

MEETING SUMMARY

IMPROVING THE METRICS ON QUALITY OF CARE IN THE CONTEXT OF RIGHTS-BASED FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES

The measurement of quality has been a critical element of efforts to improve health care globally. As efforts for Universal Health Coverage (UHC) evolve, a focus on quality must be part of the discussion. A recent meeting brought together critical stakeholders to determine how measurement of quality of family planning facilitates improvements in quality of care within the context of rights-based family planning.

BACKGROUND

The Population Council has organized a series of meetings to refocus attention on challenges in measuring and monitoring diverse dimensions of quality of care of family planning. The [first of these meetings](#), held in 2014, resulted in the formation of a community of practice for advancing the quality of care agenda globally and building consensus among participants that improved quality in service delivery is an end in itself as integral to the right to health; and that it could lead to other desirable outcomes such as increased contraceptive continuation thereby contributing to FP2020 goals.

In June 2017, a second meeting of critical stakeholders, co-hosted with FP2020 was convened prior to the July 2017 Family Planning Summit to review [quality of care within the context of a rights-based approach to family planning \(FP\)](#). With the understanding that the provision of quality care is part of the rights of the client, the 35 representatives from governments, NGOs, and donors developed recommendations for improving FP quality of care within FP2020 focus countries. The meeting produced a [Call to Action](#) asking that the countries and sponsors of the FP Summit adopt and implement a Client-Centered Approach to Care, which empowers clients to achieve their reproductive intentions safely, within the context of rights-based FP.

The third meeting co-hosted by the Population Council and FP2020 took place in January 2018 and brought together stakeholders with expertise in metrics of family planning programs to complement the previous two discussions which had centered on advocacy and “how to” improve quality. The one-day meeting allowed participants to review [the background paper](#) consisting of recent experiences and proposals for enhancing the measurement of quality of care in the context of rights-based FP services. This review allowed stakeholders to then recommend modifications in proposed indicators of quality to align them with rights-based FP services for routine monitoring of quality.

KEY MESSAGES

The following were the key messages that emerged from the January 2018 consultation with the participants:

1. There was agreement among participants regarding aspiration of inclusion of quality of care into monitoring systems such as PMA2020, SPA and/or HMIS for sustainability of measurement.
2. Several research gaps to achieve improved metrics were identified:
 - A short list of indicators of quality that would be useful for both the public and private sectors is needed.
 - Additional items that should be included within the Method Information Index must be identified, e.g., the possibility of switching to another contraceptive? The need for additional validation was highlighted, e.g., extent to which it represents the key elements of client-provider interactions, and its predictive validity.
 - There is a need to test the feasibility and validity of the proposed metrics in special studies or when working with ongoing data collection efforts like SPA or PMA 2020.
3. The inclusion of respectful care into the metric resonated with participants.

NEXT STEPS

The continuation of this work is imperative to improving quality of care globally. As a result of the meeting to address the metrics of quality care, participants expressed an interest in establishing a community of practice to specifically move the agenda forward on metrics in support of global goals, particularly UHC. It was also determined that it is essential to develop clear messaging and communication about the purpose of the indicators for specific audiences across global, national, and district levels.