

2011 OHA Partner meeting Abstract

Project Name: SCMS/Zambia

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Title of Abstract: Sustainable Building Capacity through Pre-Service Supply Chain Training

Persistent HIV/AIDS challenge that this activity/intervention addresses:

Laboratory staff and managers are responsible for ensuring timely receipt of commodities to support laboratory operations, but receive no supply chain management training before they enter the workforce which then requires large training investment.

Briefly explain why this experience needs to be shared- global relevance:

By sharing our experience working with universities in Zambia to incorporate supply chain training into the biomedical science curricula, we can highlight an effective, sustainable and cost-effective capacity building strategy that institutionalizes professionalization in pre-service training to improve supply chains for laboratory commodities.

Description of the intervention:

Inclusion of pre-service training in laboratory commodity supply chain management as a component of biomedical scientist school curriculum. SCMS/Zambia presented the need for this training during the University of Zambia (UNZA) curriculum review meetings in 2008. The lecturers present agreed to include laboratory commodity supply chain in the biomedical scientist school curricula. SCMS entered into an agreement with UNZA to lead training of trainers (TOT) courses in logistics and supply chain management for lecturers so that all graduates from UNZA and its three affiliated colleges would be trained in the MOH National Laboratory Commodities Logistics System. SCMS completed the first TOT in 2009 and a second in 2010 for additional lecturers. SCMS continues to monitor these trainings to ensure high quality standards are followed. SCMS will phase out this supervision over the next year when the course is fully incorporated into the term-long management course.

Results:

The two TOTs produced 34 competent certified lecturers. To date, 272 students have taken the course. Of those trained, approximately 80% are currently working as biomedical scientists at the Ministry of Health facilities. It is now an expectation that colleges and university will train their students on laboratory supply chain management in the final year of the curricula. All the trainings were conducted by lecturers at these institutions, while SCMS staff provided quality standard checks. SCMS in-service training costs for an average number of 30 participants were reduced by 62% due to the pre-service training initiative.

a. What worked:

- Presenting SCMS's strategy during the curriculum development meetings facilitated the process of bringing in new courses for the academic year

- Requiring that the course be given to university students ensured that all biomedical students graduated with an understanding of logistics and supply chain management. Since the first TOT, all UNZA biomedical science graduates have taken the course.
 - College and university lecturers have taken ownership of the initiative; the curricula was adopted, lecturers are capable of conducting trainings without SCMS support, and students are graduating with greater supply chain skills, thus reducing in-service training costs
- b. What did not work:
- The university and college lecturers are often part-time and inconsistent. Since there are so many part-time lecturers that teach this course, it was necessary to hold the second TOT to train more of these part-time professors.
 - The supply chain curriculum could not immediately be integrated into the full biomedical scientist curriculum because the current students are on a set curriculum and it would have meant a change in the schedule that was defined at the start of their studies. For the first three years, the course needed to be taught as an add-on and the integrated curriculum is now being taught to students just beginning their studies.
- c. How the results influence program direction/change
- Higher education pre-service trainings resulting in a significant reduction in the need for in-service training, as new professionals are entering the workforce already equipped with skills to manage laboratory commodity logistics systems.
 - 80% of the students are employed in MOH facilities and are able to implement the MOH National Laboratory Commodity Logistics System on their first day of work.