

SPEECH BY DR. PATRIC AMOTH, DURING THE 1ST GRADUATION CEREMONY (VIRTUAL) OF THE KENYA MEDICAL TRAINING COLLEGE COMMUNITY HEALTH EXTENSION WORKERS, HELD AT THE KMTC GRADUATION SQUARE NAIROBI ON 14TH APRIL, 2021 AT 11:00 AM

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to join you in this virtual graduation ceremony for Community Health Extension Workers. I wish to recognize and appreciate all distinguished guests who are gathered here today, to celebrate this important occasion.

Foremost, I congratulate the graduands for their tireless efforts and commitment towards provision of quality health care to Kenyans. We gather here today to celebrate you, for successfully undergoing this rigorous training programme which is tailored to support the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) under the President's Big 4 Agenda. Hongera!

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

The Constitution provides for citizen's fundamental rights and freedom, including the right to the highest attainable standards of health; UHC agenda seeks to deliver on this right. It is also aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 3 on good health and well-being.

UHC aims to ensure 100% of Kenyans have access to quality and affordable health services that they need so as to enhance their socio-economic livelihoods. The UHC journey began with the waiver of user fees in lower -level facilities, followed by the launch of the UHC pilot phase in four Counties. The UHC pilot phase was, by all means, a success story. It led to an increase in the utilization of

health services, with over 1.6 million additional hospital visits made during the 12-month period of the UHC pilot phase.

Key achievements of this phase include the establishment of an additional 208 community health units, staffed by 7,700 community health volunteers. These volunteers attended over 2 million clients, many of whom were served in their homes rather than having to travel to the health centre.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Adequate, skilled and fairly distributed Human Resource for Health is a prerequisite for the attainment of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Both national and county governments have defined roles that are critical and symbiotic in the delivery of health services. For Universal Health Coverage to succeed in Kenya, we must make investments in all health building blocks. Key amongst them is collaborating with like-minded institutions to address Human Resources gaps in the health sector

I am glad that KMTC, with the support of the Ministry of Health, has forged strategic partnerships with County Governments and development partners such as USAID. These inter-sectoral collaborations are key in addressing the social determinants of health by building the capacity of health workers.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

As Kenya and the world grapple with the challenges arising from the novel Coronavirus Disease, the pandemic has reminded all of us of the vital role health workers play to relieve suffering and save lives. The pandemic has also highlighted the extent to which protecting health workers while enhancing their skills and competencies is key to ensuring a functioning health system and a functioning society.

In this regard, I am confident that these graduates have the requisite skills, knowledge, competencies and a set of values to positively impact the society. It is therefore my joy to witness this great milestone. I take this opportunity to remind the graduands to embrace hard work, perseverance and persistence in order to succeed in your undertakings.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

As I conclude, would like to thank KMTC Board led by the Chairperson Prof. Philip Kaloki and the Management team led by Chief Executive Office Prof. Michael Kiptoo, thank you for your commitment and contribution that has ensured the College continues to produce competent health professionals to support health service delivery in the country.

Lastly, I wish to appreciate the USAID funded HRH Kenya Mechanism led by the Country Director, Dr. Janet Muriuki for funding this training and for its sustained efforts in towards strengthening of the Kenyan health workforce.

Once more, congratulations to all graduands.

May God bless you all.
