# PATENT MEDICINE VENDORS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE ROLE OF SUPPORT IN IMPLEMENTING A MULTI-COMPONENT INTERVENTION IN URBAN SLUMS OF NIGERIA

#### **Key messages:**

- 1. Sustaining improvements in service quality and referral practices among patent medicine vendors requires continuous, hands-on supportive supervision from multiple actors.
- 2. Complementary support from PHC workers, community leaders, project mentors, and regulatory officers collectively strengthens PMV accountability, clinical judgement, and record-keeping.
- 3. Long-term gains depend on institutionalising ongoing mentorship, access to essential tools, and community sensitisation to reinforce referral uptake.

#### INTRODUCTION

- Patent Medicine Vendors (PMVs) provide most primary care in Nigeria's urban slums.
- Weak linkages with the formal health system raise concerns about quality.
- A multi-component intervention was implemented to strengthen PMV service quality, referral practices, and collaboration with PHC workers.

**Objective:** To explore PMVs' perspectives on the role and impact of support received during intervention implementation.

#### **METHODS**

Design: Qualitative process evaluation

Participants: 22 PMVs

Data collection: In-depth interviews

Focus: Perceived role of support from community leaders, PHC workers, project staff, and external supervisors

Analysis: Inductive thematic analysis of translated and transcribed interviews

## 1. Support from Community Leaders

Monthly visits to inspect hygiene and verify registers

Improved accountability

PMVs requested expanded roles in community sensitization

2. Support from PHC Workers

Reviewed registers, corrected dispensing errors

Reinforced recognition of danger signs Increased confidence and clinical judgement

**RESULTS** 

Cross-Cutting Needs Identified by PMVs

Continuous supervision

Affordable diagnostic kits

Support for referral transportation

Community outreach to encourage referrals

**RESULTS** 

## 3. Support from Project Staff

Monthly supportive supervision & mentorship

Reinforced training; corrected errors

Provided tools (registers, referral booklets)

PMVs requested biannual refresher trainings

4. Support from External Supervisors

Mainly compliance checks (licences, statutory books)

Seen as necessary but insufficient for day-today improvement

### CONCLUSION

Continuous, multi-layered supportive supervision is vital to improving PMV quality of care and strengthening linkages with formal health facilities. Sustaining these gains requires consistent mentoring, essential diagnostic tools, community sensitization, and referral support mechanisms.





