



## Letter to the Editor

Print ISSN 2645-2464; E ISSN 2695-1770

### **Curricula review for ND and HND and the newly released Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards (CCMAS) in Health Information Management: Prospects and possible challenges to HIM practice in Nigeria**

Abubakar Gidandikko Magaji<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Health Records Officers' Registration Board of Nigeria, Abuja, Nigeria

Corresponding author: E-mail: [abubakarmagaji@gmail.com](mailto:abubakarmagaji@gmail.com)

*Edited by IT Adeleke; submitted on 04.10.2023; peer reviewed by AA Adebisi, U Isah; accepted 17.11.2023; published 18.12.2023.*

*Please cite as: Magaji AG. Curricular review for ND and HND and the newly released Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards (CCMAS) in Health Information Management: Prospects and possible challenges to HIM practice in Nigeria. Intl J Health Recs & Info Mgt. 2023;6(1):42-43.*

**Conflict of interest:** None declared.

**Funding disclosure:** No funding was solicited for nor obtained for this study.

#### **Dear Editor,**

The health sector globally is a fast-growing sub-sector of the social services. In the same vein; Health Information Management (HIM) is transiting from the traditional way of practice to involve Information Technology, which is required for the provision of fast, accurate, reliable, complete, and timely health information for effective planning and informed decision making.

Health Records Officers' Registration Board of Nigeria (HRORBN) as a regulatory agency for Health Information Management profession has earmarked a lot of resources to reform HIM training and practice in the country. The Nigeria health sector cannot maximally function without comprehensive HIM, which is the backbone of the Health Information System (HIS). In recent times, HIM training and practice have been technologically driven however, in the course of evolution, the profession has over the years witnessed many challenges due to inadequate human resources, infrastructures and nonuniform IT solutions. While these challenges continue to impose a negative impact on the profession, training for HIM in Nigeria remains at middle level cadres (ND/HND) for decades. These training are still domiciled in Schools of Health Information Management under the

University Teaching Hospitals and some colleges in the country. This ugly situation has resulted in inconveniencing some professionals to cross the shores of the country to other countries to study Bachelor of Science in Health Information Management (BSc HIM). As a result of the non-availability of public universities in Nigeria that run BSc in HIM. The curricula used in training ND/HND are obsolete and long overdue for review since 2019 as the last review was carried out in 2014.

These menace mentioned above roused the Board to start thinking out of the box and finally resolved to source for solutions, which include but are not limited to a review of ND/HND Curricular. This is tailored to achieve fundamental skills, knowledge and experiences that must be covered for would-be graduates to be qualified. A couple of years ago, the HRORBN sought the collaboration of NUC and constantly and consistently continues to follow up on the issue of BSc HIM at the Commission for approval.

Glad to let you know that, the HRORBN in collaboration with NBTE has successfully reviewed ND/HND curriculum. The review was effected from 28th November to 3rd December 2022 at NBTE Consult, No. 9 Kajuru Close, Unguwar Rimi GRA, Kaduna, Kaduna State. The

curricula were reviewed to meet the current needs of the profession and society in general. During the review, emphasis was laid on the current trend and global best practices in HIM as obtainable globally. The areas such as e-Health (Electronic Health Records and Informatics) and other relevant specializations were satisfactorily dealt with.

The recently released CCMASS by the NUC is the product of efforts that the HRORBN put in place to salvage the image of the profession. This great achievement is a foundation for the effective growth of the profession as many universities including National Open University of Nigeria have been waiting for the CCMASS to run B. HIM in their respective universities. Although the CCMASS is 65% (105 Units) presently, the HRORBN is working round the clock to ensure it is 100% complete by inputting the remaining 35% (45 Units). All the courses omitted in the document will be satisfactorily captured as part of the 35% (45 Units).

This development would end the era of an exodus of professionals to foreign countries for BSc in HIM, cutting down the effect of foreign exchange, taking the risk of traveling by road, risk of rampant insecurity and difficulties of learning the foreign language of some countries. The newly approved CCMASS will provide opportunities for holders of MSc and Ph.D. in HIM as universities would be desirously in need of human resources.

The reviewed curriculum would expose the graduates to sound skills, knowledge and experience required to compete favorably with other health professionals in the health sector. It will also introduce them to current trends and global best practices obtainable for employment. Notwithstanding, the reviewed curricular and newly released CCMASS may have some challenges as presently we do not have enough manpower to operationalize the documents. The number of HIM professionals with MSc and PhD in HIM is very limited. The intellectual content of the documents is far reached, but having adequate manpower to impact it is another problem. In conclusion, the HRORBN still has a role to play in organizing workshops/seminars and tutors courses to update the knowledge and skills of the lecturers for positive impact of the documents.

Thank you.