**Training Anambra State primary health workers on medicine management and provision of management tools: steps towards health systems strengthening for delivering primary health care**

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**Background**

Medicines are key determinants of population health and of society’s trust in the quality and viability of health systems. It’s availability is a measure of the performance of the health facilities and this is facilitated by the presence of essential stock management tools at the primary health care (PHC) level which is the first port of call for majority of the populace. Most of the PHCs are located in the rural areas which have been neglected over the years despite harboring a greater percentage of the State’s population.

**Medicine management is the set of practices aimed at ensuring the timely availability and appropriate use of safe, effective, quality medicines and related products and services in any health-care setting. It involves selection, quantification, procurement, storage and distribution. It’s use requires proper prescribing, packaging, dispensing and counselling and these tasks require qualified health workers or other relevant personnel with appropriate skills.**

**Aims and Objectives**

**This study aimed to assess the effect of training primary health care workers and provision of medicine stock management tools for effective medicine management practices in the primary health centers in Anambra state.**

**Methods**

The study was undertaken in 132 PHCs in Anambra State, Southeast Nigeria. The intervention included provision of medicine stock cards and training on essential medicine management. Data was collected using an observational check list, a pretested questionnaire administered to health workers in-charge of the facilities before the intervention and 6 months after the intervention and in-depth interviews. Data was analysed using SPSS and manual content analysis.

**Key Findings**

**Six months after intervention, of the 132 facilities, knowledge score improved from 31 (23.5%) to** 97(73.5%), while practice score improved from 40 (30.3%) to 81(61.4%) and both were statistically significant (P =0.000..). Mean scores and standard deviation before and after for knowledge (6.10±2.48 and 8.78±2.24) and practice (6.06±3.32 and 8.49±3.37) of medicine management was found to be statistically significant too.

**Reasons for the current practices were found from in-depth interviews to be lack of training and supportive supervision and also lack of regular supply and harmonization of drug stock tools in the State.**

**Conclusion**

**The training led to reduced medicine stock-outs, improved availability and use of medicine stock management tools and proper storage and prescription of medicines. It is therefore recommended that such trainings and interventions should be scaled up in all the PHCs to ensure availability of quality medicines in the PHCs.**