



Welcome to the inaugural issue of Global Health Innovation

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I am pleased to introduce Global Health Innovation, a peer-reviewed, open-access, electronic journal. The journal was conceived as an output of a project on “Developing innovative interdisciplinary biomedical engineering programs in Africa”. Its launch has been prompted by the imperative for health innovation, both social and technological, especially in poorly resourced and underserved populations, and the increasing levels of activity, both in research and practice, targeting these communities. Other factors contributing to the genesis of Global Health Innovation include the limited availability of scholarly venues for the reporting of research on health technology for low-resource settings, and the appreciation that social factors impact considerably on the success of technologies.

The journal has the mission of advancing and disseminating knowledge on all aspects of social and technological innovation for improved health and healthcare. Health innovation encompasses the conception, development and implementation of technologies, products, services, processes and systems, policies and logistical structures, with the purpose of enhancing access to and quality of healthcare, as well as improving wellness of individuals and populations. The journal serves as a platform for scholarly work on innovation at all levels of health promotion and health care - at clinical facilities, in the broader health system, and in communities.

The geographical scope of the journal is global, with an emphasis on research addressing developing-world settings. The journal is also meant to reflect the experiences of the developing world with a view to enhancing inclusive developmental outcomes. In addition to research and review articles and short research communications, the journal publishes commentaries on health innovation or related professional matters, as well as practice perspectives.

The inaugural issue illustrates some of the dimensions of health innovation. The commentary by Ahluwalia et al. calls for the democratization of medical technology through collaborative and user-oriented design, open infrastructures, accessible and integrative biomedical engineering education, harmonisation of regulations and standards, and international partnerships. The practice perspective by Rammer et al. describes the implementation of accessible low-cost human motion analysis technology in laboratories around the world. Saidi examines the varied stakeholder interpretations of a nanotechnology-based anti-tuberculosis drug, and highlights the role of the broader social, political and cultural environment in the assessment of technologies. Sekyonda et al. discuss challenges in the deployment of routine orthopaedic implants in Uganda and describe delivery pathways arising from poverty and scarcity. The practice perspective by Young et al. reflects on the implementation of a project to engage high school learners as active participants in addressing the impact of tuberculosis in their communities, through learners’ exposure to biomedical science and documentary film making. The themes of the inaugural articles are technological as well as social, and there is an emphasis on the importance of context in the deployment of health innovations.

Global Health Innovation provides a dissemination platform for knowledge on health innovation in a diversity of forms, applications and outcomes. It aims to capture research both on and from developing world settings, with the latter serving not only as sources of research questions and as targets for intervention, but also as sources of scholarly knowledge for the global academy.

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