

Community Health Workers' Performance and Their Influence in the Adoption of Strategies to Address Malaria Burden at a Subnational Level Health System in Cameroon

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Abstract : Community health workers' performances are known to influence members' behaviours and practices while translating policies into service delivery. However, little remains known about the extent to which this remains true within interventions aimed at addressing malaria burden in low-resource settings like Cameroon. The objective of this study was to examine the health workers' performance and their influence on the adoption of strategies to address the malaria burden at a subnational level health system in Cameroon. A qualitative exploratory design was adopted on a purposively selected sample of 18 key informants. The study was conducted in Konye health district among sub-national health systems, managers, health facility in-charges, and frontline community health workers. Data was collected using semi-structured interview guides in a face-to-face interview with respondents. The analysis adopted a thematic approach utilising journals, credible authors, and peer review articles for data management. Participants acknowledged that workplace networks were influential during the implementation of policies to address malaria. The influence exerted was in form of linkage with other services, caution, and advice regarding strict adherence to policy recommendations, perhaps reflective of the level of trust in providers' ability to adhere to policy provisions. At the district health management level and among non-state actors, support in perceived areas of weak performance in policy implementation was observed. In addition, timely initiation of contact and subsequent referral was another aspect where community health workers exerted influence while translating policies to address the malaria burden. While the level of support from among network peers was observed to influence community health workers' adoption and implementation of strategies to address the malaria burden, different mechanisms triggered subsequent response and level of adherence to recommended policy aspects. Drawing from the elicited responses, it was inferred that community health workers' performance influence the direction and extent of success in policy implementation to address the malaria burden at the subnational level.

Keywords : subnational, community, malaria, strategy

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