

Negative LARC Trend Reversed after Meerut Data Review Leads to More Equipment and Trained Providers at UPHCs

The Challenge Initiative for Healthy Cities (TCIHC) in India learned early on that if certain steps were taken to “activate” a TCIHC-supported city’s urban primary health centers (UPHCs), then delivering quality family planning services became easier and quicker.

Meerut – an city in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh – successfully activated 42% (10 out of 24) of its UPHCs within five months of its engagement with TCIHC by following those steps. Yet the data did not reflect significant positive trends in contraceptive uptake, especially related to long-acting reversible methods (LARCs). During a data review meeting in New Delhi, the TCIHC team noted that Meerut was situated within the low-performing block of cities.

Although the city learned how to activate UPHCs from the first five TCIHC cities, as outlined in its **[Eight Steps to Activate a New City for Family Planning](#)** approach, Meerut faced two major stumbling blocks at its UPHCs: a lack of trained service providers and not enough family planning equipment.

TCIHC’s City Manager shared these issues with the Meerut health department. To address the lack of required equipment, the city government suggested and approved the use of funds from an underutilized budget category for patient welfare called Rogi Kalyan Samiti. The funds purchased intrauterine contraceptive device insertion kits, boilers and other equipment, which were then provided to the UPHCs in need.

To address the lack of service providers, TCIHC worked with the Nodal Urban Officer of the National Urban Health Mission to map all existing trained service providers. They found that many lady health visitors (LHVs) – who at a minimum have been trained as auxiliary nurse midwives (ANMs) – posted in UPHCs were already trained on IUCD insertions. Subsequently, the Chief Medical



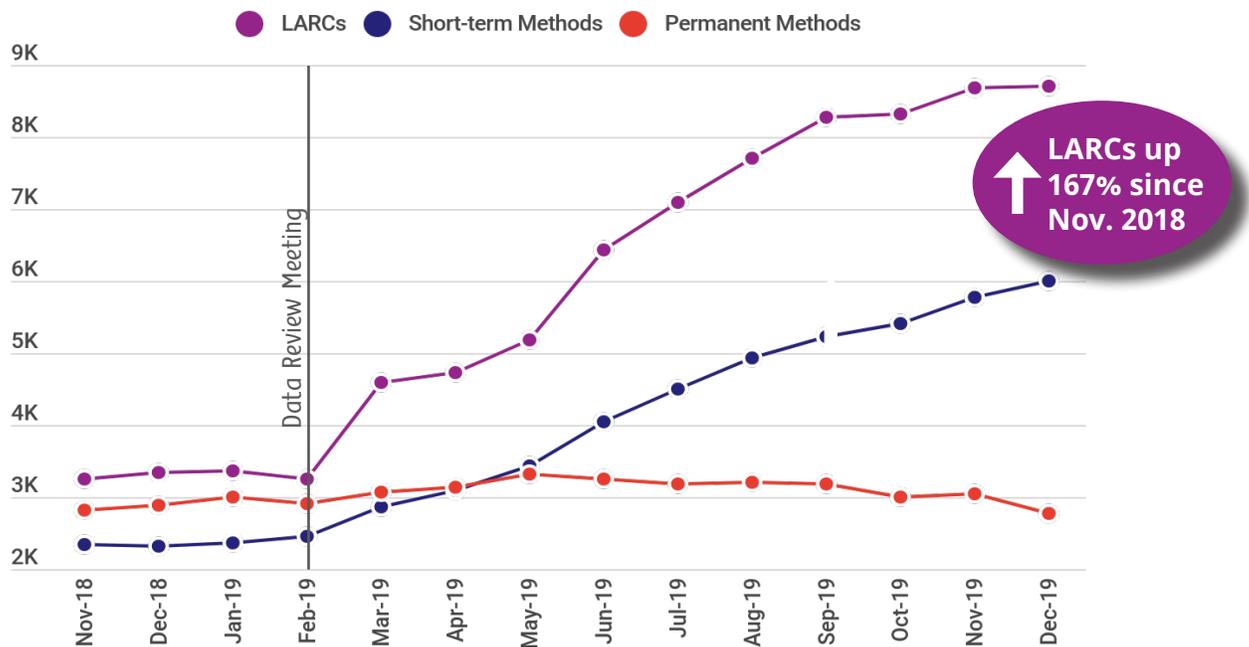
A lady health visitor (LHV) counsels a client on available method choices.

Officer of Meerut issued a directive urging all LHVs to support providing family planning services during **[fixed-day static services](#)**/family planning days (FDS/FPD).

As a result of these efforts, all 24 UPHCs were activated to provide quality family planning services by June 2019. According to the Health Management Information System (HMIS) data

“We productively utilized our existing human resources for strengthening family planning services. I am thankful to TCIHC for helping us find a quick solution for this ongoing problem. In fact, I will explore this solution for strengthening other health programs as well, like tuberculosis.”

- Meerut’s Deputy Chief Medical Officer



This graph represents the increase in annual family planning client volume (Source: HMIS). To prevent overestimation of short-term methods, the HMIS data has been adjusted using standard “couple-years of protection,” (CYP) which is the total estimated protection provided by contraceptives in a one-year period. To account for seasonal variations, the data represents a 12-month average for short-term methods and a 12-month rolling sum for long-term. Thus, an increase in the trend means that the latest month outperforms the same month from last year.

from UPHCs, district hospitals and medical colleges, TCI has contributed to a 107% increase in annual family planning client volume in Meerut as of December 2019, accounting for a reversal of a negative trend from the city’s lowest point in November 2018. This translates to a 9,060 increase in the annual number of family planning clients. Most noticeably, Meerut reversed its downward trend of LARC acceptors as noted by the gray line in the chart above, which is also when the first performance review meeting took place.

With TCIHC’s commitment to long-term sustainable solutions, it helped facilitate the training of staff nurses and ANMs on IUCD insertion through a government-contracted agency, Hindustan Latex Family Planning Promotion Trust, in July 2019. Once trained, staff nurses and ANMs received supportive supervision and coaching support from the LHVs on IUCD insertion.

As a result, Meerut saw a 167% increase in annual LARC users, according to HMIS from UPHCs, district hospitals and medical colleges. In looking

at just the UPHC level data, there was a massive 725% increase in LARC acceptors from November 2018 to December 2019. This accounts for 5,992 more LARC clients seen.

This clearly demonstrates how optimal utilization of existing resources and regular data performance reviews can yield groundbreaking results. The city of Meerut not only reversed a negative trend in LARC acceptors but also demonstrated how simple changes can result in a surge in uptake of LARC acceptors.

“I am happy that I can avail family planning services of my choice from nearby Zakir colony UPHC. Because a few months back when I visited the district hospital for the same, I had to return without availing services due to high client load. Even the district hospital is quite far from my place. Now whenever I meet any woman of my area interested in family planning, I tell her about our nearby facility.”

**– Zahida Parveen
24-year-old mother of three**

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