

GRADUATION CEREMONY- Thursday 19 NOVEMBER 2020

FACULTY OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES & UOM TRUST

Guest Speaker- Dr Laurent Musango, WHO Representative

- *Chancellor, Dr Louis Jean Claude Autrey*
- *Vice-Chancellor Professor Dhanjay Jhurry, CSK, GOSK*
- *Pro-Vice Chancellors*
- *Members of the Congregation*
- *Distinguished academics*
- *Distinguished guests*
- *Graduands*
- *Parents, Ladies and Gentlemen.*

First of all, thank you for choosing me as a Guest of Honour for this ceremony. It is really a pleasure for me, not because it is related to health or related to my position of WHO Representative in Mauritius, but because I am also a teacher, and former Dean of School of Public Health in my country (Rwanda). Still now I am a visiting professor of Policy and Planning and Strengthening Health Systems in the Free University of Brussels/Belgium. You can now imagine how excited I was when I received this invitation to be part of this academic ceremony.

*Dear graduands of the University of Mauritius **today is your day**. I'm convinced that by now, **you have already been equipped with all you need to know and to face the next stage of your life**.*

So today, I've chosen to share with you a bit about some realities on the new life that you are starting very soon and challenges that are awaiting you.

*I will start by talking about the important **role** of doctors/health workers in our society. What patients/clients are **expecting from you**? And then how **confidentiality is one of the important expectation** from the patients.*

- *Doctors/health workers are important agents through which the scientific understanding is expressed. But medicine is more than the sum of our knowledge about diseases. Medicine concerns the experiences, feelings, and interpretations of human beings in often extraordinary moments of fear, anxiety, and doubt.*

There is nothing nobler or that can bring you satisfaction than saving human lives. A doctor/health worker must always try to do his / her best to help a patient.

- **Society's primary expectation** is that individuals will receive the services of the health workers. They want caring and compassionate treatment, with their confidentiality respected and their dignity preserved. Furthermore, they want to retain control of the direction of their own treatment.
- **Patient confidentiality** is one of the most important pillars of medicine. Protecting the private details of a patient is not just a matter of moral respect, it is essential in retaining the important bond of trust between the health workers and the patient.

From my own experience, how can you achieve that, three simple secrets:

- **Build good relationships with your patients.** While it's tempting to spend more time with 'happy' patients, it is in your best interests to make an effort to build a good relationship with patients who seem unhappy or who are panicking
- **Employ two-way communication,** allow your patients to talk to you, patients want doctors and nurses to communicate at a level they understand, use simple and understandable words.
- **Be proactive** especially when things are going wrong.

How to measure this satisfaction of your patients or your clients.

I'll give you an Example of Satisfaction Measure by my Personal Example.

My parents were refugees, so I was born into the refugee family, and I did my general medicine under these conditions, when I finished my studies, I worked in a private clinic and you know that in private clinics, they offer the opportunity to patients to choose their own doctor.

*We were three general practitioners, but at my door there was a **very long queue** compared to that of the other two fellow doctors. According to this success, there are patients who do not even know my name and they were coming in saying, "we want the Rwandese doctor, not someone else".*

This is a measure of satisfaction, if patients have the choice to choose their doctor and you have more patients than others, it should be noted that they are satisfied with your services. Fortunately, for this example, the remuneration was also related to the number of consultations made. So, I was well-paid compared to my colleagues.

What are the most challenges you will be faced to?

1. ***Lack of advancement opportunities and mentoring.*** Lack of advancement opportunities posed a significant challenge in the health workers profession, including in-house skills training, education reimbursement, technology training and opportunity for innovation.
2. ***Work overload.*** — especially in the catastrophic situation and outbreaks (the current situation of COVID-19 is a good example that you can see in USA, Europe, India, Brazil, South Africa among others), with the consequence of another challenge of which is inadequate amount of time spent with patients or ***not enough time spending with patients***, or being obliged to choose patient according to the level of severity of cases.
3. ***Poor salary.*** Poor salary is an issue when you will try to compare yourselves with other colleagues who were at the same university but in another domain. Try to be creative, create opportunity, don't wait for opportunity to come to you.
4. ***Poor organizational culture.*** As young professionals, maybe you will come with innovation but without an agreement of implementing them by your supervisor, this can create a frustration.

Capitalize your opportunities and mitigate your challenges.

Vaccine on the international market.

- *Currently, around 200 candidate vaccines are at some stage of development. Of these, at least 45 candidate vaccines are in human trial. About 11 are in phase III trials. There are several others currently in phase I/II, which will enter phase III in the coming 2 months.*
- *The 10 vaccines on the phase III are from the following labs:*
 - *Sinovac*
 - *Wuhan Institute of Biological Products/Sinopharm*
 - *Beijing Institute of Biological Products/Sinopharm*
 - *University of Oxford/AstraZeneca*
 - *CanSino Biological Inc./Beijing Institute of Biotechnology*
 - *Gamaleya Research Institute*
 - *Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies*
 - *Novavax*
 - *Moderna/NIAID*
 - *BioNTech/Fosun Pharma/Pfizer*
- *Candidate vaccines can be of various types – virus vaccines using live attenuated virus, viral vector vaccines, protein-based vaccines, and nucleic acid or RNA and DNA vaccines, which are completely new platforms.*

- *Phase III trials for some candidate vaccines began in July 2020. The results from this large-scale trial phase (enrolling at times 30 000-60 000 people) will begin to come in at the end of the year, possibly from end of November. This would be the minimal data needed for emergency use authorization by WHO – on efficacy, and on safety.*
- *After the data is available, regulatory authorities will need to assess the safety and efficacy, and manufacturing for approved vaccines will begin.*
- *Given this timeline, expected by WHO, doses to begin arriving in countries in the middle of 2021 (second or third quarter).*
- *A limited number of vaccines may be available for high-risk groups starting from the first quarter of 2021.*
- *Mauritius committed with COVAX for 20% of its population which is around 240.000 doses of vaccines.*

To conclude, on behalf of all of you I offer gratitude to your parents, teachers/professors as well as to the University of Mauritius itself, your Government etc.... for their contribution on your scholarships that allow you to be graduated today. Because, by choosing to put you here, ***today you all have been placed in a position of advantage amongst your peers due to the knowledge you've had.***

Once again congratulations. From now, you will be the ambassadors of the University of Mauritius across your country and abroad. You must play a big role for advocacy.

Thank you very much for your attention.