Assessing Communication and Transport Protocols in Three Health Referral Networks in Haiti

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Assessing Communication and Transport Protocols in Three Health Referral Networks in Haiti

Blami Dao, MD, FWACS, FRCOG(H)
Learning Objectives

1. Describe steps to set up a health referral and counter-referral (RCR) network.
2. Describe the tools used to run an RCR network.
3. List the challenges in implementing an RCR network.
93% of health providers said they made a referral in the last 6 months.

65% sent patients to the in-network referral hospital.

30% sent patients to an out-of-network hospital.

70% of providers filled out the patient chart and referral register.
Results

The majority of health providers said they used the protocols:

- 73% used the communication protocol
- 51% used the transportation protocol

Very few found it easy to apply the protocols in practice:

- 39% for communication protocols
- 31% for transportation protocols
Results

Patients’/parents of patients’ feedback:

- **74%** said that transport cost was the primary reason they did not complete a referral.
- **87%** were satisfied or very satisfied with the care they received during a referral.
Background

- Before 2015, RCR was almost nonexistent in Haiti.
- An RCR system was developed in 36 facilities in three communes.
- An RCR network was established around the referral hospital.
Methods

• Piloted RCR forms in Matheux commune, then introduced to Ouanaminthe and Saint-Michel-de-l’Attalaye communes.

• Developed communication and transport protocols for facilities, providers, and ambulance drivers to support the referral system.
Methods


- Collected quantitative data via RCR forms and community health worker registers.
- Conducted semistructured interviews and focus group discussion for quantitative data.
Conclusions

• Communication and transport protocols led to:
  • More referrals
  • Better coordination between the different levels of care
  • Satisfaction among the majority of patients/parents of patients

• The main challenge is logistics, such as availability of ambulances and mobile phones.
Key Messages

1. An RCR system should include easy-to-use communication and transport protocols.
2. Logistics for RCR (ambulances and mobile phones) should be available to make the system operational.
3. RCR costs should be affordable for patients/parents of patients.
For more information, please visit www.mcsprogram.org

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