

## CHAPTER 3

### EMOC CLIENT/FAMILY INTERVIEW

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#### PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this interview is to capture aspects of EmOC clients' experience (or that of their families) in your facility from their perspective, including both the things they liked and the things they did not. The instrument consists of a list of 22 questions organized according to the clients' component of the Rights Framework for Quality Emergency Obstetric Care.

#### WHEN TO CONDUCT CLIENT INTERVIEWS

Client interviews can be conducted periodically throughout the year. Arrange an appropriate time interval—perhaps every three months—to meet and talk with your clients through these interviews. Interviews can all be conducted on one particular day or spread out over the course of a week.

#### ESTIMATED TIME

A reasonable estimate is 10 to 20 minutes per interview, but this time frame is highly flexible, depending upon the individual client.

#### PREPARATION REQUIRED

Review and adapt the questions as appropriate to your facility and to the client you are interviewing.

#### Interviewers

Any member of staff may potentially conduct interviews. However, conducting client interviews can sometimes be a challenge. Often clients wish to tell staff only good things, and it takes some skill to bring out suggestions they may have, things they did not like, or stories of what went wrong for them. Active listening skills—demonstrating interest, empathy, patience, and understanding—are your best aids in obtaining the fullest picture possible. Therefore, identify staff members who have strong active listening skills to carry out the interviews.

- **Important note:** Please remember that women who require EmOC may have had physically and emotionally traumatic experiences. It is important for interviewers to be aware of, and sensitive to, the outcomes of their visit and to adapt or not ask questions when appropriate. (For example, if a baby died during childbirth, the interviewer should be prepared for the mother to be highly emotional and to spend more time with her if she needs it.)

#### Client Selection

It is important that, where possible, the clients interviewed reflect the different types of client and medical conditions seen in the EmOC services at the facility. When selecting clients for interviews, take into consideration women from different ethnic or language groups, primiparous and multiparous women, a range of obstetric complications, whether clients arrived in an

emergency state or whether complications developed while in the hospital, etc. Making an effort to interview different types of clients will provide a more realistic assessment of services provided from the clients' point of view.

## USING THIS TOOL IN THE QI PROCESS

### Conducting the Interview: Information Gathering and Analysis

- **Pick a time** when the client and/or her family members are not under stress.
- **Ensure privacy** as much as possible. This demonstrates respect for the client; in addition, answers will generally be more forthright if the client feels other staff or clients are not listening.
- **Introduce yourself** to the client.
- **Explain the purpose** of the interview. You want to find out how the client feels about the services offered at the facility and to get her suggestions about how services might be improved.
- **Stress** that this interview is *confidential*. The client's name is not needed and will not be used.
- **Tell the client** that she has the right not to participate in the interview if she does not wish to. If there is any question she does not want to answer, she does not have to.
- **Engage the client/family member** in conversation. It is not necessary to ask every question exactly as written. Try to use open-ended questions, like those beginning with: "How?" and "Why?" Use probing questions, like: "Can you please explain that?" or "Tell me more. How do you feel about that?"
- **Write down** any additional information the client gives to you even if it is not covered by the questions.
- **Thank the client** for her help.

### Developing an Action Plan

If the client brings up problems about the facility that you think the team should address, bring them to your next action plan meeting to write into your action plan. These can be either concrete problems or those that, in your view, are problems of perception. Problems of perception can influence client satisfaction and willingness to return to your facility as much as "actual" problems. But remember, clients will also tell you good things about your services, and these should be recorded as well.

- Discuss with staff what the root cause of the problems or issues identified might be and identify a solution for each root cause.
- During the action plan meeting, discuss your thoughts about the root causes and potential solutions with others.
- Prepare an action plan using the standard format.

### Implementing Solutions, Evaluating Progress, and Following Up

The action plan serves as the guide for implementing solutions and should be reviewed during staff meetings to check on progress. During the follow-up action plan meeting, staff review and evaluate progress and make plans to repeat particular assessments as discussions reveal the need for further information gathering and analysis.

## EMOC CLIENT/FAMILY INTERVIEW FORM

*(Note: These questions are written to be asked directly of EmOC clients. Interviewers should modify them as appropriate for family members.)*

1. What was the medical problem that brought you to this facility? What happened to you before you came to here?
  
2. What made you come to this particular facility?
  
3. How did you get here? (What means of transport did you use?)
  
4. What happened from the time you first arrived at the hospital gate to the time you first saw a nurse, clinical officer, or doctor?
  
5. How long did you wait before seeing a doctor, clinical officer, or nurse for the first time?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- (a) Do you think this wait was acceptable or too long?  
Acceptable \_\_\_\_\_ Too long \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) If it was too long, please explain.
  
6. After you saw a doctor, clinical officer, or nurse for the first time, how long did you wait before someone gave you medical treatment for the problem? \_\_\_\_\_
- (a) Do you think this wait was acceptable or too long?  
Acceptable \_\_\_\_\_ Too long \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) If it was too long, please explain.

7. When you were being examined, did the doctor, clinical officer, or nurse explain to you what he or she was doing and why?

8. Do you feel you received enough information about your condition and about what the doctor, clinical officer, or nurse was doing?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

(a) If not, what did you want to know that nobody told you?

9. Have you been given information about what to do once you leave the facility regarding

(a) How to take care of yourself at home?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

(b) What to do if your condition gets worse?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

(c) What follow-up is needed (e.g., when to return to a facility and where to go)?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

10. Were the medications and supplies you needed available at the facility?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

(a) If not, what happened? Did this delay your treatment at all?

11. Do you find this facility

Clean? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Welcoming? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you feel your privacy was respected by the staff?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain:

13. Were you given something for pain if you needed it?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

14. How did the facility staff treat you? Please explain.
  
15. How were family members and others accompanying you to the hospital treated? Please explain.
  
16. Did you feel the staff respected your opinions? Did the staff listen to your suggestions or opinions if you made them? Please explain.
  
17. Could you have refused treatment if you decided you didn't want it?
  
18. Are you satisfied with the care you received? Please explain.
  
19. What do you like best about this hospital?
  
20. What suggestions do you have for improvement?
  
21. Is there anything else you'd like us to know about your experience here?
  
22. Is there anything else you'd like to know about your care?