PA-118 RESEARCH ETHICS CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE NEXT DECADE – 'BEYOND TRAINING' – RHINNO ETHICS AS MODEL TO IMPROVE AND ACCELERATE ETHICS REVIEW OF HEALTH RESEARCH

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Background Wide social disparities and weak health care systems in Africa make timely development of essential medicines, vaccines, medical technologies in and for Africa a desperate need, given the burden of diseases facing the continent. We estimate that it takes, on average, 1.5 years to get research ethics clearance in many African institutions for complex research proposals needed to deal with disease and solutions. Such delay comes with potentially high human costs. The need for Research Ethics Committees (RECs) to promptly and competently review protocols is therefore critical. Competent and efficiently RECs can save human lives, reduce costs and ultimately contribute to scientific development.

Methods Research for Health and Innovation Organiser (RHInnO Ethics) is both an information management system and an expert-decision support system for individual RECs that is currently installed in 29 RECs in 8 African countries. It enables online, better quality, efficient and standardised reviews that can reduce review time in complex, multicentre trials by 12 months or more.

Results What progress has been achieved in the process of implementing RHInnO Ethics since its inception in 2013? While training courses (long and short) have been considered as the mainstay of research ethics capacity building for decades, the development of this software-as-a-service platform has led to a more substantial understanding of how we can both accelerate and enhance the quality of ethics review of health research. We present experiences of our end users on how RHInnO Ethics contributes in enhancing the quality and efficiency of ethics review process.

Conclusions Health research ethics review needs to go beyond training. We also present new functionalities in RHInnO *Ethics* version 2.0, including EthiCALL-(*RECs connecting with other RECs worldwide*), EthiXPERT (*RECs updates on research ethics developments*) as well as Invoicing, REC accreditation and pharmacovigilance functionalities that promise to revolutionise the research ethics review process in Africa and beyond.