

PALS – a new didactic



approach for IPC trainings in Nigeria

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The Challenge

Traditional IPC trainings often focus on biomedical facts and technical methods, separating them from the social and contextual aspects critical for real-world improvements. The

“Participatory Approach to Learning in Systems (PALS)”

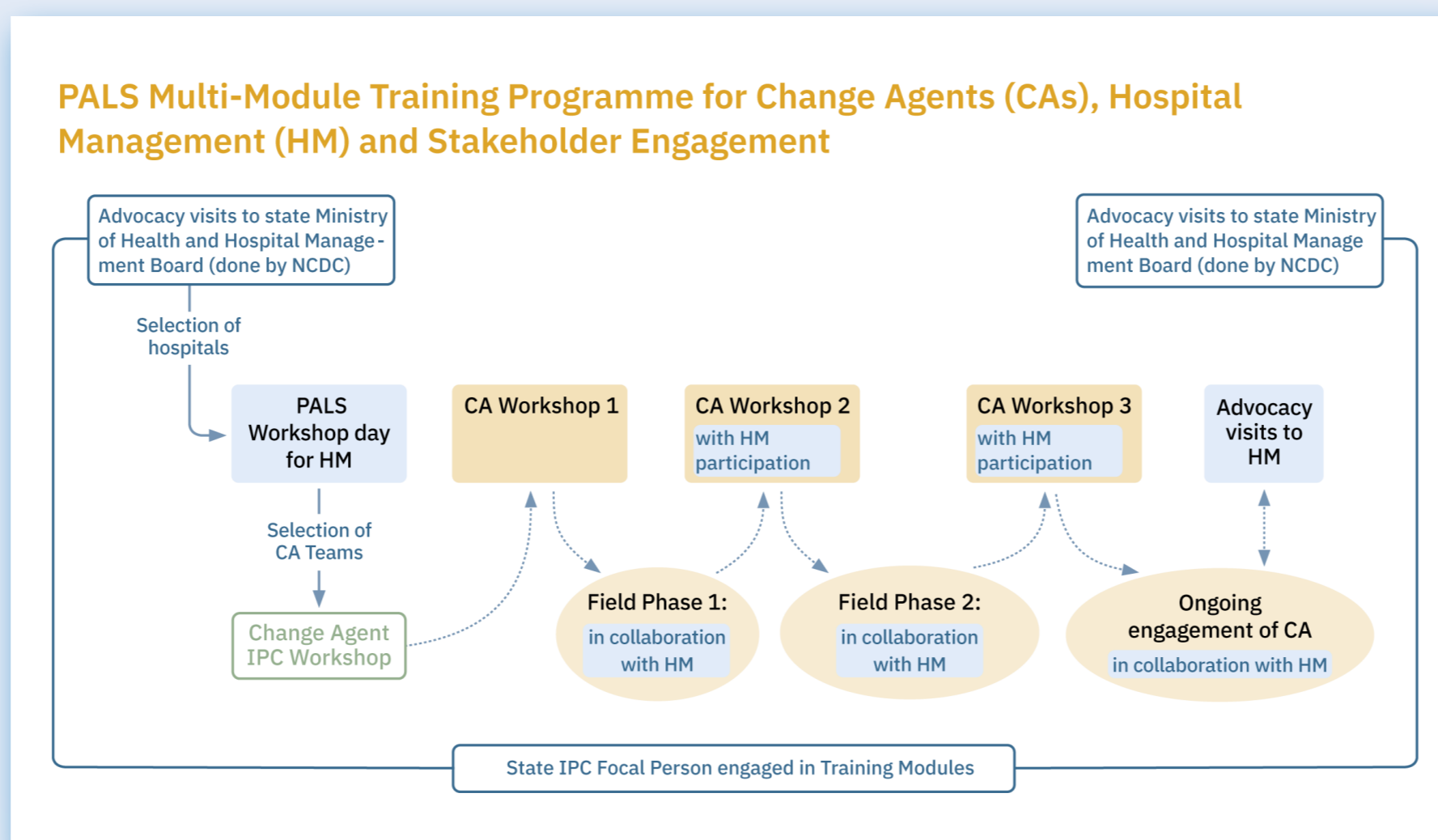
is a novel IPC training and practice approach that acknowledges that IPC takes place in a social system and trains participants in the necessary social skills and systemic understanding. Healthcare workers are no longer viewed as faceless participants in IPC trainings but as Change Agents and experts in their working context who draw on their knowledge to implement needed activities for IPC improvement.

The PALS Didactic Approach

The PALS didactic approach shifts the training objectives from IPC knowledge reproduction to active IPC problem solving through team work, fostering a blame-free, mutually respectful communication and systemic thinking. The PALS training didactic and curriculum development is characterized by interactive sessions, interprofessional reflection of participants' comprehensive IPC activities of the day, negotiation processes with management which includes inviting medical directors to „sign-up“ on an IPC project initiated by Change Agents in a symbolic gesture to affirm their support, as well as practice knowledge and an overall participatory and systemic working culture. The multimodule program is organized in workshops and mentored field phases. Participants work in teams throughout the program. Facilitators are trained IPC and PALS experts. The underlying learning principles for all training modules are:



- inquiry-based learning
- reflective learning scenarios and exercises
- theory-practice loops with mentorship
- teamwork and teambuilding
- experiencing PALS as modus operandi in the training program



The hospital management of the participating facilities is actively involved in the PALS training curriculum and program. Together with their Change Agents they design local IPC improvements.

PALS cannot be taught; it has to be experienced!



PALS Training session with CA Teams and their hospital management



Teambuilding exercises



PALS Feedback Hand



Interprofessional discussion on IPC!



PALS in Practice: Every voice counts!

Results

Quantitative and qualitative M&E data and a sustainability survey from more than 90 healthcare workers from 23 hospitals reveals that participants have adopted and still practice PALS more than one and half years after their training. Participants felt comfortable and satisfied with the training program. They felt empowered and able to communicate and collaborate differently in practice. Their perception of IPC problems and solutions changed, leading to first local IPC activities in collaboration with hospital management. The training didactic not only translated the basic principles of PALS to Change Agents but also enabled them to act accordingly. Change Agents

- engage actively in the workshops and field phases
- understand the systemic view and its application in the hospital
- apply their understanding of participatory collaboration
- practice PALS in team communication and interprofessional collaboration
- start locally adapted IPC activities together with their MD/CMD

Conclusion

The results show that the PALS training didactic and curriculum delivers the PALS concept which strengthens teamwork, improves the communication and collaboration skills of participants, promotes the active and supportive involvement of hospital management to IPC teams. The PALS training fosters the creation of a solution-oriented culture by leveraging local affordances to address context-specific IPC solutions by incorporating the PALS concept into a fruitful organisational change process.

For references and further information please check: <https://nicadeipcpals.ncdc.gov.ng/>

This work was conducted by NCDC and RKI within the NiCaDe IPC project with funding from the German Ministry of Health through its Global Health Protection Programme.