape
- Media and Training Centre : Participatory media in the Western Cape

Current Programmes

Activities in which the Network has been involved since the 1994 elections

- Advocacy & Health Promotion
- Women's Health & Empowerment
- Youth Health & Sexuality
- Legislative & Policy Analysis
- Community Involvement in District Development
- Human Resources Development
- Participatory Research

These programmes are elaborated on in further detail below :

Health Advocacy

Seeks to transform progressive policy into participatory programmes

- Develops strategic alliances
- Lobbies government
- Utilises Media
- Mobilises popular support
- Based on concepts of health promotion
- The Current Campaign is to develop a national charter of Health Rights

Women's Health

Seeks to empower women to promote their own wellbeing

- Uses participatory methods
- Maternal & health issues form only part of the concerns
- The current emphasis of the programme is on economic empowerment

Youth and Sexual Health

Seeks to address priority issues in the lifestyle of young people

- Encourages young people to set the agenda
- Identifies the concerns of young people as the basis for the programmes
- Current emphasis is promoting communication between adults and youth on sexual matters

PHILA

Seeks Public Health Interventions through Legislative Analysis

- Analysis of government policies and bills

- Participatory research on high-priority topics
- Empowering communities to understand the legislative process
- Assists portfolio committees in national and provincial parliament
- Current emphasis is on strengthening the new proposed health act

Community Participation

Seeks to achieve active community involvement in the district development process

- Promotes community health committees and community health workers
- Assists in the participatory development of district health systems
- Current emphasis on developing consensus regarding practical approaches to give effect to community involvement

Human Resource Development

Seeks to skill workers, members and staff for health development

- People-centred management
- Participatory community development
- Compassion and accountability
- Conflict resolution
- Current emphasis is developing skills for district health systems development

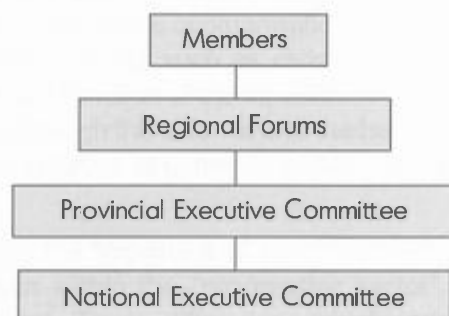
Participatory Research

Seeks to help people become active participants in discovering information important for their own development

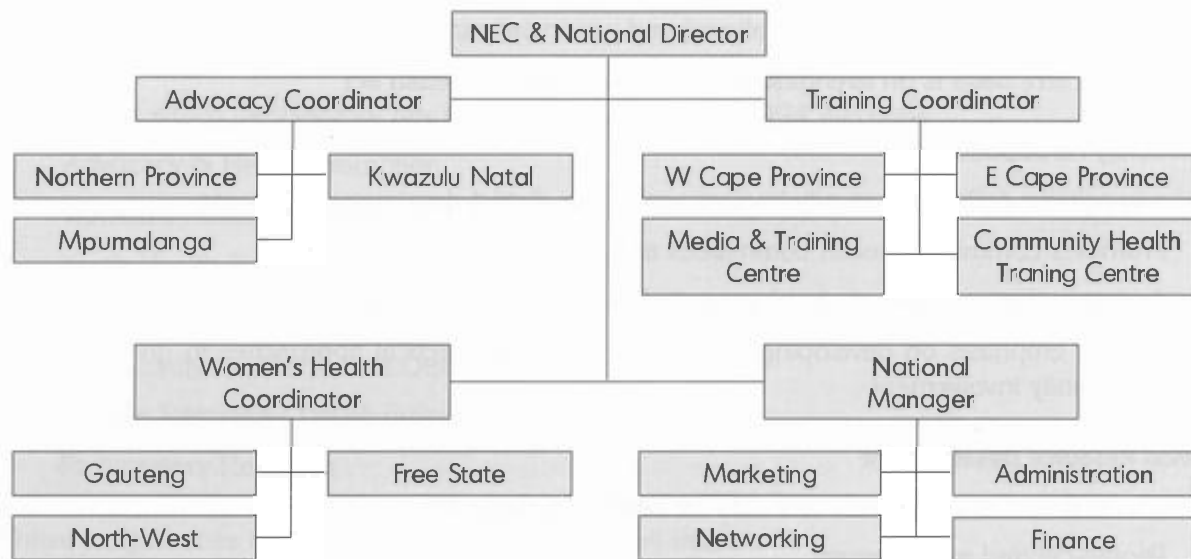
- Popularising participatory research methodology
- Evaluation of high-priority health programmes
- Current emphasis has been on community involvement and primary school nutrition programme

Organisational Structure

The organisation is accountable to grassroots members



Mutual Supervision is the principle



Who Supported the Network Financially?

- Henry Kaiser Family Foundation
- The W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- The Kagiso Trust in association with the European Union
- The Independent Development Trust
- USAID
- and many others

Looking Forward

A time for celebration

- In 1997 South Africa will pass an historic new Health Act that will make health available for all
- PPHC will turn 10 years old