

[Module 3: Evidence based approaches to health service provision to adolescents - Adolescent health and development with a particular focus on sexual and reproductive health - Assignment](#)

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My perception of the reality in terms of adolescent friendly health services in my country Zimbabwe

The role of health services in contributing to the health and development of adolescents

Health services play a crucial role in contributing to the health and development of young people. It is responsible for provision of clinical services, information dissemination and counselling of people. Health services' goals are to focus on promoting preventive, curative and rehabilitative measures in order for the target group, in this case adolescents, to have the maximum attainable state of good health.

Adolescent friendly health services: The reality on the ground

When it comes to health, young people know whom to turn to and believe that health personnel can help them. However, although they believe they can get proper help from health services, they normally avoid such places because of the attitude they receive from the health care providers. Normally when it comes to some health services, the situation on the ground is such that adolescents feel unacceptable in most health centres. Service providers still have a long way to go when it comes to being non-judgemental and considerate. This drives away adolescents' will-power to seek help. The service delivery points are not welcoming and appealing to adolescents. They rarely create conducive environments for adolescents to develop a sense of trust and responsibility. Their needs are not effectively addressed. On the other hand poor remuneration for civil servants is destroying the health sector as it is instilling less commitment in employees, and encouraging emigration by health workers. Zimbabwe has lost many health care providers to the greener pastures as a result of political instability and economic hardships. Quality services do not exist in vast areas of Zimbabwe. Counselling of patients or clients is impossible for someone who is enraged, which is the case with most employees as they are failing to provide for their families due to the current hardships.

What we are doing to improve the quality and expand the coverage of health services for adolescents

Efforts are being made to reinforce the already existing service deliveries, and to train and bond more staff for a certain period in order to try and retain them. This, to a large extent though is of insignificant help as a hungry man is an angry man, so they do not deliver their best.

Non-governmental organisations are also funding and conducting some programmes aimed at improving the quality of health, with adolescents being their main focus. Though facing some

political challenges, they are doing a great job. The government has also done a great deal in constructing health care services like hospitals, clinics and educational institutions, though increasing such is still necessary especially in rural areas where they are very far apart.

The potential utility and potential feasibility of who's approach to improving the quality and expanding the coverage of health services to adolescents

It is a good object to intend to focus on building what is already there, reinforcing the present service deliveries so that they can be more friendly to adolescents. It is important that they be accessible, acceptable, equitable, appropriate, effective and efficient.

But looking at the reality of life, it is not easy to effectively and efficiently apply this. The already existing services are not as reliable as they should be. Even though the government claim to be supportive of these service deliveries, some of its restrictive policies tend to be contradictory to their words. This includes not allowing adolescent mothers to return back to formal school. Again, it is not feasible to apply this if the employees are not content with their salaries.

Key comments for the case study of South Africa

Evolution of the National Adolescent–Friendly Clinic Initiative in South Africa:

1. This document, written by Joanne Ashton, Kim Dickson and Melanie Pleaner explores and outlines the development of a health provision system aimed at accessibility to adolescent people, who, especially in developing countries have been denied such due to a variety of reasons. This takes a technical yet simplified approach to compiling a useful guide for stakeholders at all levels involved in setting up and running these clinics.
2. The authors painstakingly describe how this initiative has evolved through pilot projects and seek to provide ways for health personnel, teaming up with community and youth representatives to expand the programme to a national level. They successfully identify barriers that implementers should be aware of as they progress through the various stages of running the programme. This manual to a large extent is a useful tool in achieving the main objective, helping adolescents to benefit from the national health provision system without fear of castigation, tearing down barriers that have largely contributed to the prevalence of HIV infections, STIs and unintentional pregnancies.
3. South Africa has so far benefited from the efforts of various governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as local initiatives such as Lovelife. The continued success of this programme largely depends on unwavering participation of all stakeholders, of major importance the government and policy makers, the community and the young people themselves. Financial and logistical support is of paramount importance, but these can go to waste if they are not tried and tested, well laid methods of setting up and running these clinics. This is where this

document comes in, and its well researched approach provides clear cut and very adaptable guidelines.

Assignment documents

1. [WHO Department of Child and Adolescent Health and Development. Improving the quality and expanding the coverage of health services for adolescents. WHO's approach. Paper presented at: Training Course in Sexual and Reproductive Health Research; 2010 Sep 11; Geneva.](#)
2. [WHO Department of Child and Adolescent Health and Development. The evidence base for our approach to improve the quality and expand the coverage of health services for adolescents. Paper presented at: Training Course in Sexual and Reproductive Health Research; 2010 Sep 11; Geneva.](#)
3. [WHO. Evolution of the national adolescent-friendly clinic initiative in South Africa. Geneva: WHO; 2009.](#)