



Site Certification for HIV POCT

The Namibia Experience

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Background (1)

- Countrywide implementation of HIV POCT in Namibia started in 2004.
- All Health Facilities are required to be registered under the Hospitals and Health Facilities Act No. 36 of 1994.
- Guidelines and procedures were developed to guide the successful implementation of the HIV POCT program.
- Guidelines provided for the requirement that all HIV POCT sites be registered and certified.
- Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) license all Health Care facilities.



Background (2)

- Namibia Institute of Pathology (NIP) mandated to certify all HIV POCT testing sites.
- Due to scarcity of Medical Technologists, stakeholders agreed to allow community counselors to be trained for employment in HIV POCT sites.
- Certification process is based on continuous compliance with minimum operational requirements to ensure POCT sites meet the minimum certification requirements and staff maintain the required competency levels.



Site Readiness Assessment & Licensing

- Site Readiness Assessment and Initial licensing:
 - A health facility license is a legal requirement for health facilities in Namibia.
 - All health facilities, mobile vans are licensed to provide POCT services.
 - License is issued on the basis of an assessment of whether the site meet all the infrastructure requirements.
 - Outreach sites operates under their base site license negating the need for a registered nurse at every outreach location.



Annual Renewal of License

- Annual renewal of license:
 - Renewal of license is a legal requirement for all health facilities in Namibia.
 - Licensing officers conduct annual assessments to confirm that infrastructure has not change or that changes still support operational needs.
 - Process outcomes (that procedures are adhered to, waiting times are acceptable etc.) are also assessed during annual visits.



POCT Site Certification Requirements (1)

POCT sites should meet certain minimum standards in their infrastructure, processes and outcome of their services to attain and maintain operational status.

1. Requirements for service providers

- Only trained and certified individuals may offer POCT services.
- Entry requirements for training of such individuals is a grade 10 certificate.
- ✓ ***Certification in HIV counselling***
 - Community counsellors are trained and certified to offer counselling services by authorized training institutions.



Certification Requirements (2)

✓ ***Certification in HIV POCT testing***

- HC workers and CC's who successfully completed the HIV Rapid Test training and conducted rapid tests with complete concordance on re-testing by the Reference Laboratory are certified to offer POCT services.
- Re-certification is done annually (PITC & Home based) or bi-annually (fixed or mobile) for individuals who conducted proficiency panels with concordance to the Reference Laboratory



Certification Requirements (3)

2. Infrastructure requirements for sites

- **Personnel:** For a POCT site to be certified, at least two trained and certified service providers, including one registered nurse.
- **Space and furniture:** Adequate space and minimum furniture should be available.
- **Storage facilities:** Adequate storage facilities must be available. (storage for test kits, controls, client records etc.)
- **Inventory:** Dedicated site supervisor assigned with the responsibility to manage the inventory system.



Certification Requirements (4)

- **Safety, Infection Control and Occupational Health:** Proper waste disposal and incineration services, & availability of PEP in case of occupational exposure.
- **Client Handling:** Assurances of confidentiality should be maintained at all times in the handling of the patient and the reporting of results.

3. Process requirements for sites

- **Awareness of Policies, Guidelines and SOPs:** Availability of such documents at all POCT sites.
- **Client Flow:** Client flow in the facility should minimize waiting times (to no more than two hours).



Certification Requirements (5)

- **Collection and submission of accurate data:** HIV rapid testing logbooks and client registers, accurately completed.
- **Contribution of routine data to monitoring quality:** Sites should take part in routine data analysis not only for the purposes of reporting but also to monitor quality in a systematic manner.
- **Counsellor support systems:** These include supervision, burnout prevention and observed practice.



Certification Requirements (6)

4. Agreed standards for testing:

- Concordance on re-testing of 5%. (HIV rapid test client samples, i.e. every twentieth specimen submitted to Reference laboratory for re-testing.)
- A performance score of 80% or more on the quarterly proficiency testing program.



Non-Complying sites

- In the event of continued non compliance - MoHSS is informed regarding the failing site.
- Closure of such POCT site, in line with requirements of Hospitals and Facilities Act.
- POCT site remained closed until all recommendations have been fully and successfully met.
- Re-assessment and re-certification is required to attain operational status.



Achievements

- 377 certified HIV POCT sites.
- 2328 POC testers trained.
- Discordant rate of 0.002% (5 % re-testing).
- Good performance on PT panels (95 % Pass rate).



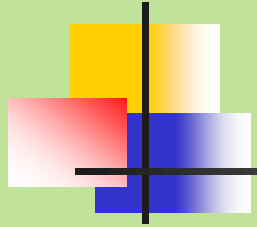
Challenges

- Personnel/supervision.
- Inventory management.
- Safety challenges.
- Non-compliance to re-testing requirements.



Conclusion

- Continuous assessment of POCT sites provides opportunity to identify and correct non-compliances.
- Certification of POCT sites provides recognition that pre-determined operational and quality and safety requirements are met.
- Excellent model to integrate other POC tests.



Thank you