

Title of abstract: Development of a Guideline for Primary Healthcare Providers to Integrate Child Mental Healthcare Services Into Primary Healthcare Practice

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Abstract

Background: Child mental health is a growing global concern. There is a call for the integration of mental health services into primary healthcare which has a wider provider workforce. This has become necessary as the institutionalization of care tends to have a negative effect on the development of the child and also perpetuates stigma and discrimination. Apart from that, there is an inadequate number of specialist practitioners to provide accessible and prompt services to meet the needs of children with mental health issues.

Objective: The main objective of this study is to develop a guideline for primary healthcare practitioners to integrate child mental health services into primary healthcare practice in the Tamale metropolis.

Method: The study will following a multi-phase approach involving three phases.

Phase one will be a scoping review to map existing evidence on available guidelines used for the integration of child mental health services into primary healthcare practice.

Phase two will be a survey on primary healthcare providers' perceptions and practices of child mental healthcare services within the primary healthcare system. This phase will also identify the barriers and facilitators to the integration of child mental health services into primary healthcare services.

Phase three will be the triangulation of data from phases one and two to develop the guideline.

The draft guideline will be completed using the Delphi methods where experts will review the guideline and make inputs for its finalization.

Expected outcomes: the study is expected to produce a standardized guideline for the integration of child mental healthcare services into primary healthcare services in Tamale Metropolis.