

Community Health Workers Providing Family Planning

What are the benefits?

Expanded services benefit family planning users

- Bring convenient services to those who cannot travel far to a facility or cannot leave home
- Help to meet need for family planning
- Increase clients' access to other services that the community health workers may offer
- Give clients a provider who lives in their community and is familiar to them
- Give people easier access to health information

Methods community health workers can provide

Pills
Injectables
Male and female condoms
Emergency contraceptives
LAM counseling
Fertility awareness methods
Spermicides
Withdrawal counseling

Tasks community health workers can do

- Counsel for informed choice
- Screen for medical eligibility
- Provide methods and offer resupply
- Counsel about common problems and side effects
- Provide information on women's and men's fertility
- Refer to the clinic:
 - for methods available only in the clinic
 - for management of side effects, if needed
 - to address new health conditions
 - whenever a client wants to be referred

What is the role of the community health worker?

- Provide high-quality services
- Know the needs of the community
- Help to create demand for services that promote health
- Encourage community members' efforts to stay healthy
- Prepare for visits of mobile outreach teams
- Work with supervisor to fix any problems that arise
- Link the community with the health care system
- Keep good records and keep track of supplies in order to request more in time to avoid running out

Sharing tasks benefits clinic-based providers

- Frees more highly trained staff to provide more expert care
- Allows more time to give each client the help and counseling that she or he needs
- Can reduce work load at the clinic

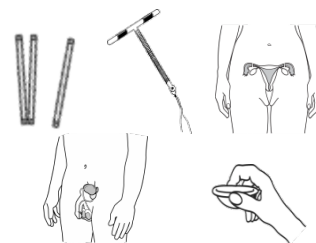
Sharing tasks benefits community health workers

- Offers opportunities to train and learn new skills
- Can lead to more guidance and supervision
- Expands their role in the community

Methods that clinic-based staff provide

All those that community health workers provide, plus:

Implants
Intrauterine devices
Female sterilization
Vasectomy
Diaphragms



Tasks clinic-based providers do

- Provide methods to clients, including those referred by community health workers
- Counsel about and treat side effects
- Manage complications
- Screen for medical eligibility if clinical judgment is needed
- Address any client needs that the community health workers cannot
- Supervise and support community health workers

How do facilities support community health workers?

- Ensure continuity between community health services and facility-based services
- Provide regular supportive supervision to guide, motivate, and ensure that community health workers are functioning effectively and efficiently
- Provide mechanisms for identifying and solving problems
- Manage supply logistics for community health program
- Ensure proper waste disposal of needles and syringes

Research on provision of injectables by community health workers. A recent WHO meeting reviewed available evidence and found that, with appropriate training, community health workers, including volunteers, can effectively screen clients, counsel on side effects, and give injections safely.



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