

Research Updates

IndiaCLEN embarks on a study to assess injection practices in India

Injections have been used effectively for many years, in preventive and curative health care. However, research studies and mathematical modelling have estimated that at least 50 percent of the world's 12 billion injections administered each year are unsafe. Most of the unsafe injections are administered in developing countries, posing serious risks to recipients, health workers and the community. Moreover, most of the curative injections are unnecessary, ineffective or inappropriate.

A study on the trends of the use of injections in India is the need of the hour. This study will provide baseline information on the magnitude of the problem (e.g., injection frequency, proportion of unsafe injections) and identify the locally relevant determinants of prevailing injection practices. The goal of the project is to facilitate the development of a national policy on safe injection practices in India. The focus will be to determine the magnitude of unsafe injections, understand the process of injections at both public and private health facilities and identify determinants of injection practices among clients/patients as well as prescribers/providers.

The study, which will be conducted in 24 centers representing all the socio-cultural and geographic regions of the country, will use both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Rapid assessment procedures will be used to identify determinants of injection practices among clients as well as prescribers or providers. The opinions of health care waste management workers will also be studied. Data will be collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with the stakeholders.

In addition, a population-based cluster survey will be carried out. India has been divided into 15 zones, and investigators from 60 partner medical colleges and NGOs will be involved in data collection. This population-based cluster survey will provide the magnitude of the use of injections and their indications in the community. Observations in the health facilities will determine the magnitude of unsafe injections and practices regarding management of sharps wastes.

Quality assurance mechanisms have been built into the study to standardize the methods across the centers. A Central Coordinating Team (CCT) will be established to coordinate the entire study in collaboration with the 12 regional coordinators (for qualitative part) and 15 zonal coordinators (for quantitative part).

To ensure that findings will be translated into relevant healthcare policy, the objectives of the study have been developed in consultation with policy makers and health administrators at the highest level of health care delivery. The recommendations will be given to these policy makers for the development of a National Injection Safety Policy and for the design of interventions for behavioral modification.

This study was awarded a grant of approximately US\$ 1M by the World Bank through the Government of India, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

Narendra K. Arora
Principal Investigator and Project Coordinator
At the Global Meeting XVIII in Egypt