



STEERING THE RUDDER IN UNCHARTED WATERS

From the Editor



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This edition, which marks the last quarter of the project's 3rd year of implementation, features the training of over 69 staff of the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria (PCN) by Lagos Business School.

This strategic activity which was planned to bridge some of the gaps identified in the report of the organization capacity assessment (OCA) will strengthen the council's capacity to discharge all its regulatory mandate including supervision of community pharmacists (CP) and Patent and Proprietary Medicines Vendors (PPMVs) in Nigeria. Sequel to the MoU signing between the Council and different Schools of Health Technology in the previous quarter, a Training of Trainers (TOT) also took place in Lagos. This is a significant milestone in preparation for the Mandatory Entry Point Training Programme (MEPTP)/Tiered accreditation training.

In 2019, some IntegratE providers in Lagos were trained on DMPA-SC/SI, a family planning method, in support of the Federal Ministry of Health's efforts to introduce and increase client's accessibility to that method. Findings from a study carried out by Population Council in this quarter lent credence to the importance of this family planning method from a provider as well as client perspective.

As the project begins to wind down activity in preparation to close out, a number of interesting impact stories continues to emerge. This edition you will read about a young FP-antagonist turned advocate as she shares her experience with the team in Kaduna during one of our "voices from the field" interview.

Partnering with PCN to improve regulatory efficiency through capacity development



Following the recommendation of the organizational capacity assessment (OCA) of PCN conducted in 2019, the project worked with the leadership of the Council to review and prioritize critical courses that will equip the staff with the requisite knowledge and skills to regulate and supervise CPs and PPMVs across the country.

At the end of the meeting, six areas of gap and courses were agreed on and Lagos Business School (LBS) was recommended to provide the required capacity building. The capacity development program commenced in August and by end of September, over 69 staff of PCN have been trained on courses ranging from Executive Program on Strategy to Strategic Operation Planning for Middle and Senior Managers, Quality Services Delivery Acculturation, Curriculum Development and Strategic Innovation Training and Routine Data Management System. The trainings had staff from relevant departments across all PCN zonal offices and Head office in attendance. It is hoped that the key learning from the training will continue to strengthen and transform the council's operation and improve its overall regulatory functions.



Handing over copies of the fully executed MoU by PCN to the head of participating Schools of Health technology in Lagos during the training of trainers.

PCN flags off the pilot Mandatory Entry Point Training Programme in Lagos State

Sequel to the MoU signing between PCN and different Schools of Health Technology in the previous quarter, a training of trainers (TOT) took place in Lagos between 10th -14th of August, 2020.

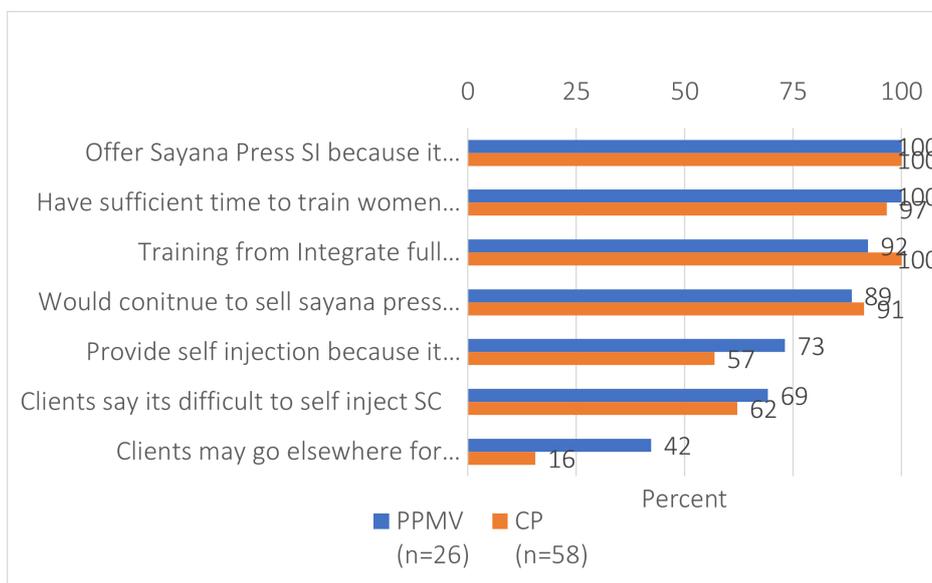
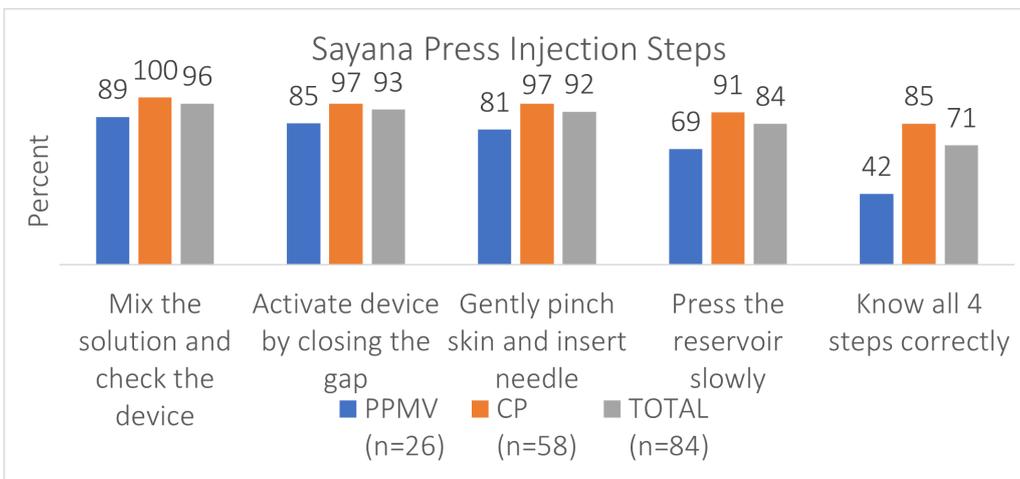
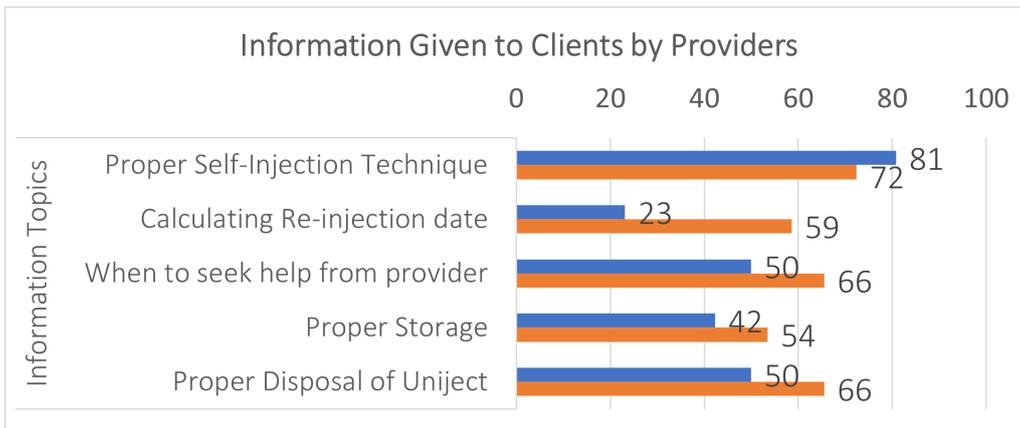
A total of 24 participants from three Schools of Health Technology participated and tentative dates in October 2020 were agreed on for the cascade training but this will depend on government's decision to re-open schools after the COVID-19 restrictions, as the School of Health Technology is classified as a tertiary institution.

Self- Injection from the perspective of Providers and Clients

Between July and August 2020, the Population Council began a DMPA-SC (Sayana Press) self-injection (SI) study among 84 providers who were previously trained on the method and 28 clients who received SI services between January and July 2020. Providers were asked about their experience providing SI services, the SI training, and perceptions about the service provision.

Clients were also interviewed on their experiences with Sayana Press services provided by a CP/PPMVs. Some of the findings from the study showed that most providers correctly mentioned all 4 key injection steps. A significant number had trained at least one woman on self-injection and almost all providers (CP/PPMV) will continue selling Sayana Press and training women on self-injection. It was also noted that a major barrier to self-injection was clients' fear of the method.

But even with this, a good number feel confident about self-injecting Sayana Press following the training they had received and actually applied this method by themselves at home. Even though the key limitations of this study was the size of the sample interviewed, it does provide some insights on the opportunities that exist with self-injection and sets the tone for wider studies across the country.



From an antagonist to a strong advocate

SHARING THE EXPERIENCE OF A SATISFIED FP CLIENT



Fauza Madu (real name withheld) is a young woman of 22 years of age, 4 years in marriage and a mother of 2 girls, living with her husband Malam Madu Aminu (real name withheld) in Amaru community, a rural part of Zaria LGA, Kaduna state. She was strongly against the use of modern child birth spacing methods but later accepted and even became an advocate for Family Planning along with her family members. IntegratE interviewed her on how her views of family planning changed so dramatically within a short period of making contact with one of the trained providers. In her words;

"I got my second pregnancy when I was actually not ready for it, even though my family and the community think it was okay since, my first child was about 8 months then. Only a few sympathized with me. I suggested abortion to my husband but he feels it is like killing a living human, hence, he disagreed. I had to bear all the burdens; taking care of my daughter while being unwell due to the second pregnancy. It was Allah Who saved my life and delivered me safely. I believed there are problems associated with the Family Planning, deviation from faith, fear of poverty, which she considered wrong and used to believe that all these are against religion of Islam. But now realized, I was wrong as I and my mother have been using it without any problem. My family now advocate for family planning".

IntegratE: What happened to you that led to your change in opinion?

"After delivering my second daughter, I was worried and had internal conflict; I was against the use of family planning and at the same time I want to decide when I should get pregnant. I was afraid that I will be sinning and also cause harm to myself if I use any of the modern Family Planning methods. Shortly after my post-natal bleeding stops, my husband started coming to me and I cannot deny having the affair. I was with this understanding strongly until one day, when my husband informed me of someone with whom he discussed the safety in using Family Planning. At first, I did not believe it could be. So, he narrated what your IPC agent told him but wanted me to meet the lady perhaps I could also ask further".

IntegratE: Were you able to meet the Interpersonal Communication Agent (IPCAs) yourself and what happened?

"My husband invited the IPC agent, and interestingly, the agent decided to listen to my concerns first, which are all around problems resulting from using the Family Planning methods and the general understanding I have about them".

IntegratE: So, how did the IPC agent respond to your concerns and understanding?

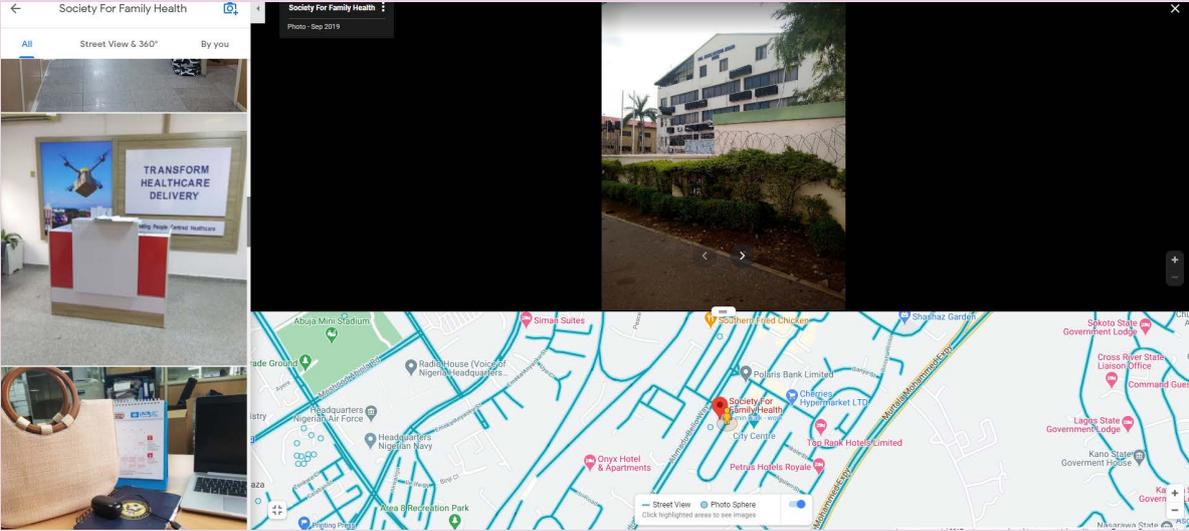
*"The agent asked me about the methods I know or heard about after which she explained each and every one of the methods, and she made me understand that; **Problems encountered by women who uses Family Planning are mostly due to wrong use, lack of proper assessment of client before using the methods, Some of the drugs have side effect which goes away within a short time and are not harmful, There are methods without side effect that can help me prevent pregnancy until I am ready to conceive and a trained qualified Health Care professional can help me.**"*

IntegratE: So, what then follows after these points were clear from the IPC agent?
"I was happy with the information I received but still uncertain until the agent refers me to Malama (one of the trained Tier 2 PPMVs) who further discussed in more details all the methods and I chose the implant which was given to me".

IntegratE: Now, how do you and your family became advocates of Family Planning?
"I have been safe and happy since I started using the Family Planning and had recommended to my mother who is still giving birth and had never used any method in her life. She went and started and later convinced her friends to go. My father said he had always wanted my mother to use those methods but she never wanted and now he is happy she started after giving birth to 10 children. He also told his friends some of whom were able to support or initiate the idea to their wives. And the good thing is that none of us have any problem as a result of the Family Planning. And the misconception was clarified for me by my father and my husband making reference to our Imam Sheikh Maraya Zaria".

IntegratE: Thank you so much Hajjiya for giving us your time for this interview.

connect with us



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