



## FACT SHEET

# Component 2: Delivery of Evidence-Based, Quality PHC Services

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*Since March 2011, the USAID Primary Health Care Project in Iraq (PHCPI) has been working closely with the MOH to put in place key building blocks to support the delivery of quality PHC services at the community and facility levels, especially those that target reductions in maternal and neonatal mortality, so that Iraq can meet its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. Under the Component 2 of the project, USAID/PHCPI is working closely with MOH counterparts to establish standards of care, develop and introduce quality improvement programs, expand high-quality in-service training programs, develop platforms to enhance the quality of care provided in the private sector, and develop an agenda for conducting research to fuel further evidence-based improvements. The project is placing particular emphasis on low-cost, high-impact interventions to reduce maternal and child mortality and to strengthen referrals between hospital-based services and the primary care level. To ensure the availability and utilization of high quality clinical services, the project focuses on the following areas.*

### **Improving Quality Clinical Care Standards**

In close collaboration with the Directorate of Public Health Directorate and other stakeholders, USAID/PHCPI is helping the MOH to update/revise 20 priority treatment protocols and clinical guidelines found in the Iraq Basic Health Services Package. USAID/PHCPI has finalized the updated clinical guidelines related to Infection Prevention and Waste Management, Diabetes Mellitus, Hypertension, Asthma, Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) for Nurses, Communicable Disease Control, Trauma, Maternal and Child Nutrition, IMCI for Physicians, Obesity, Nursing Standards, Laboratory Standards, Breast and Cervical Cancer, Menopause, and Premarital Counseling. The updated guidelines are being introduced to service providers from the project's 360 target clinics through in-service training. These and other updated/revise clinical guidelines have been incorporated in to a Clinical Service Guidelines Handbook, which will offer a collection of easy-to-use clinician's reference guides with treatment protocols and performance-based checklists for each category of primary care services offered at PHC centers.

### **Collaborating to Emphasize QI**

USAID/PHCPI worked with MOH to develop a QI strategy to improve the quality of PHC services. The project team is assisting the MOH in introducing the PHC QI Program through clinic-based QI teams. USAID/PHCPI is integrating many of the basic elements of traditional health programming (standards, training, job aids, equipment and supplies) with modern QI elements (team work, process analysis, monitoring of results, client satisfaction) to create a dynamic learning system where teams from different sites collaborate to

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share and rapidly scale up strategies for improving the quality and efficiency of health services in a specific technical or management area.

### **Supporting Operational Research for PHC**

USAID/PHCPI worked with MOH and university partners to identify priority research topics to determine and apply evidence-based solutions to improve PHC systems. The project will assist in translating research results into specific improvements in policy design and implementation, resource management, and clinical processes, while also building the capacity of MOH staff to design and conduct operational research studies in the future. In 2012, USAID/PHCPI conducted two research studies: 1) an evaluation for the maternal mortality, and 2) an evaluation of the Health Visitor Program in Maysan. The results of these studies are now available and will be used to guide MOH priority planning and decision making. In 2013, the project will conduct two additional studies, one evaluating the effectiveness of family medicine training in Iraq and one evaluating the effectiveness of the current HIS system in capturing and reporting deaths of children under five.

### **Developing Model Clinics**

USAID/PHCPI is working with the MOH to refurbish 36 PHC centers with all of the required medical equipment and supplies necessary to effectively provide the services outlined in Iraq's Basic Health Services Package and to apply the newly acquired knowledge and skills obtained through USAID/PHCPI training and capacity building activities. PHCPI and the MOH's shared vision of a model clinic is a functional clinic equipped with modern medical devices, stocked with enough drugs and consumables, and efficiently functioning through reliable health systems and well trained staff, practicing clinical protocols and guidelines to ensure the application of best practices. It is the goal of the model clinic activities to achieve the maximum impact of the technical competence of the service providers and the optimal physical environment, collectively contributing to enhancement of quality PHC services. It is the intention of the Government of Iraq (GoI) to upgrade the balance of the 360 clinics to meet this model standard.