

Functioning and Challenges of Primary Health Care (PHC) Program in Roma Valley, Lesotho

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ABSTRACT Primary Health Care (PHC) plays a vital role in decentralization of health care services. PHC is designed to ensure health care coverage at the community level through the involvement of the community in improving their healthy living. PHC offers treatment and care in continuum that is supported by a facility-linked home-based care system and a referral system. While PHC is global, its operation and functioning in the area of community health provisioning varies across communities. The main objective of this study is to find out whether PHC is effective or not in Roma Valley, Lesotho. The study was carried out in Roma Valley, in the Maseru district of Lesotho. The population for this study includes the nurses under the department of PHC, village health workers, Chiefs and out-patients from four different villages. Out of this, a sample of thirty individuals was selected. The data for this study was collected through qualitative research technique, particularly oral interviews and written records or secondary data sources. The analysis revealed that nurses and village health workers respond to the social needs and health problems of the community and community members are also involved in improving their health status. Village health workers face many challenges in their engagement in this system such as not being given incentives for what they do and often uncooperative disposition of some community members including their leaders. It was also found that they operate under a lot of stress due to lack of resources.