



When I is replaced with WE, illness becomes wellness

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We all know that one of the key elements for service delivery and high quality care is access to medicines. So, it is a win when pharmaceutical services can be reached by contact or virtually, and in a timely manner. This includes the absence of obstacles such as distance, transportation, long waiting lines and inconvenient operational hours. Timely access to pharmaceutical care can be increased by ensuring that there is enough staff, implementing shift work (if required) so as to reduce crowdedness of clients during the day.

There have been various innovations designed, proposed and some implemented to reduce congestion in facilities. These innovations cater for geographic access to medicines by providing alternatives which have features of buildings, transportation, technology, service provision (contact or virtual) and service providers. They address supply and demand side barriers such as long waiting times, congestion and reduced travel costs. Also, these innovations provide a shift in access to medicines from a pharmaceutical service provision in a health facility approach to providing medicines through innovative community based distribution approaches.

Ideally these innovations will make it easier for patients to pick up their medicines and keep themselves out of congested facilities. However, for these innovations to be sustainable they need to be utilised, that is, patients need to be referred to them. Understandably these are new things, thus change management is required and will take time.

Purposeful change can only be found at the interface of patient and healthcare workers. The interaction between these two groups, even though they have different perspectives, should reflect mutual dependency, accountability and benefit. Thus, healthcare workers need to check themselves if they are delivering services for compliance or for positive outcomes.

This means how they see things, think, and act daily needs to change especially when they realise that the need for change inevitably affects them. Ownership and commitment to the change will lead to a better understanding for the need to change and clearer vision of the expected results.

Patient experience concerns what patients value when seeking or receiving services and is very important. If patients do not seek care that is of high quality, it is unlikely to result in improved outcomes. Also, if patients are not accessing services via these innovations, it is important to understand the reasons, that is whether it is due to perceived quality of care or accessibility and if both are lacking, they may have to be addressed simultaneously to improve utilisation of care and subsequent positive health. If these are not addressed, the patients will return to the overburdened facilities and the value for money of these innovations will not be recognised.



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