



EXPANDING ACCESS TO QUALITY FAMILY PLANNING AND PRIMARY HEALTHCARE SERVICES

The role of Integrated Supportive Supervision (ISS) in strengthening Family Planning (FP) service delivery on the IntegratE project.

Policy Brief

IntegratE Project
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1.0 BACKGROUND

Integrated Supportive Supervision (ISS) is an intervention that facilitates quality improvement by ensuring adequate oversight as well as skills and knowledge transfer to health service providers. ISS has also been adapted to enhance the performance and effectiveness of community health workers.¹⁻² The process of implementing ISS involves the setting up of monitoring teams to assess service delivery processes and activities of family planning (FP) providers to improve value and proficiency³⁻⁴. This brief highlights the potential for ISS implemented by the IntegratE project team and stakeholders to enhance the quality of FP service delivery among the PPMVs in Lagos and Kaduna States, Nigeria.

The IntegratE Project

The IntegratE Project is a 4-year initiative (2017-2021) funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and MSD for Mothers that seeks to increase access to contraceptive methods by involving the private sector (CPs and PPMVs) in FP service delivery in Lagos and Kaduna States. IntegratE is implemented by a consortium of partners, Marie Stopes International, Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria, Population Council, Pharm Access, and led by the Society for Family Health. IntegratE seeks to establish a regulatory system with the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria (PCN) to ensure that CPs and PPMVs provide quality FP services, comply with FP regulations and report service statistics to the Health Information Management System (HMIS). To achieve this, the IntegratE Project in collaboration with PCN and the FMoH, is implementing three main activities: (1) a pilot 3-tiered accreditation system for PPMVs based on their healthcare qualifications; (2) pilot a hub-and-spoke supervisory model to ensure standard drug stocking practices; and (3) building the capacity of CPs and PPMVs to provide a wider range of FP services and report data to the HMIS. Additional information on IntegratE Project can be found on www.integrateproject.org.ng.

Table 1: Description of Tier Accreditation System

Provider type	Description	Training received
Tier 1 PPMVs	PPMV without healthcare qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FP counseling and referral Refill of oral contraceptives
Tier 2 PPMVs	PPMV with healthcare qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FP counseling and referral Injectable administration Implant insertion and removal
Tier 3 PPMVs	PPMV who are also pharmacy technicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FP counseling and referral Injectable administration Implant insertion and removal
CPs	Outside of accreditation system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FP counseling and referral Injectable administration Implant insertion and removal

Structure of the ISS

The ISS process is a shared responsibility of FP stakeholders and the IntegratE project team in the pilot states of Lagos and Kaduna to ensure quality service delivery by PPMVs and CPs. Some of the stakeholders include; Pharmacist Council of Nigeria (PCN), National Association of Patent and Proprietary Medicines Vendors (NAPPMED), Association of Patent Medicines Vendors (APMEV), State Ministry of Health (SMoH) and State Primary Health Care Development Agency (SPHCDA). The supervision is usually carried out quarterly and a checklist is used to guide this process. The supervisory team is responsible for ensuring compliance, competence, regular and timely documentation of FP services.



A joint team comprising of representatives of KSMoH, PCN and APMEV during an Integrated Supportive Supervisory Visit to a CP (left) and a PPMVs (right) in Kaduna State.

Areas of focus during ISS include:

- Competence and Counselling style

The team looks out for skill and professionalism among FP service providers which is usually identified during “*role-play*” in the course of the ISS visit.

- Documentation

The focus here is on the level of consistency and completeness in the documentation of services rendered by the provider.

- Awareness on avenues for Commodity Purchase

The supervisory team identifies facilities in need of commodities during their visits and guides providers to suppliers of the needed commodities at reasonable price.

- Technical advice on disposal of sharp objects

The ISS teams provides guidance on disposal of sharp objects to FP providers.

- Refresher training on FP service delivery

The ISS team facilitates capacity building sessions for service providers in aspects of FP service delivery that are considered deficient.

2.0. METHODOLOGY

In order to gain insights into the impact of ISS in Lagos and Kaduna States, three (3) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted. FGD 1 consisted of 11 Tier 1 PPMVs, FGD 2 consisted of 11 Tier 2 PPMVs and FGD 3 consisted of 11 CPs 8 PPMV with a fair representation of male and female participants in each FGD. Participation in the FGDs was voluntary, confidentiality was assured, and consent was obtained from all participants. Phone interviews were conducted among seven members of the supervisory team. The FGDs and interviews explored the perceptions about perception about the value of ISS on FP service delivery. The FGDs and interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis.



Interview session with randomly selected FP providers on ISS

3.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Commitment to FP service delivery

The regular ISS visits were useful in ensuring that service providers retained their commitment to “best practice” in FP service delivery.

“The role-play had really improved my counselling skills and now, am better-off using the chart with my clients during counselling than I was before their visits”

Improvement in the documentation of FP services

ISS contributed to improvement in complete and timely documentation of services provided on the FP registers.

“Anytime I remember the supervisory visit, I am compelled to ensure that my FP service documentation on the register and on the summary form is up to date, correctly inputted and well reported. Secondly, since I was once corrected during one of the visit by the supervisory team on the hygiene status of my facility, I don’t take the cleanliness of my pharmacy for granted any longer”

Knowledge on display and disposal of sharp tools

The ISS visits helped some providers to know where to keep and place sharp objects in their facilities and where to dispose used ones.

“Now, I know where to place sharp tools or objects in my facility. Also, I know how and where to dispose them after use as a result of the supervisory visit”

Morale booster

In addition to the technical support provided, the ISS visits boosted the morale of providers and

encouraged them to continue providing vital FP services.

“The team supervisory visits usually boost my morale. It gives me a sense of feeling that I am very important, because my shop is not even in a strategic location”

Platform for knowledge transfer and quality improvement

Government officials viewed ISS visits as unique opportunities for knowledge transfer and quality improvement.

“It has been very useful for us at the state level. Now we are able to go for regular supervision which we have not been doing as we should before. We attend to issues that needs correction during the supervision, monitor and improve the quality of FP services rendered in the state. Also, we can boast of complete Family planning data from both the private and the public vendors”

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is the need to increase role-play during visits as this had been found to reinforce what was taught during the training sessions. The provision of more counselling charts and training manuals will facilitate this process.
- ISS visits should be structured to include key stakeholders relevant to the process and to ensure that progress made with providers is scalable and sustainable.
- Vendors already working at the public facility who might also own a pharmacy or medicine shops should be selected with caution as this may interfere on the quality of service they rendered to the state and integrity level at some point.
system.

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