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 National

Medical schools to teach professional subjects

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Kampala

A review of the medical curricula will, starting next academic year, require all students studying a health course to undergo minimum competence training.

For example, in addition to a student studying medical knowledge and clinical skills, Prof. Sarah Kiguli of Makerere University said they also need to learn professionalism, communication skills, leadership and management skills and health promotion and disease prevention in their five years of study.

“Most of the medical curricula are content and process based. There is an outcry for professionalism. We don’t know how to communicate to patients and the community,” Prof. Kiguli said. “Some of the areas like critical inquiry, patient care, communication skills, continuous improvement of healthcare through reflective practice, leadership and management skills need to be strengthened.”

She was speaking at a stakeholders meeting in Kampala on Friday involving a partnership between Gulu, Busitema, Mbarara, Kampala International and Makerere universities under a US fund of \$130m (Shs286billion) over five years. The grant is hoped to transform African medical education and increase the number of healthcare workers.

According to Prof. Nelson Sewankambo, the principal Makerere University College of Health Sciences, the proposed competencies for Uganda’s medical education are expected to improve people’s health through training medical graduates with skills to deal with health needs of individuals, families and communities.

Quality focus

“Quality is not a static concept. There is

need for continued improvement. High quality healthcare cannot be delivered by systems and institutions content to rest upon their laurels – this indicates the importance of the science of quality improvement,” he added.

Mr Robert Odok Oceng, the commissioner higher education, recognised the need for government to increase funding to universities for continued review of the curricula at institutions of higher learning to match the demand at the world of work.

“There is need to increase funding to universities for expansion, equipment, attraction and retention of staff,” Mr Oceng said.