

Maternity Clinic: A Serious Game for Improving Communication and Teamwork Among Healthcare Workers

BACKGROUND

Jhpiego and Smart Game Systems developed a customized, serious board game, *Maternity Clinic*, for healthcare-related locations to improve the quality of patient care through better teamwork, decision making skills, and interpersonal communication between doctors, midwives, and nurses in rural clinics.

NEED

- Healthcare workers in maternity clinic settings often have poor communication due to cultural and role-based reasons that affect the quality of care for mothers and newborns
- Increase impact on mothers and babies thriving post partum
- Traditional methods of learning such as classrooms are inadequate to impact behavior change where games can have a better effect
- The ability to collect data on performance and evaluate impact on patient quality is needed.



The game board was designed to resemble a typical maternity clinic.

OBJECTIVES

SGS was asked to develop a tabletop game that is easy to learn, fun to play, and challenging for participants to explore the power of working together as a team and prioritizing strategies for treatment of patients and utilization of limited resources. A thorough evaluation was part of the program, including:

- Impacts on the participants:* Described the feelings/reactions and learning of health care professionals in Botswana while playing the game
- Impacts on the program:* Determined how the game affects the quality of interaction and change of behavior in the maternity clinic settings

TARGET AUDIENCE

Participants in the game included healthcare practitioners, university faculty and students in nursing and midwifery, program managers at clinics and hospitals, and department staff.

SOLUTION

Maternity Clinic was developed as a cooperative, tabletop board game for maternity care health workers to improve teamwork, decision making skills, intrapersonal communication and a collaborative approach to patient care in resource challenged settings. The game was played at least twice several weeks apart by the same four players in eight locations in a maternity ward, hospitals, nursing schools, midwifery council institute, and department of public health.

RESULTS

Overall, the game was very well-received and was determined to be best suited for administrators and students in the learning institutions as well as for training sessions with practitioners. Most of the participants had little or no previous game play experience, and they reported the game was enjoyable, related to their work, and could be applied to real world decision-making. The game is now being deployed in multiple countries and languages. Quotes from players:

Teamwork is the key. Everyone has a specific skill--need to take advantage of it. Shows how important it is to put the white coat aside.

Excellent introduction as a brainstorming tool, challenge for critical thinking, and teamwork.

Interesting how the game forces you to plan our day. It's in front of us. We have to think broadly--all patients at one time.