

“IT IS NOT WHAT YOU HAVE, BUT WHAT YOU DO WITH IT” – EXPERIENCE WITH A KMC IMPLEMENTATION PACKAGE IN SOUTH AFRICA



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Background

The scale-up of Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) in South Africa started in the early 2000s. Two randomised trials testing different outreach strategies for KMC implementation were conducted between 2002 and 2007. As part of these outreaches an implementation package was developed.

Methods

The findings from an initial qualitative study in two hospitals indicated the need for well-planned educational materials to accompany the implementation process. This led to the development of a KMC implementation workbook that was tested in six hospitals. The findings from this second study led to the development of a basic, “mix-and-match” implementation package that could be tailor-made according to the needs of different health authorities.

Results

An underlying approach was developed to root the planning for KMC implementation holistically within the broader institutional context. Each health care institution had to find its own solutions. Guidelines were in the form of questions rather than descriptions or prescriptions.

Different variations of the package have been used in three provinces in South Africa and an adapted version was also used in a scale-up intervention in Ghana. Individual health facilities used the package in different ways. However, providing educational and implementation materials did not necessarily guarantee implementation. Success in implementation depended rather on how the package was used.

The South African studies also led to the development of a tool for monitoring progress with the implementation of KMC. This tool has been used to evaluate scale-up of KMC in Ghana, Indonesia, Malawi, Mali, Rwanda and Uganda (2009-2012).

Conclusion

The core finding from our studies is that educational and implementation materials should not be planned for the users, but with them.