

Abt Associates: Leaders in Health Service Delivery

Abt Associates brings a wealth of practical experience and proven innovative models to strengthen the delivery of health services in both the public and private sectors to improve people's health. Our work in service delivery implementation focuses on applying evidence-based practices, improving quality of care, building local capacity for sustainable interventions, and improving health systems.

We recognize the importance of ensuring linkages between system-level improvements and point-of-service interventions in order to affect sustained changes in service provision, and therefore have refined a "diagonal" approach to health programming to achieve sustained quality improvement of service delivery. This means that we combine a focus on disease-specific or categorical health conditions (vertical approach) with committed efforts to address systemic flaws or gaps in the wider healthcare delivery structure (horizontal approach). Applying this integrated approach to service delivery, Abt Associates focuses on:

- systematic quality improvement, supervision, monitoring and accountability;
- increased coverage and utilization of health care services;
- planning, management and human resources;
- resource distribution, financing, and pharmaceutical supply;
- information sharing, coordination and referral systems; and
- community engagement and mobilization.

ABT ASSOCIATES' CORE COMPETENCIES IN SERVICE DELIVERY:

- Evidence-based clinical guidelines and standards
- Quality assurance and performance improvement
- Behavior change communication to improve provider counseling skills and increase patient demand for services
- Addressing chronic diseases/non-communicable diseases and injuries (NCDI)
- Innovative models of clinical supervision
- Improving surveillance systems
- Pre-service and in-service clinical training in:
 - Integrated Primary Health Care and Family Medicine
 - Maternal Neonatal Child Health
 - Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI)
 - Family Planning/Reproductive Health

SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS OF ABT ASSOCIATES AT WORK

Improving Child Health and Nutrition in Zambia

In Zambia, Abt Associates has improved the quality of child health and nutrition care by introducing community and facility-based IMCI in

all 72 districts in the country, with over 500 health workers trained in IMCI case management. In addition, Abt supported the Ministry of Health to develop Zambia's Essential Nutrition Package and provide 7.8 million children with Vitamin A supplements - resulting in an increase in coverage from 67% in 2005 to 90% coverage in 2008.



A child receiving a Vitamin A supplement capsule in Zambia

Local Solutions to Build Local Capacity

Abt has also introduced the concept of "Clinical Care Specialists," positioned in Provincial Health Offices across Zambia to improve clinical management of HIV/AIDS and other significant health issues. Serving as advisors, mentors, and trainers, Clinical Care Specialists play a critical role in each of Zambia's nine provinces. They have trained hundreds of health workers, have helped improve ART access for hundreds of thousands of new patients, and provide constant supervision, case management and review support, leading to continuous improvement in quality of care given at the facility level.

Improving Quality of Care in Kyrgyzstan

An example of the success of this diagonal approach is Abt Associates introduction of a continuous quality improvement (CQI) program

designed to improve the diagnosis and clinical management of hypertension. Beginning in 2005, the project trained primary care providers through continuing medical education on evidence-based clinical practice guidelines for management of hypertension and supported the Family Group Practice Association (an NGO delegated this function by the Ministry of Health) to introduce facility level quality improvement processes and monitoring. Results have been impressive with a significant increase in routine screenings and hypertension being managed better by doctors and patients. Doctors are now able to prescribe more appropriate and effective drugs, as recommended in the new guideline. These improvements have reduced average systolic and diastolic blood pressures by 23.3 and 8.3, respectively, bringing the majority of patients closer to a healthy blood pressure range after only six months. By the second year of the intervention 47% of hypertension patients had their

blood pressure under control, a significant achievement given that cardiovascular disease represents the greatest burden of disease in Kyrgyzstan. In addition, the diagonal approach facilitates rapid scale-up and approximately 50% of all PHC providers in the country have introduced the hypertension quality improvement program.



Blood pressure check up during antenatal period in Kyrgyzstan

ABT ASSOCIATES AT A GLANCE:

- Abt Associates' International Health Division has 400 employees worldwide and a consultant roster of more than 3,000 professionals with direct technical experience in international development.
- Abt Associates' health specialists are currently working in 40 countries and are implementing more than 60 projects that are collectively valued at more than \$500 million.
- Abt Associates has applied our proven approaches to help more than a dozen countries improve the delivery of health services for more than 15 years.

Enhancing Maternal Health and Family Planning in Jordan

In Jordan, Abt is improving community outreach and counseling efforts, reaching more than 778,800 women. As a result of Abt's efforts, 81,148 women have adopted modern methods of family planning, and a majority of referrals (64% of family planning clients and 59% of breast cancer clients) from outreach efforts have resulted in follow-up visits to health clinics. Abt has introduced Safe Motherhood Committees in government hospitals as an innovative way to improve quality of care in Jordan, and is training both public and private sector maternal and child health service providers in improved service delivery and counseling. Among the key results of family planning activities is enhanced capacity to perform intrauterine device (IUD) insertions, which has increased from 29% to 42% in maternal and child health units.

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Abt Associates Flagship Programs

Health Systems 20/20

www.healthsystems2020.org

Private Sector Partnerships-One

www.psp-one.com

AIDSTAR Sector II

www.abtassociates.com/aidstar

Health Policy Initiative

www.abtassociates.com/hpi

TASC 3

www.abtassociates.com/tasc3

Health Services & Systems Program - Zambia

www.hssp.org.zm



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