Pharmacy workers’ knowledge and provision of medical abortion
A study of pharmacy workers in Kenya

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Background
Objectives

To assess pharmacy workers’ knowledge of using mifepristone and/or misoprostol for MA in Kenya

To assess pharmacy workers’ provision of MA information and services
Methods

Design: Cross sectional survey among pharmacy workers in 2013
Location: Three largest cities in Kenya: Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu
Population: Pharmacies selected from lists of all registered outlets in each city
Methodologies:

1. Knowledge, attitudes and practice survey (KAP)
   - 300 pharmacies sampled at random, 100 from each city
   - 1 face-to-face interview per outlet
   - 235 interviews were completed

2. Mystery client survey
   - 12 women posted as clients seeking abortion services without a prescription to pharmacies that had consented to being visited
   - 401 visits conducted among 138 pharmacies
   - Within one hour of visit, mystery client completed a structured questionnaire

Ethical approvals: Kenya Medical Research Institute, Marie Stopes International Ethical Review Committee, Population Council International Review Board
## Results: Study population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>235</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>51.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age (years)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-27</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-34</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>51.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35+</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>81.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training received to dispense medicines</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No training received</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training received</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>95.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Familiarity with misoprostol higher than combination regimen
Low knowledge of correct regimen, registration status, potential side effects and abortion complications
13.7% had received abortion training
45.5% wanted more information or training on abortion services
Findings: Reported and actual provision practices

Provision of information was more common than provision of services.

Advising women to continue with their pregnancies was common

Self-reported provision of medical abortion information and services was low, but 42% of pharmacies offered MA services to clients.
Implications

• Pharmacy workers play an important role in providing information and referrals to clients seeking abortion
• However they lack adequate training and knowledge of MA drugs and legal status
• Quality of care provided may be poor if women are not advised about side effects and complications, and there are missed opportunities for family planning
• In/pre-service training of pharmacy workers in MA can improve the quality of care provided and increase access to safe abortion
• Strengthen referral linkages
• Research to measure impact of interventions on quality of care needed
Acknowledgements

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Thank you

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