

REACH Researching Equity in Access to Health Care Project

WHAT IS REACH?

REACH (Researching Equitable Access to Healthcare) is a four-year programme of work examining health system access and equity. It aims to develop a better understanding of the barriers to obtaining health care faced by people living in South Africa. Maternal health, tuberculosis (TB) care, and antiretroviral (ARV) therapy are used as tracers to assess equity in access to and utilisation of services in the sub-districts of Bushbuckridge (Mpumalanga), Mitchell's Plain (Western Cape), Soweto Region D of the City of Johannesburg (Gauteng) and Hlabisa (KwaZulu-Natal).



WHY IS THIS STUDY IMPORTANT?

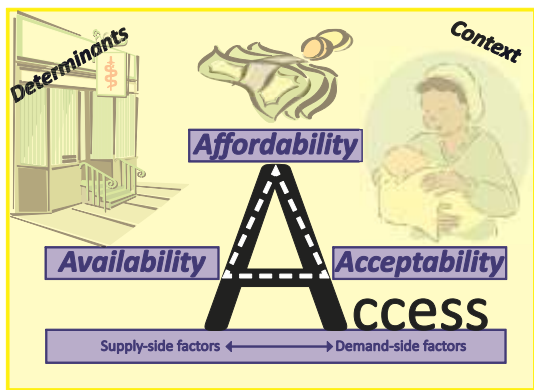
The REACH study is important because many South Africans still do not have adequate access to quality health care services, so it is necessary to find out what people are experiencing with respect to accessing health services, affording to pay for the costs of health care, and the levels of acceptable health service they receive.

WHO IS PARTICIPATING?

In Phase 1 of the research, about 4,000 adults using either TB, ART or maternal health services were interviewed in the 4 districts.

THE CONCEPT OF 'ACCESS' INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:

- ✦ Availability (sometimes referred to as physical access) refers to whether or not the appropriate health services are in the right place at the right time.
- ✦ Affordability (sometimes referred to as financial access) refers to the 'degree of fit' between the cost of health care and individuals' ability-to-pay.
- ✦ Acceptability (sometimes referred to as 'cultural' access) refers to providers' and patients' attitudes towards and expectations of each other, and how they relate to each other.



REACH Institutions:

Centre for Health Policy (CHP), University of the Witwatersrand; Health Economics Unit (HEU), University of Cape Town (UCT); McMaster Institute of Environment and Health (MIEH); Centre for Health Economics and Policy Analysis (CHEPA), McMaster University; Africa Centre for Health and Population Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal; Rural AIDS and Development Action Research Programme, University of the Witwatersrand