Country: China

Project Name: The National Early Childhood Development Demonstration Base Initiation Program

Project Reach: 25 Provinces - Sub-National

Project Time Period: 02/2014 - Ongoing

Project Impact areas: Health; Food Security & Nutrition; Security & Safety; Responsive Caregiving; Early Learning & Stimulation;

Project Funding: National Budget

Project Website: http://www.chinawch.org.cn/etwsbjb/xmhz/

Project Description:

This is the first early childhood development service institution creation project in China’s health sector. The main objectives of the project are:

- To establish 100 National Early Childhood Development Base throughout the country,
- promote the work of early childhood development of child healthcare service institutions at the provincial-, municipal-, district/county-levels,
- and enhance the national child healthcare service capabilities.

The National Early Childhood Development Demonstration Base Initiation Program is a national-level child health institution review project aimed at improving the quality of services related to early childhood development in the national children healthcare institutions. Entrusted by the National Health Commission, this project was organized and implemented by the National Center for Maternal and Child Health of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, with a view to promoting the development through initiation. From 2014 to 2015, the criteria for review were developed and issued. From 2015 to 2017, all 31 provinces across China submitted materials for application and participated in the review. Through three steps of review, including preliminary review of materials, open reply and on-site review, 50 national-level early childhood development demonstration bases have been initiated up to now.

The review was conducted from the floor space for child health-care service, facilities and equipment, staffing and training, outpatient service quality and quantity, health education, research abilities, information construction, interdisciplinary cooperation and other aspects. For the service, this project focuses on children’s growth and development, nutrition and feeding, mental and behavior, parenting care, high-risk child healthcare, pregnancy nutrition and pregnancy mental healthcare and other areas closely related to early childhood development.

The child health care institutions that passed the review preferentially enjoy the policies related to the training of the National Early Childhood Development Base, such as the reduction of training fees, more chance to join in national level research or training. Meanwhile, they also undertake tasks of demonstration, guidance and promotion for the national early childhood development work.

The project, to date, has resulted in:

1. The increased attention of leaders of health administrations and healthcare institutions at all levels on the importance of early childhood development.
2. Greatly improved the site environment, facilities and equipment, human resources and other conditions of children’s healthcare services.
3. It has promoted the cooperation and connection among the various service departments of early childhood development, and enhanced the capabilities of service providers.
4. The selected national demonstration bases include provincial-, municipal- and county-level medical and health service institutions, including maternal and child healthcare institutions, general hospitals and children’s hospitals, which are conducive to promoting the equalization and fairness of child health care services.

**Legal Framework:**
Based on “China Children’s Development Program (2015-2020)”, and it also meets the requirements of “China Children's Health Action Plan (2020-2030)”.

**Funding**
National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China used part of the special funds for maternal and child healthcare and reproductive health development (central-level funds) for project design, evaluation criteria development and implementation, and demonstration base capacity building. The National Center for Maternal and Child Health of China CDC also support part of funds for training and research.

**Program Evaluation:**
To monitor the quality, the review is conducted every three years in the National Early Childhood Development Bas.

**Lessons Learned:**
1. The inclusion of health administrators and hospital administrators into the reporting members of the review group is conducive to raising the awareness and attention of policy-makers.
2. Quality early childhood development services require integrated service, which needs strong multi-sectoral collaboration and good linkages with health care institutions.
3. The establishment and review process of the institutions is conducive to optimizing the service processes, improving service quality, breaking poor service models, and promoting exchanges between regions.