

WHA47.9 Maternal and child health and family planning: quality of care

The Forty-seventh World Health Assembly,

Noting the report by the Director-General to the Executive Board on maternal and child health and family planning: current needs and future orientation;

Recalling resolutions WHA32.42 on maternal and child health, including family planning; WHA32.30 on primary health care and monitoring health for all; WHA45.5 on strengthening nursing and midwifery services; and WHA46.18 on maternal and child health and family planning for health;

Noting that the Organization has successfully developed and adapted a number of management and evaluation methods that involve the participation of all levels of the health system and community, that can be rapidly applied to a wide range of service delivery problems, and that may provide guidance on action needed to improve the functioning and performance of maternal and child health and family planning services;

Noting also that several divisions and programmes within WHO are engaged in these fields and that there is a need for a comprehensive, unifying strategy for action and research in the broad area of reproductive health;

Recognizing that enormous progress has been made in many aspects of maternal and child health, as evidenced by the great increase in immunization coverage, accessibility and use of family planning services and numbers of trained attendants at childbirth;

Concerned nonetheless that in many countries such increases in coverage are not having the expected effect because of poor quality of care and performance of health systems;

Emphasizing that rapid progress in the health of mothers and the newborn and in family planning can be assured by improving the quality of care and the performance of the existing services and staff;

Recognizing that a number of different international and national governmental and nongovernmental organizations are providing technical and financial support at country level,

1. **URGES** all Member States:

- (1) to give priority to assessing and improving the quality of care for women and children in district-based health systems, as part of a global approach to family health;
- (2) to adapt and apply standard protocols for the diagnosis and clinical management of the common problems encountered in services for the health of mothers, infants and children;
- (3) to strengthen health centres so as to ensure a high level of nursing and midwifery care, and to provide regular supervisory, managerial and logistic support to peripheral health posts, community health workers and trained traditional birth attendants applying local strategies for the health of mothers and the newborn;
- (4) to give priority to assessing and improving the quality of basic and continuing nursing and midwifery education;

(5) to reorient training curricula to community-based and problem-solving approaches, and to ensure that health workers are made aware of the attitudes and needs of women and other members of the community within a context of coherent implementation of population policies;

2. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to continue to provide technical support and guidance to Member States in the further development, adaptation and application of indicators of quality of care in maternal and child health and family planning and other aspects of primary health care;

(2) to continue to prepare guidelines and training material and devise approaches that improve the quality of care through standardized case definition, diagnosis and case management for the major health problems affecting mothers, the newborn, infants and children, and providing the necessary supervisory support, including monitoring and evaluation;

(3) to ensure that the components of maternal and child health care and family planning are promoted and provided to Member States in a coherent and integrated manner, and that they correspond to national priorities and demand;

(4) to seek to improve mechanisms in countries, where appropriate, for coordination between all concerned agencies and organizations, in order to support national leadership and make optimal use of available human and material resources;

(5) to report to the Executive Board and to the Health Assembly in 1995 on ongoing activities to develop a comprehensive strategy for action and research in the broad field of sexual and reproductive health.

Hbk Res., Vol. III (3rd ed.), 1.8; 1.12.1

(Twelfth plenary meeting, 10 May 1994 -
Committee A, second report)