

PRIME PAGES

Training Improves Family Planning and Reproductive Health Services at Bayaguana Hospital

While PRIME II focuses on implementing programs at the national and regional levels, the Project also has the capacity to carry out small-scale interventions in response to the needs of USAID missions. At the request of USAID/Dominican Republic, PRIME II has been providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Health since early 2002 to improve the quality and accessibility of family planning and reproductive health services at Bayaguana Hospital. Serving the province of Monte Plata, Bayaguana is a secondary-level public hospital accepting referrals from a network of five rural clinics.



A State of Inertia

When PRIME began working with the Ministry of Health at Bayaguana it had been eight years since the hospital's doctors and nurses had received any training. Hospital personnel were perceived as being indifferent and apathetic; in turn, clients found the hospital's environment unwelcoming and did not express confidence in the hospital's services. Many clients were referred from Bayaguana to Los Mina Hospital for services that the secondary hospital should have had the capacity to handle. For example, although the hospital attended about 60 obstetrics/gynecology clients on an average day and conducted many prenatal consultations, only 25 births per month were being recorded at Bayaguana. Fearing complications, the general physicians responsible for attending births tended to refer deliveries right away, especially for first-time mothers.

New Knowledge and Skills Motivate Providers

To help solve performance problems and improve services at Bayaguana Hospital, PRIME II staff designed a five-day training session held at Nuestra Senora de la Altigracia Maternity Hospital in the capital city of Santo Domingo. The trainees included six obstetrician/gynecologists, six general physicians and six nurses from Bayaguana. Content areas focused on reproductive health, quality services, counseling, the social context of women clients, and postpartum and postabortion care including manual vacuum aspiration. Ten staff members from the five rural clinics also received training in infection prevention. After reflecting on their past performance and becoming reoriented to the mission of their hospital, the Bayaguana staff emerged with a newfound awareness of quality services. As one trainee exclaimed, "I feel I have been reborn with all that I have learned."

PRIME II Regional Office
for Latin America and the Caribbean
Federico Henríquez y Carvajal #11
Segundo Piso-Gazcue
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Tel: 809-685-8817, 221-2921
Fax: 809-221-2914
alprime@codetel.net.do

PRIME II

Intrah School of Medicine
University of North Carolina
1700 Airport Road, Suite 300 CB 8100
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27599-8100
Tel: 919-966-5636 Fax: 919-966-6816
intrah@intrah.org www.prime2.org



Client-Friendly Providers, Better Services

The training intervention has already resulted in numerous improvements at Bayaguana:

- To reinforce client confidence in the hospital's capacity for birthing services, the delivery room has been made more comfortable and is now air conditioned.
- To enable surgeons to perform more effectively and decrease risk for patients, the hospital has assigned an additional auxiliary nurse to the surgery room. Previously, one nurse carried responsibility for preparing equipment, passing instruments to the surgeon, fetching drugs and serving as a general assistant—often too much for one person to reasonably handle.
- Family planning counseling has become routine. Before training, providers usually suggested that clients interested in family planning accept whatever method they had on hand. Now they orient clients, explain all available methods and let the clients choose which one is best for them.
- With training and a donation of equipment from PRIME II partner EngenderHealth, the hospital is now offering voluntary surgical contraception on Fridays.
- Training and the donation of two manual vacuum aspiration kits have also enabled providers to treat rather than refer cases of incomplete abortion.
- Providers are looking for ways to improve the hospital's environment for clients and have requested another consultation room to add more privacy. Clients have noticed the difference—as one asked of a PRIME staff member, “What is it that you do in those trainings (to change people so)?”

Sustaining the Momentum

Additional activities are planned to build on the success of the training intervention at Bayaguana. Nurses will be trained in family planning counseling and services, while support personnel will receive training in quality of care. The management structure of the hospital will be revised. And the Community COPE methodology developed by EngenderHealth will be employed to gather and make use of additional input on quality services from the hospital's current and potential clients. If the longterm goals of the intervention are realized, improved family planning and reproductive health services at Bayaguana Hospital will contribute to reducing the Dominican Republic's overall rates of infant and maternal mortality.



PRIME II

Suggested citation:
Nelson D. Training Improves Family Planning and Reproductive Health Services at Bayaguana Hospital. 2/2003 (PRIME PAGES: DR-4)



This publication was produced by Intrah at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for the PRIME II Project and was made possible through support provided by the Center for Population, Health and Nutrition, Global Bureau, U.S. Agency for International Development, under the terms of Grant Number HRN-A-00-99-00022-00. The views expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Agency for International Development.