
ASSESSING PUBLIC AWARENESS AROUND THE DE-CENTRALIZED MODEL OF CARE IN SHEFA PROVINCE IN 2022

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INTRODUCTION

- Vanuatu Ministry of Health has adopted a decentralized model of care
- Key to this model is the establishment of a referral pathway, outlined in the Role Delineation Policy of the Ministry of Health, which aims to guide a patient's journey through the healthcare system to refer them to the most appropriate health facility depending on their specific health needs
- A clearly structured hierarchy of care by health facility type is essential for effective management of the referral pathway
- It is unclear whether the referral pathway and the health facility hierarchy is well understood by the public



METHODS

- KAP (Knowledge, Attitude, Practices) SURVEY: most appropriate tool to assess Shefa's population understanding of the decentralization of health services
- The KAP survey used was developed using the open-source and free online platform KoboToolbox



METHODS

- Between July and October 2022, Shefa Community Health Services conducted a KAP survey during three public gathering events in Port Vila: Independence Day Celebrations, PSC Open Week and PM's MSG Cup
- Volunteers and Health Officers used smartphones and tablets to conduct the survey.
- Questions asked during the survey captured people's attitudes towards Health Services in Shefa Province, assessed their healthcare seeking practices and assessed their knowledge around decentralization and the referral pathway



METHODS – WORKFLOW

Identify priority health issues and objectives

Socialise the survey initiative to mobilise Shefa Health Team

Develop the survey

Learn how to use KoboToolBox

Identify settings to administer the survey

Administer the survey

Analyse Data

Develop a report including data collection and analysis

Share the report



RESULTS

- A total of 280 randomly selected people participated in this survey. 55% Female 45% Male
- When asked what they would do if they became sick, 80% of respondents said they would seek health services
- 51% of Port Vila residents reported VCH as their first point of care
- Nearly 20% of Efate Rural residents reported VCH as their first point of care
- People surveyed were twice more likely to report dissatisfaction of VCH services compared to other facilities on average
- Long distance to travel (100%), Waiting time (53%), Poor Service (53%) and Insufficient staff (49%) were the most cited reasons of dissatisfaction.



RESULTS

- Two thirds of people surveyed were unaware of the decentralized model of care and of those that did know about it, less than half were aware of the need to obtain a referral letter prior to admission to hospital
- Only half of people surveyed were aware that there are different types of health facilities. Of those that did know they listed Dispensary (84%), Hospital (83%), Health Centre (78%), Aid post (44%) and Private Clinic (41%).



DISCUSSION

- There are 61 public health facilities on Efate that are currently opened
- However, 40% of Port Vila and Efate Rural respondents reported VCH as their first point of care, indicating a disproportionate reliance on VCH
- Higher dissatisfaction rates for VCH indicates that the quality of care may be impacted by over-stretched services
- Important to note that recent disruption of health services due to COVID-19 may have influenced people's responses



RECOMMENDATIONS / IMPLICATIONS

- Survey results suggest there is still work to be done to better educate the public around the decentralized model of care and the referral pathway
- A communication campaign using community awareness, mass media and social media should be considered to address this gap. A follow-up survey should be conducted to assess progress in this area



OTHER POSITIVE OUTCOMES

- Positive mobilization of staff around a new and interesting initiative (team spirit)
- Learn new skills
- Open doors for new surveys (not that complicated)
- An interactive kind of community engagement activity (motivating members of the public to reflect on their own health and about health system)



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- Interviewees

