

Reproductive tract infections, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS prevention related training at a hospital and medical college, Gujarat: A feedback from participants

Sir,

This communication describes the feedback received from the participants of a Reproductive Tract Infections (RTI), Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) and HIV/AIDS prevention related training at a hospital and medical college, in Gujarat. Nine training programs were organized by the Community Medicine Department of the Medical College, from Dec 2006 to Feb 2007. Facilitators from the Departments of Ob/Gyn, Skin and VD, Microbiology and Community Medicine were involved in the training program and all of them were trained at State Institute. Participants of training program included Medical Officers (MO), Laboratory Technicians (LT) and Health Workers in separate groups. No male health worker was sent for this training. Training participants were drawn by State Health Authority. It was a modular training on STDs, RTIs, Health Education and Counseling.^[1] Each training program was of two days, wherein the participants were exposed to Laboratory, Outdoors, Counseling Center and Participatory Lectures. The feedback from participants by VIPP method (Visualization in Participatory Programs)^[2] about good aspects of the training strategy and aspects which they felt needed improvement on two different colored cards were voluntarily gathered. They were asked to give not more than two opinions each. Suggestions to improve the quality of trainings are recommended based on the findings.

In nine training sessions, 89 health workers, 38 laboratory technicians and 38 medical officers were trained. It was important to note that there was no male participant in the Health worker category. It was seen that the majority of medical officers felt that the training had equipped them with the practical knowledge and counseling skills that would help in prevention of the transmission and spread of STDs and HIV/AIDS in rural areas. However, it was also felt that the training should be avoided on holidays and should be conducted for more than two days. The laboratory infrastructure at PHC should be improved. The medicines required to treat STD/RTI patients should be made available at Primary Health Centers (PHCs) and Sub-Centers (SCs). A similar feedback was provided by laboratory technicians. They also expressed that they would now always follow Universal Work Precautions (UWP). However, it was also felt that the training should be for more number of days so that each one of them gets a chance to collect samples from patients and do testing individually. Some needed Traveling Allowance (TA)/Dearness Allowance (DA) in cash at the end of training.

The feedback of participants in all the three categories suggest that training leads to capacity building; however, the felt need was to reduce the gap between skills and infrastructure/facilities and material supplies for better implementation of the program.

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