



Forming an interdisciplinary committee in your institution

The interdisciplinary committee is the heart of the ICI process – this committee will shape decision-making and review input received from those giving birth and their families. They will think strategically and communicate to the ICI team to identify areas where the health facility would like support from ICI and the ICI partner network.

Composition

The committee should represent the diversity of professions in the facility (physicians, midwives, nurses, traditional birth attendants) and include psychosocial services, other medical professions and administration to ensure that different points of view are represented, and encourage collaboration across sectors.

Including a representative from a nearby facility to which you send maternity patients or from which you receive maternity patients frequently can also be beneficial.

An essential element of the committee is a community representative who can give a perspective that is external to the facility. It is expected that this person is not someone who is on the staff of the health facility, to ensure they are able to speak as an independent representative. To identify such a person, the health facility can reach out to local/regional organizations who may be engaged in education and women's rights issues in the community. Ideally, this will also serve to promote community engagement and awareness of the ICI program.

Your facility could connect with organizations that have a local branch that could offer a community representative. There could be local childbirth education organizations, branches of the White Ribbon Alliance, Lamaze International, International Childbirth Education Association, Dona International, La Leche League, or a local grassroots women's organization in your community. If you are having trouble forming local connections, ICI may be able to connect you to a local group within our network.

Committee lead

One or two people should be chosen as the committee lead(s) during the first meeting of the committee. This may initially be the person who completed the application, but it can be changed during this first meeting. To promote a lack of



hierarchy in the committee, it may be beneficial if the committee lead is not the person who is considered the highest ranking person on the committee.

The committee lead will:

- Organize, plan, and facilitate committee meetings
- Periodically send outcomes from the meetings to the ICI team, along with any concerns, requests for support and resources, and particular successes

The committee lead should not take major decisions, such as set priorities, without input from the full committee. The lead has a responsibility to guide and facilitate, but not to direct the actions of the group.

One person on the committee will also be the person responsible for ensuring questionnaires are administered according to the schedule set by the committee. This may or may not be the committee lead.

Frequency of meetings

The frequency of meetings may be set by your committee. Determine a schedule during your first meeting and include this in your action plan. The expectation is that your committee should meet no fewer than 4 times per year, but meetings can be more frequent based on your facility's needs.

Decision-making

The committee is responsible for developing an Action Plan through collaboration. The facility's goals and the major actions to be undertaken should be decided by the committee as a group, through an open process that allows all members to participate and have a voice in the decision.

** This guidance document is a work-in-progress. We welcome feedback from the implementing facilities to improve and update this guidance. Please email mtherrien@icichildbirth.org with proposed edits.