

Editorial

The Kenya Eye Health Journal: A novel tool for enhancing interprofessional collaboration in eye health

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Publication of the Kenya Eye Health Journal (KEHJ) resonates well with the theme of the 2025 Ophthalmological Society of Kenya (OSK) congress which reads: "Bridging the gap: Innovation, Access, and Equity in eye health". Moreover, the first sub-theme is "interprofessional collaboration" (IPC) and the tagline of the Congress is "Local is good, can be better". The World Health Organization defines IPC as the collaborative practice which happens when multiple health workers from different professional backgrounds work together with patients, families, carers, and communities to deliver the highest quality of care.⁽¹⁾ Any individual whose skills can help achieve local health goals should be engaged. Likewise in Kenya, eye health services have been evolving since 1956 and the development of a strong eye health workforce is a top priority.^(2, 3) The workforce comprise of medical and non-medical professionals who play different but complementary roles in clinical care, public health, management, training, and research. These roles cannot be optimally performed without effective IPC strategies and the creation of KEHJ is one such strategy.

In early 2024, the Scientific and Education Committee of the OSK initiated the publication of KEHJ and the OSK Council appointed an autonomous editorial board to manage the journal. A baseline situation analysis had revealed that production of KEHJ is feasible and sustainable since Kenya has a well-established eye health system with plenty of unpublished information and supportive eye health partners.⁽⁴⁾ The journal therefore opened a primary outlet for the dissemination of eye health innovations and research by all eye health professionals and partners. The first issue of the journal was launched during the annual OSK Congress on November 28, 2024.⁽⁴⁾ The online journals and corresponding articles are available with open access at <https://journals.osk.or.ke/> and there is limited circulation of printed copies.

The KEHJ promotes IPC in eye health because of:

An organisational structure that supports a team-

based approach: The journal is managed by a reputable, autonomous editorial board whose members are recruited from different professions. The eligibility criteria for appointment as a board member include being actively involved in research, having published in scientific journals, and participating in peer review.

A broad scope: The journal was created with the sole aim of advancing research by all eye health professionals and teams. Furthermore, the journal promotes diversity of expertise of authors by accepting articles from all eye health and related disciplines such as clinical practice, public eye health, basic sciences, and eye health economics, among others.⁽⁴⁾

An all-inclusive peer reviewers process: KEHJ involves all qualified individuals in peer review processes, irrespective of whether they are eye health professionals or not.

Training by and for all: The Board is organising training on how to write and review journal articles during continuing medical education, conferences, and workshops for all eye health professionals. The resource persons and trainees are drawn from all eye health professionals.

Wide dissemination and distribution: The online and print journals are distributed to readers from different institutions and organisations in Kenya and abroad.

The KEHJ Editorial Board endeavours to promote this great mission of strengthening IPC in eye health and welcomes all eye health professionals and sponsors to submit articles for publication and offer support to the journal. The Board continues to encourage publication of collaborative research by eye care and allied disciplines such as project management, health economics and biomedical engineering, among others. Additionally, the Board will actively look for and publish stories of successful multidisciplinary teams' special projects.

On behalf of the OSK Council and the KEHJ Editorial Board, the Editor-in-Chief would like to sincerely thank the Ministry of Health, Christian Blind Mission (CBM), Sightsavers, Fred Hollows Foundation, Operation Eyesight Universal and CBM Global for their generous support towards the publication of the KEHJ.

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