

Strengthening Nursing Midwifery Pre-service Education in India: A national initiative

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Duration: 2009-2017

Partners: Indian Nursing Council (INC); Government of India (GoI)/ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; State Governments of Uttar Pradesh (UP), Odisha, Madhya Pradesh (MP), Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Gujarat, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir

Donors: Norway India Partnership Initiative, UKAID-Department for International Development, US Agency for International Development, CARE International UK

Background

Optimum midwifery services are among one of the most effective ways to reduce maternal, newborn and infant mortality. There is an acute shortage of competent auxiliary nurse midwives (ANMs) and staff nurses in the country, especially in the ten high focus states. This problem is compounded by the sub-optimal quality of pre-service education (PSE) at the nursing educational institutions in these high focus states.

To respond to the need for improving the quality of nursing education and develop a cadre of competent and confident nurse midwives, the Indian Nursing Council (INC) and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India (MOHFW, GoI) have developed a roadmap for improving the quality of PSE in select high focus states of India. Jhpiego, with support from Norway India Partnership Initiative (NIPI), Department for International Development (DFID) and CARE International UK, is working closely with the INC and the national and state governments to provide catalytic and strategic support to this initiative.

Strategic Approach

The strategic approach adopted for this program includes the establishment of centers of excellence for nursing midwifery education- six at the national level, called national nodal centers (NNCs), and ten at the state level in seven of the ten high focus states, called state nodal centers (SNCs). It is envisioned that these nodal centers, besides serving as model teaching institutions, would also serve as pedagogic resource centers for the ANM/ GNM schools in their region and also provide support in the concurrent strengthening of these ANM/GNM schools.

Fundamental principles of the program:

- Building nursing midwifery institutions
- Quality Assurance
- Strengthening health systems
- Leveraging resources
- Being catalytic
- Ensuring evidence-based, proven and effective interventions

The program uses Jhpiego's Standards-Based Management and Recognition (SBM-R) approach to performance and quality improvement as an overarching mechanism for implementing the INC approved educational and clinical standards across the NNCs/SNCs and ANM/GNM schools.

Programmatic Approach

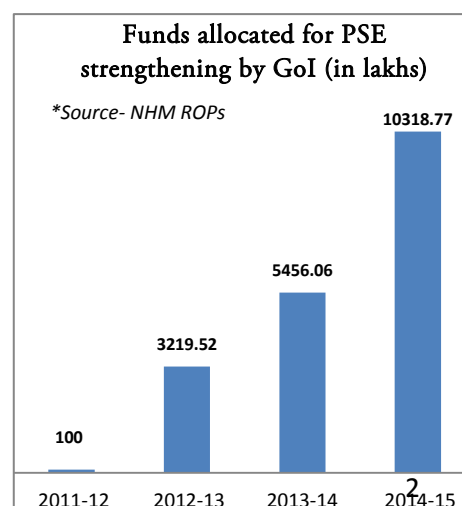
The strengthening of the NNCs/SNCs and the ANM/GNM schools is being done through the use of simple, measurable performance standards which serve as a guide to quality improvement. These standards provide a structure for program support and a criterion-based monitoring system which allows the INC, through its nodal centers of nursing midwifery education, to provide specific ongoing technical support.

Number of Pre Service Education Performance Standards				
Section	Areas	ANM schools	GNM Schools	NNCs & SNCs
1	Class room and practical instruction	15	15	15
2	Clinical instruction and practice	16	16	17
3	School infrastructure and training materials	12	13	13
4	School management	16	16	16
5	Clinical site practices	20	20	20
	TOTAL	79	80	81

National level – Major Interventions and Accomplishments

Jhpiego has undertaken several activities aimed at strengthening nursing education and creating an enabling environment for the nursing midwifery cadre at the national level:

1. Constitution of a **National level Technical Advisory Group (TAG)** with representation from MoHFW, INC, NIHF, state governments and development partners for strengthening of PSE.
2. Support to MoHFW in development of **Operational Guidelines for PSE strengthening.**
3. Support to MoHFW in development and implementation of **a roadmap for nursing midwifery cadre; including development of standards** for guiding the quality improvement process at the nodal centers and the ANM/ GNM schools.
4. A **Memorandum of Understanding** was signed by Jhpiego with the INC and selected state governments at the beginning of the project implementation.
5. **Technical Assistance to INC** for ANM curriculum revision and introduction of competency-based examination for ANM students.
6. **Advocacy for greater clinical and programmatic autonomy for nurses:** With Jhpiego's continuous efforts, a letter was issued by Additional Secretary and Mission Director, NHM directing Principal Secretaries (Health & Family Welfare) of all states and union territories for ensuring inclusion of District Public Health Nurses and State Nursing Officers as an integral part of NHM District and State Program Management Units.
7. **Leveraging resources from GoI for PSE strengthening:** Jhpiego's technical support has resulted in a hundred fold



increase in the amount of funds allocated by GoI to the high focus states for PSE strengthening interventions over the past four years.

8. **Establishing International institutional collaboration with UK based institutions** in areas of nursing education, research, regulation, leadership and innovations.
9. **Strengthening Six Colleges of Nursing into National Nodal Centers:** NNC at Nil Ratan Sarkar Medical College & Hospital, Kolkata has already been operationalized with the setting up of a well-equipped skill lab, computer lab and training infrastructure and appointment of two full-time nursing midwifery tutors for conducting the 6 week trainings and mentorship visits.

Twelve batches of 6 weeks training for 153 ANM/GNM faculty members from various states have already been completed here. Five other NNCs under development are at Vadodara, Vellore, Wardha, Guwahati and Kanpur. Of these, two NNCs at Vadodara and Vellore are ready for external assessment and certification by INC.



State-wise coverage: Jhpiego support for PSE strengthening

S. No.	State	ANMTCs	GNM Schools	Colleges of Nursing (SNCs/ NNCs)	Total
1	Bihar	21	6	1	28
2	Rajasthan	27	13	1	41
3	Madhya Pradesh	32	9	2	43
4	Uttar Pradesh	40	9	3	52
5	Odisha	18	8	1	27
6	Jharkhand	10	0	1	11
7	Uttarakhand	5	0	1	6
8	Tamil Nadu	-	-	1	1
9	Gujarat	-	-	1	1
10	West Bengal	-	-	1	1
11	Haryana (Soft TA)	78	73	1	152
12	Jammu & Kashmir (Soft TA)	11	2	-	13
TOTAL		242	120	14	376

State level – Major Interventions and Accomplishments

1. **Constitution of state level Technical Advisory Groups** in the intervention states of Bihar, MP, UP and Odisha for guiding the overall process of PSE strengthening.
2. **Establishment and operationalization of autonomous Nursing Directorate / State Nursing Cells** in Odisha, Bihar, MP and UP for leading the process of empowerment of nursing midwifery cadre.

3. **Technical support to the State Nursing Councils** of Bihar, Rajasthan, MP and Odisha for implementation of revised ANM curriculum and examination guidelines as mandated by INC, initiating competency based practical examinations for ANMs and piloting the ANM internship.
4. **Establishment of State Nodal Centers (SNCs):** Till date, three functional SNCs have been set up with technical assistance from Jhpiego at Patna, Dehradun and Ranchi. Out of these, SNCs Patna and Dehradun have already initiated the 6 week trainings for ANM/GNM faculties. Additionally, Jhpiego is also supporting the upgradation of six colleges of nursing at Ujjain and Jabalpur (MP), Berhampur (Odisha), Meerut and Varanasi (UP) and Kota (Rajasthan) into SNCs. Out of these, three SNCs i.e. Ujjain, Jabalpur and Berhampur are ready for certification by INC.
5. **Improvements in educational processes and clinical practices at nursing institutions** through regular supportive supervision for implementation of PSE standards, addressing shortage of human resources, leveraging funds under NHM and strengthening of training infrastructure.

Progress so far...

- 8% of the targeted nursing institutions (14/ 175) in seven intervention states have been strengthened with achievement of >70% of performance standards while another 30% institutions (52/ 175) are very close to being strengthened with standards between 50-69%
- Of the 134 govt. nursing institutions across MP, Odisha, Rajasthan and Bihar, one-third have well equipped skill lab and computer lab while around half have a library with latest books
- Improved clinical practices like Active Management of Third Stage of Labor and establishment of Functional Newborn Care Corner at >90% of attached clinical practice sites
- More than 2500 personnel across Bihar, MP, UP, Odisha and Rajasthan trained on SBA guidelines and latest Maternal Newborn Health (MNH) protocols till date
- Close to 193 nursing faculties from seven high focus states trained in the specialized 6 week training till date

6. **Competency based trainings of nursing faculties and clinical site service providers** on Skilled Birth Attendance (SBA) guidelines and latest MNH and infection prevention protocols of GoI.
7. **Capacity building of the nursing faculties** for improving their teaching skills, MNCH/FP knowledge and clinical skills through a customized 6 week training at the nodal centers.
8. **Leveraging Information Technology for improving the quality of nursing education:** With support from DFID and in partnership with Cisco and Govt. of Bihar, Jhpiego has established virtual classrooms in 15 out of the existing 27 govt. nursing schools of Bihar. This intervention aims at enhancing the clinical skills and knowledge of nursing midwifery students on key components of Maternal and Newborn Health (MNH). With support from CARE International UK, virtual classrooms are now being established in the remaining 12 govt. ANM/GNM schools of Bihar thereby, leading to a state- wide scale up of the virtual trainings.

Future Plans

- Establishment of functional National and State Nodal Centers with sustained quality of performance in teaching as well as clinical practice skills.
- Introduction of uniform competency based examination and certification for nursing-midwifery students.
- Concerted advocacy efforts at the national and state levels for ensuring greater clinical and programmatic autonomy for nursing midwifery cadre in India's public health system.
- Establishing international institutional collaborations for providing impetus to PSE agenda.
- Continued technical assistance to high focus states for implementing the GoI roadmap for nursing midwifery cadre.