

Person-Centered Maternity Care



Unacceptably high maternal mortality remains a challenge in many low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). While clinical aspects of care are a primary focus in efforts to reduce it, evidence demonstrates that person-centered maternity care (PCMC)¹ also plays a role in reducing maternal mortality, newborn complications, and low rates of facility-based deliveries. To ensure high-quality care is provided, it is important that providers and funders of maternity services clearly understand if clients are receiving PCMC. However, in many LMICs the quality of care is unclear.

IMPROVING OUTCOMES: MEASURING THE QUALITY OF MATERNAL CARE

The 13-item [PCMC scale](#) provides insight on dignity, respect, communication, autonomy, and emotional support. It allows users to rapidly understand a woman's experience of care, informing routine measurement and management decision-making in health facilities, and also provides data for quality improvement processes.

The short PCMC scale was derived from a 30 item scale, variations of which were tested in India, Kenya and Ghana.² The scale items were refined and validated with input from both maternal and child health experts and postpartum women in rural and urban settings, and then reduced to identify those which were most generalizable. The resulting 13 item PCMC scale has been shown to have high reliability as well as high content, construct, and criterion validity.³

A SIMPLE SCALE FOR RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE ASSESSMENT

The PCMC scale requires minimal training to use, and is scored according to an easy-to-use rubric. Results can be used to create an average PCMC score by facility, method type, delivery type, and/or provider type. Guidance for implementing the PCMC scale reinforces the principles of respectful and dignified engagement, encouraging security and transparency even when used in the facility where care was received.

WHO SHOULD USE THE PCMC SCALE?

- Quality improvement personnel
- Maternal health researchers
- Hospital/clinic staff
- Health providers
- Ministries of Health
- Departments of Health

DOMAINS COVERED BY 13-ITEM SCALE:

- Autonomy
- Communication
- Dignity and respect
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Supportive care
- Trust



M4M can help you use the 13-item short scale in your project. For more information contact communications@m4mgt.org.

¹ PCMC is equivalent to terms such as respectful maternity care and patient-centered, woman-centered, or people-centered care.
² Afulani, P.A., Diamond-Smith, N., Golub, G. et al. Development of a tool to measure person-centered maternity care in developing settings: validation in a rural and urban Kenyan population. *Reprod Health* 14, 118 (2017). doi.org/10.1186/s12978-017-0381-7
³ Afulani, P.A., Feeser, K., Sudhinaraset, M. et al. Toward the development of a short multi-country person-centered maternity care scale. *Int J Gynaecol Obstet*, Jul;146(1):80-87 (2019). doi: 10.1002/ijgo.12827.

