

PRINMAT Maternity Homes to become Centres of Excellence Attracting Communities to Seek Quality Maternal and Child Healthcare Services

By Kezia Kapesa, PRINMAT

The Private Nurses and Midwives Association of Tanzania (PRINMAT) supports the establishment of Maternity Homes in rural and semi-urban areas to improve access to reproductive health services. PRINMAT has 20 maternity homes located in Mwanza, Geita, Simiyu, Mara and Kagera regions. This year the organisation will move into Tabora and Mbeya regions. Mandated by the Ministry of Health, PRINMAT facilitates licensing processes and ensures a high quality of services in their maternity homes. “At organisational level, PRINMAT envisions maternity homes as centres that provide best quality services in order to attract community members to seek services,” said Mama Kezia Kapesa, the then Executive Secretary of PRINMAT, now the Board Chairman (2016).

PRINMAT has undertaken initiatives to improve the quality of services in Maternity Homes in collaboration with stakeholders, for example, Population Services International (PSI). Most of these efforts have followed a vertical approach, addressing specific components of service delivery. A lack of approved facility-wide standards to measure quality has made it difficult to objectively compare quality performance between maternity homes. Furthermore, experience shows the need to guide these facilities to prioritise addressing key quality gaps. PRINMAT in collaboration with PharmAccess International have adopted the SafeCare approach to launch a stepwise, facility-wide quality improvement methodology that builds ownership at facility level in the improvement process.



“Ownership and leadership from facility management in the quality improvement process is a prerequisite for any facility that intends to incrementally comply with standards of healthcare as it moves towards excellence in service provision.” –Peter Risha, SafeCare Project Director, Tanzania

Using the SafeCare methodology, PRINMAT has carried out quality assessments of 20 maternity homes whereby a prioritised Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) has been developed. The QIP takes into consideration patient safety and availability of resources. The facility owns and implements the QIP while PRINMAT provides regular technical support. The approach has been an eye opener for PRINMAT and greatly appreciated by the facility owners as testified below:

Owners appreciate the value of the approach as it makes them realize what they had not considered as important components of care delivery: One facility Manager commented that, “When you are being assessed and asked for staff files, I was shocked about what I had to hand over, and it took me sometime to trace the needed staff information, but now everything is in order and the facility is running far more efficiently.”

Immediately after the assessment, a facility in Mwanza, started renovations to address client flow. When the manager was asked why now? she responded: “when I reflect on what I did wrong before the SafeCare assessment, some of these changes do not require money, that’s why I changed them to avoid similar mistakes in the future and to promote overall quality.”

Clients' needs are being recognised: Patient rights and privacy were compromised before. One manager from Tarime-Mara said “I did not know if the patient's rights creed needed to be displayed, and what it was for?”

Going forward, PRINMAT believes that adopting the SafeCare methodology, puts it in a better position to monitor, support and ensure quality service delivery by member facilities. For the first time they have undertaken a comprehensive approach to evaluate quality of services. Using the SafeCare tools, they now have a comprehensive approach and are now looking at service related areas they did not do before. For example, they are able to link during a single assessment how facility management and adherence to best management practices influences the quality of both clinical services, infection prevention and control. It also provides PRINMAT with a structured tool to support its members as they undertake the journey towards excellence in service provision.

The approach strengthens PRINMAT’s capability to achieve its envisioned mission of assuring quality of services and making maternity homes into centres that attract community members for Maternal and Newborn Care Health services. This will greatly complement Government efforts to reduce Maternal, Infant and Child Mortality in the country.