

Improving health workers' adherence to test, treat and track procedures

Observing the test, treat and track policy requirements have been a challenge for health workers in overcrowded health facilities. A training that encouraged health workers to observe the standards of managing malaria cases has resulted in adherence to the policy and improved clinical treatment of malaria in Buliisa district.



Health workers and Ministry of Health representatives reviewing data in relation to test and treat policy

At the end of July 2017, USAID's Malaria Action Program for Districts organized a clinical audit training of clinicians in Buliisa district to improve the quality of care for malaria provided by district health workers. The training formed part of activities being undertaken by the program to improve health systems in Uganda.

According to the DHIS2 weekly epidemiological reports, the proportion of negative malaria cases treated with anti-combination therapy was at 42% during the week of the training, which took place on the 34th week of the program. This was partly a result of diagnosing fever as malaria and treating patients for malaria without testing. According to health workers, malaria is often diagnosed and treated without testing to ease the long lines at health facilities.

The training in Buliisa district reminded health workers of adherence to the test and treat policy set by the Ministry of Health (MoH). The district trainers were taught to roll out to other health facilities, and during the roll out, health workers were reminded on a quarterly basis to maintain standards according to Ministry of Health

requirements. Health workers were trained on clinical audit which focuses on the standards for the management of malaria. After the training, medical education was conducted by the district trainers in other health facilities in Buliisa district to share the knowledge gained from the training.

Following the training, MAPD staff along with MoH and district officials facilitated a clinical audit exercise which used an assessment tool to evaluate malaria management health standards at health facilities. After the data from the assessment tool was analyzed, it was found that health workers in Buliisa were shown to have observed the correct standards in the diagnosis and treatment of malaria leading to improved malaria case management.

"When we had the clinical audit training [in week 34], we were told that the proportion of people treated clinically diagnosed malaria fever was at 42% and that this has contributed to Buliisa district's bad performance in malaria health indicators. After the training, we have reached out to fellow health workers in other health facilities [in regards to the new adherence test, treat and track policy] and that explains our

current malaria clinical treatment rating of 1%.”

Rosemary, Buliisa District Surveillance focal person

The training has led to a significant reduction in treatment without testing from 42% of patients to just 1% of patients, meaning that 99% of treatment now occurs only after a positive test. The training in Buliisa reinforced the importance of providing health workers with regular reminders of malaria management standards. Supportive supervision is crucial to ensure that health workers are informed of what is expected with regard to the test, treat and track policy.

NEXT STEPS

USAID’s Malaria Action Program for Districts will continue to support the district health team logistically to conduct support supervision. In addition, the program will provide updates to health workers as well as build capacity in prevention, diagnosis and treatment of malaria, and conduct monitoring and evaluation on the performance of health workers at facility level. The performance monitoring and evaluation will be done through review of HMIS tools in order to ensure the provision of quality health care services.

This success story is published as part of a series from the USAID’s Malaria Action Program for Districts project.

For more information, see www.malariaconsortium.org/projects/malaria-action-program-for-districts or contact: Dr Sam Gudo, s.gudo@malariacconsortium.org

USAID’s Malaria Action Program for Districts aims to improve the health status of the Ugandan population by reducing childhood and maternal morbidity and mortality due to malaria. The project will support the Government of Uganda for a period of five years, focusing in particular on children under five years of age and pregnant women.

This project, made possible by the generous support from the American and British people, is implemented by Malaria Consortium in partnership with Jhpiego, Banyan Global, and Communication for Development Foundation Uganda (CDFU), Deloitte Uganda and Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI).

Malaria Consortium Uganda, Plot 25 Upper Naguru East Road, PO Box 8045, Kampala, Uganda / Malaria Consortium, Development House 56-64 Leonard Street, London EC2A 4LT, United Kingdom / info@malariacconsortium.org / www.malariacconsortium.org
