

8<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2016



## **EMERGENCY NATIONAL COUNCIL ON HEALTH (NCH) MEETING**

**ROTUNDA HALL, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS BUILDING, ABUJA,  
FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY**

### **COUNCIL COMMUNIQUE**

The Emergency Session of the National Council on Health (NCH) to discuss important National Health issues such as the New National Health Policy as well as the outbreak and containment of polio/lassa fever was held at the Rotunda Hall, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Building, Abuja, FCT on 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2016. The National Council on Health is the highest advisory body on health in Nigeria. It comprises the State Commissioners for Health of the 36 States, the Secretary of Health & Human Services Secretariat FCT, with the Honourable Minister of Health as the Chairman of the Council. The Emergency Meeting of the National Council on Health was chaired by the Honourable Minister of Health, Professor Isaac F. Adewole.

2. A total of 201 delegates participated from the Ministry, Departments and Agencies of the Federal Ministry of Health, State Ministries of Health and the Health & Human Services Secretariat of the Federal Capital Territory Administration, Abuja. Also in attendance were representatives from the development partners' community including BMGF, Canadian High Commission, CDC, CHAI, HERFON, JICA, MNCH2, NPHD, PACFAH, PATHS2, UNFPA, UNICEF, USAID, WB, and WHO; as well as delegates from the Health Regulatory Bodies and Professional Associations.

3. The Emergency meeting was convened by the Honourable Minister of Health to formally deliberate on and endorse the new National Health Policy 2016. The meeting also discussed the status of the containment efforts as a result of the recent outbreaks of polio and lassa fever in the Country and also received updates on the status of the operationalization of the National Health Act (NHAAct), as well as the development of the second National Strategic Health Development Plan (NSHDP II).

4. Council received welcome remarks from the Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Binta Adamu Bello, Good will messages from MNCH2, UNFPA and USAID on behalf of the development partners and a Keynote Address from the Honourable Minister of Health, Prof. Isaac F. Adewole.

5. Council also received a presentation from the Honourable Minister of Health, Prof. Isaac F. Adewole, titled "The New National Health Policy (2016)". The presentation dwelled on the rationale for the review, processes involved, the structure and content of the New National Health, as well as the role of the States in fostering its implementation.



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6. Council also received the following additional presentations:

- a. Update on the development of the second National Strategic Health Development Plan (NSHDP II)”; - by the Director, Health Planning, Research and Statistics
- b. Update on the operationalization of the National Health Act (NHAAct)-The role of the States” - by Dr. Akin Oyemakinde Director, Health Planning, Research and Statistics
- c. Update on Polio and Lassa Fever outbreak/containment by both the National Coordinator of NCDC and the ES of the NPHCDA - by Dr. Emmanuel Odu, Ag. Executive Director, NPHCDA;  
- by Dr. Chikwe Ihekweazu, National Coordinator, NCDC

7. Council deliberated extensively on the Draft National Health Policy as presented. After careful consideration of concerns raised by members, Council approved the New National Health Policy 2016.

8. Council noted efforts of the Federal Ministry of Health to fast track further operationalization of the National Health Act 2014. Council debated extensively and approved the Guidelines for the disbursement, Administration and Management of the Basic Health Care Provision Fund as presented. The Guidelines will be shared with members of the National Assembly as part of the steps in ensuring the funds are released in the 2017 budget. The Council also urged the Ministry of Budget and National Planning to provide for the basic health care fund in the 2017 budget. Council has also put up a small committee to provide additional inputs into the guidelines. It is comprised of Commissioners of Health from Lagos, Niger, Delta, Borno, Anambra, and Sokoto States as well as Pharm. Remi Adeseun from PSN/HFN with Department of Health Planning, Research & Statistics as secretariat. Council further discussed and approved the Basic Minimum Health Care Package.

9. Council noted the plans by the Federal Ministry of Health to develop the second National Strategic Health Development Plan (NSHDP II). Council urged the Federal Ministry of Health to fast track the development of the NSHDP II including support for the development of sub-sectoral Strategic Health Development Plans to ensure timely finalization and use as the compass for all investments in the health sector from 2017 onwards. Council noted the progress made by some states to develop their own strategic health plans urged the Federal Ministry of Health to support such states to ensure alignment with the NSHDP II when approved.

10. Council decried the recent outbreaks of wild polio virus in Borno State and Lassa Fever in Delta/Anambra, Bauchi, Gombe, Plateau, Rivers and Ondo States. Council



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acknowledged efforts of the Federal Ministry of Health and State Ministries of Health/FCT HHSS in curtailing disease outbreaks and epidemics. It urged all stakeholders to maintain high level of vigilance and support all efforts to ensure the success of planned interventions to stop the on-going outbreak and eradicate polio from Nigeria as well as to ensure effective control of Lassa Fever across the Country. Council further urged states to further strengthen their existing surveillance and response systems including capacity building for epidemiologists and first responders as well as providing dedicated budget lines for outbreak and epidemic response.

11. Council further appreciated the support of the army medical corps in the struggle to ensure adequate vaccination coverage for all the hard-to-reach communities in Borno State and neighbouring States, the role of development partners in health in the control of epidemics and outbreaks as well as improved performance of the health system at all levels generally, as well as the media and other stakeholders for their contribution towards the success of the meeting.

12. Council reaffirmed its decision to convene the 59<sup>th</sup> NCH in Abia State.

13. The Emergency Session of the NCH was closed following a Vote of Thanks by Dr. Akin Oyemakinde, Director, Health Planning, Research & Statistics, Federal Ministry of Health.