

Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery Pre-Service Education in India: A National Initiative

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Duration: 2009-2013

Partners: Indian Nursing Council, Government of India/National Rural Health Mission; Governments of Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh

Donor: USAID-MCHIP

Background

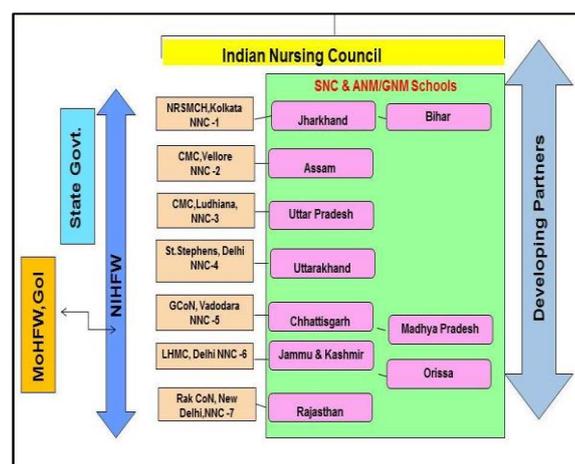
The recent policies and programs of Government of India, especially those focusing on Maternal Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH), have put an increased emphasis on the role of the basic health worker, the Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM), in the provision of comprehensive reproductive health (RH) and MNCH services in the country, especially in rural areas.

There is an acute shortage of competent ANMs in the country, especially in the 18 high focus states. This problem is further compounded by the grossly sub-optimal quality of pre-service education in the existing ANM training centers in the high focus states. To respond to this need for development of the basic healthcare service provider, who can provide quality RH and MNCH services at the grassroots level, a comprehensive initiative to strengthen the foundation of pre-service education for these ANMs is being undertaken by the Indian Nursing Council (INC) and Government of India (GoI).

US Agency for International Development (USAID), supported Maternal & Child Health Integrated Program (MCHIP) is working closely with the INC to provide catalytic and strategic support to this initiative. MCHIP's work aims to upgrade the clinical training capacity of the faculty, thus resulting in improved provision of MNCH, including FP, services at the national level and at the clinical sites in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand.

Strategic Approach

The strategic approach adopted for this program includes the establishment of seven national nodal centers (NNCs) across the country and State nodal centers (SNCs) of excellence for nursing and midwifery education in ten high focus states. It is envisioned that these nodal centers, besides serving as model teaching institutions, would serve as pedagogic resource centers for strengthening PSE at the ANM/General Nursing and Midwifery (GNM) Schools in their region and also provide support in the concurrent strengthening of these ANM/GNM Schools.



The program uses Jhpiego's Standards-Based Management and Recognition (SBM-R[®]) approach to performance and quality improvement as an overarching mechanism for implementing the INC approved educational and clinical standards across the NNCs/SNCs and ANM/GNM schools.

Programmatic Approach

The strengthening of the National/State nodal centers and the ANM/GNM Schools are being done through the use of simple, measurable performance standards which serve as a quality improvement guide. These performance standards provide a structure for program support and a criterion-based monitoring system which will allow the INC, through its nodal centers of nursing-midwifery education, to provide specific ongoing technical support.

Fundamental principles of the program:

- Building nursing and midwifery institutions
- Strengthening health systems
- Leveraging resources
- Being catalytic
- Ensuring evidence-based, proven and effective interventions

Salient features of the program:

- Initiative led by Government of India and Indian Nursing Council
- Build on GoI's resources for training
- Build a quality assurance model for nursing and midwifery education in India
- Focus on the basic health worker to reach the community
- Focus on the clinical practices and clinical teaching in the NNCs, SNCs, ANM and GNM Schools.

Major Accomplishments

The major accomplishments under the project to strengthen the quality of PSE for nursing-midwifery cadre are as follows:

At the national level

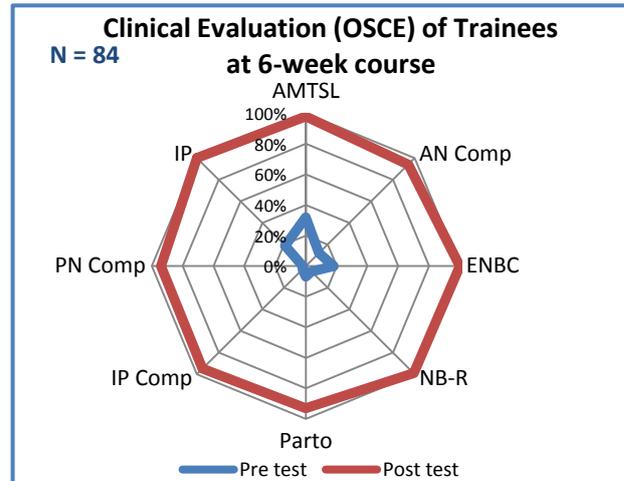
- A Memorandum of Understanding, specifying the roles and responsibilities of the various parties, was signed by Jhpiego with the Indian Nursing Council and State government at the time of beginning the implementation of the project.
- A national and state level technical advisory group for strengthening of PSE was formed and a set of performance standards for use by the NNCs, SNCs ANM and GNM Schools for improvement of the educational processes and infrastructure was developed. These performance standards include a total of 61 educational standards and 21 standards for the clinical practice sites.
- Seven Colleges of Nursing have been identified as the national nodal centers
 - Christian Medical College-Vellore
 - St. Stephens Hospital-Delhi
 - Nil Ratan Sarkar Medical College & Hospital-Kolkata
 - Christian Medical College-Ludhiana
 - SSH Hospital-Vadodara
 - Lady Hardinge Medical College (LHMC)- New Delhi
 - RAK College of Nursing-New Delhi
- The process of quality improvement has been initiated at five NNCs and two SNCs with encouraging results. Five NNCs have succeeded in achieving more than 80% of the standards.
- The NNC at Kolkata has been operationalized with the setting up of a well-equipped skill lab, computer lab and training infrastructure. Two full-time training coordinators have been appointed to conduct trainings with support from the NNC faculty and also mentor the ANM faculty on-site during their follow-up visits.

Pre Service Education Performance Standards		
Sec.	Areas	Number of Standards
1	Class room and practical instruction	15
2	Clinical instruction and practice	17
3	School infrastructure and training materials	13
4	School management	16
5	Clinical site practices	21
	TOTAL	82

- Seven batches of 6 weeks training for ANM/GNM faculty (84) had been completed at NNC Kolkata.

Main components of the 6 weeks curriculum

- Effective teaching skills
- Skilled birth attendance
- Integrated management of neonatal and childhood illness (IMNCI)
- Prevention of reproductive tract infections including prevention of parent to child transmission of HIV
- Family Planning
- Quality improvement in nursing education (SBM-R®)

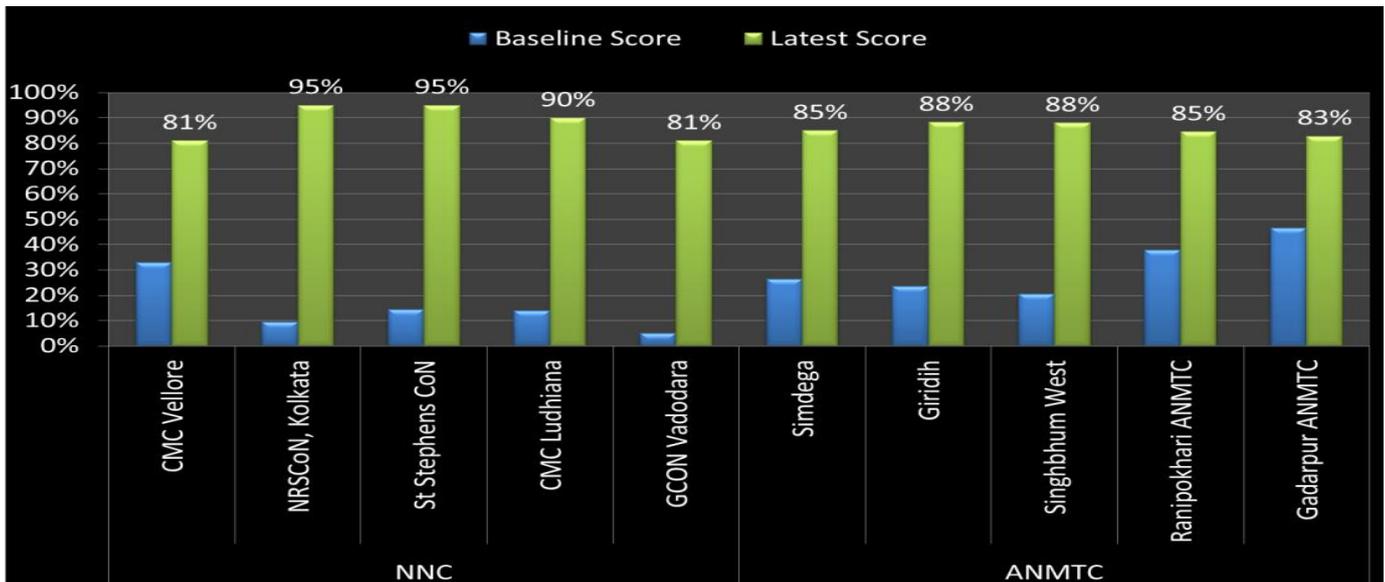


At the state level

Jharkhand and Uttarakhand:

- With support from USAID's MCHIP program and in collaboration with the state governments and INC, work to strengthen the PSE of nurses and midwives started with three ANM training centers (ANMTCs) in Jharkhand at Simdega, Chaibasa and Giridih, and at Rani Pokhri and Gadarpur in Uttarakhand in 2010. All these ANM/GNM schools achieved more than 80% scores on performance standards.
- Witnessing the success of these institutions, all the ANMTCs and GNM schools of these two states have adopted the same process to strengthen PSE with strategic support by MCHIP in terms of facilitating planning in the state PIPs, providing tools and TA for conducting baseline assessments, and facilitating linkages of these institutions with the faculty of NNC at Kolkata for mentorship and support.
- The College of Nursing, Dehradun has been accredited by INC as a State Nodal Center, with a score of 72.3%. Batches of 6 weeks training for faculty of ANM/GNM schools of Uttarakhand and other high focus states will be initiated later this year.
- The process of strengthening the College of Nursing at RIMS, Ranchi is currently ongoing. As a part of this process, workshops have been conducted in effective teaching skills and clinical skills standardization for the faculty, skills lab has been established, and management processes have been strengthened.

Graph: Scores on performance standards of pre-service institutes strengthened under the MCHIP program



The graph above depicts the scores of educational standards at the NNCs and the ANMTCs being strengthened under MCHIP. It can be seen that all these target institutions have achieved more than 80% standards on the most recent assessment. The baseline scores at these institutions ranged from less than 5% to approximately 50%.

Future Plans

- Initiation of batches of 6 weeks training for ANM/GNM school faculty at SNCs in Jharkhand and Uttarakhand.
- Handholding and mentorship to the NNC Kolkata to undertake independent assessment and strengthening of institutions in high focus states.
- Introduction of uniform competency based examination and certification for nursing-midwifery students.
- Continue efforts to encourage state governments to recruit more and more nursing-midwifery personnel.