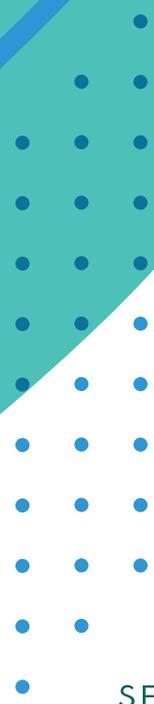# QUALITY OF CARE FRAMEWORK FOR SELF-CARE

BRIEF SUMMARY 2023

SELF-CARE
TRAILBLAZER
GROUP

WHY CREATE THIS TOOL?

All health systems have a duty to ensure quality care, including when health behaviors and practices take place outside the confines of a facility. As self-care becomes more prevalent and accessible, the quality of this care must be ensured. The World Health Organization has produced the Consolidated Guideline on Self-Care Interventions for Health to support individuals, communities, and countries with evidence-based recommendations and good practice statements for self-care interventions. The Quality of Care Framework for Self-Care builds on this Guideline, providing a much-needed set of standards for quality self-care.

WHO IS THIS TOOL FOR?

The Quality of Care Framework for Self-Care targets a range of audiences including national and international policy-makers, researchers, program managers, health workers, donors, and civil society organizations.

WHAT DOES THE FRAMEWORK DO?

The Quality of Care Framework for Self-Care aligns with the WHO Consolidated Guideline on Self-Care Interventions for Health. It is designed to provide a structured focus on the channels and mechanisms through which quality care is delivered and monitored, and the associated standards which can impact an individual's experience and health outcomes. The Framework highlights and expands upon themes included in the WHO Guideline with specific considerations for ensuring quality of care in self-care: healthcare clients; digital technologies and platforms; the trained health workforce; regulated quality products; and interventions and accountability of the health sector.

The Framework outlines 41 standards within five key domains which can be adapted for self-care interventions, including standards relating to:

Technical competency: the knowledge and skills of the client for competent self-management of care; health workers ability to build the skills of a client; the licensing and registration of health professionals; and supervision systems. Technical competency of clients, health providers, and health systems is critical in self-care.

Client safety: a client's ability to understand how to safely use self-care products; communication of dosage and side effects; the expiry of products; and manufacturer requirements.

Information exchange: access to clear information which informs a client of choices and options; provision of information regarding risks; benefits and side effects; health worker communication to support clients.

Interpersonal connection and choice: access to care that does not vary in quality due to personal characteristics such as age, gender, or ethnicity; empathetic and non-judgemental interaction of the health provider; and assessment of and accountability to, a client's experience.

Continuity and care: the client's ability to determine if they have an adverse event; information on follow ups; and availability of products.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Quality of care systems must adapt to recognize an individual's engagement in their own care while ensuring quality, equity, and accountability. Health systems should monitor and support the care a client accesses on their own, while ensuring this approach does not inadvertently hinder a person's ability to manage their own care. This Framework provides a set of standards for quality self-care to can be used to inform clinical guidance, supervision, and health information systems to ensure the quality of existing and new approaches.

HOW HAS THIS TOOL BEEN USED?

" We've been able to apply the Quality of Care Framework from the onset when Uganda initiated its journey in contextualizing the WHO Consolidated Guideline on Self-Care Interventions for Health. We were very intentional in ensuring that this was actually incorporated in our contextualized national self-care guidelines for Uganda. … We found it very much in line with our context, so we did not have to do a lot of context change and shift. "

-Anna Kukundakwe, Center for Health, Human Rights and Development (CEHURD)

WHERE CAN I FIND FURTHER INFORMATION?

- Quality of Care Framework for Self-Care
- WHO Consolidated Guidelines on Self-Care Interventions for Health

ABOUT THE SELF-CARE TRAILBLAZER GROUP AND ITS EVIDENCE AND LEARNING WORKING GROUP

This Quality of Care Framework for Self-Care is a product of the Self-Care Trailblazer Group (SCTG), a global coalition that aims to advance evidence-based SRH self-care policies and programs. The SCTG Evidence and Learning Working Group (ELWG) supports this work through the generation and synthesis of strategic evidence and learning products to strengthen the evidence base for SRH self-care programs, policies, and implementation. The Quality of Care Framework for Self-Care is one of many resources published by the ELWG to offer practical and theoretical tools to support increased awareness around sexual and reproductive self-care for health officials, health professionals, and researchers.