



CASE STUDY

Workload Assessment Paves Way for New Health Workers in Enugu State

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A newly recruited health worker attends to a client in Nara Health Centre

Nigeria understands the importance of having the right number of health workers (HWs) in health facilities in the country, especially in rural areas where the tendency to seek out traditional, unlicensed patent medicine vendors, or self-medication remedies is high. Plenty has been discussed nationally and internationally about the dearth of HWs in rural areas. The challenges that led to this situation are complex, and mostly political, but do not change the fact that the high rate of maternal and child mortality in the course of birth can be reduced, if the right systems are in place.

Development partners have often sensitised communities in Nigeria about the importance of HF antenatal care and delivery. But some pregnant women will not change their practice of home delivery without assurance of 24/7 HWs in the nearest facility. They will not plan for a delivery in a facility where they are aware that there are no HWs, or where they are frequently absent from work.

In Enugu State, PATHS2, a development partner funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) is working with the government to assess its human resource for health (HRH) challenges and put systems in place to fill any gaps which exist. An assessment of the number of staff working in public HFs and how much work they do within normal work hours (workload analysis) was undertaken in October 2011.

The findings and recommendations were shared with the State Ministry of Health (SMoH), Local Government Service Commission (LGSC) and Local Government Areas (LGAs). As a result, the LGSC and some LGAs began recruitment and redistribution of health workers in May 2012. In Uzouwani and Igbo Etili LGAs, 57 senior Community Health Extension

Workers (CHEWs) and 73 junior CHEWs were recruited respectively, and posted to the health centres (HCs) to begin work. Nsukka LGA recruited 39 health workers, comprising CHEWs and midwives. Udi LGA is also in the process of doing the same.

Chief S.I. Abugwu, Health Head of Department in Igbo-Etiti LGA gives his perspective. “Fortunately, His Excellency the Governor of Enugu State gave approval for the recruitment of seventy three health workers in Igbo-Etiti. After the recruitment, we were at a crossroads on how to post them. But we used the data from the workload analysis (WA) organized by PATHS2, which revealed which HCs were in dire need of staff and posted them accordingly”.

Thirty year old Amu Charity is a registered CHEW, employed by the Igbo-Etiti LGA and posted to the Ozalla HC on May 28, 2012. She is very happy about her new job. “I was attending to patients at home before I got this job. My salary working for the LGA is much higher than what I used to earn. Now, all my patients come to the HC, because I direct them to come there”.

Mrs. Ezeorah Mary is a senior CHEW and the Officer in Charge at Nara HC, Nkanu East LGA. She is 46 years old and has worked at the HC since 2007. She is



Mrs. Mary Ezeorah, Officer-in-Charge, Nara Health Centre

very happy about the new staff recently posted to the HC by the LGA. “Yes”, she says. “I have more support and I am very happy. Before now we were two, and couldn’t render 24hrs services. But since these new health workers were sent to us in April, we always have at least two people on duty at every hour of the day”.

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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.



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