



CASE STUDY

Improving service efficiency in Poly District Hospital, Enugu

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Mrs Mary Ozobu undergoing ultrasound scan at the Poly Clinic

Until recently, the Poly sub-district health centre in the Enugu North Local Government Area had faced some serious problems, though lack of demand was not among them: its client flow was huge. “We had severe power outages,” said the centre’s Chief Medical Officer, Dr S. N. Chukwu. “We were accustomed to providing delivery services with the aid of a torch light or head lamp.” The health centre also lacked ultrasound facilities.

“We would ask pregnant women to travel significant distances to get ultrasound service.” said Dr Chukwu. Even women in emergencies were not spared: “Sometimes, during labour, we require ultrasound services but are unable to get ready access to them.” Dr Chukwu mostly relied on his years of experience to save the life of a woman and child. He usually asked for and got emergency ambulance services to take the woman to an ultrasound centre. But in March 2013,

the UKaid-funded PATHS2 programme supported the hospital with an inverter and generator to facilitate constant power supply.

“The constant power source is such a relief,” said Dr Chukwu. “Now we provide services with proper lighting, which improves our efficiency.” The health facility also received an ultrasound machine. “I was part of the team that PATHS2 supported to visit Lagos for the training on how to operate and care for the machine appropriately.”

Following the training, Dr Chukwu faced some challenges in operationalising the ultrasound machine. “The state had no laboratory technician in its employment, and we wanted someone who could provide 24-hour service.” Not deterred, Chukwu worked with private technicians. “The arrangement with the private technicians made it possible for us to provide ultrasound service.”

Relieved clients now find the service seamless. Mrs. Mary Ozobu, who was visiting the hospital for her routine antenatal care, had only to walk next door from the maternity room to get ultrasound service. “This is a lot easier, and it is cheaper compared with elsewhere,” she said.

“We merely charge minor fees to help us pay the two laboratory technicians who provide the 24-hour service, and to obtain the routine consumables,” said Dr Chukwu. “It is now easier to do our job. In the event of a labour, we can do an ultrasound and convey the woman directly to the theatre quickly and safely.”

Through PATHS2 support, the health facility is exploring more space alternatives to allow it accommodate the increasing client flow. An average 30 pregnant women got ultrasound services at Poly clinic since the ultrasound machine was installed in April 2013. 330 deliveries were conducted with improved facilities between April and June 2013.

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The Partnership for Transforming Health Systems Phase Two (PATHS2) is a six-year development initiative that aims to ensure Nigeria achieves important health-related Millennium Development Goals.

Funded by UKAID from the Department for International Development, PATHS2 is working in partnership with the Government of Nigeria and other stakeholders to improve the planning, financing, and delivery of sustainable health services for those most in need. In addition to its work at the federal level, the PATHS2 programme is implemented in the five states of Enugu, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, and Lagos. PATHS2 follows the successful PATHS programme, which was implemented from 2002 to 2008.

PATHS2 is managed by Abt Associates, in association with Options, Mannion Daniels, and the Axios Foundation.

