Assessment of the accessibility of point of care ultrasound services among primary care providers in Nigeria.

Osita Okonkwo¹ Jack Lee²

¹Initiative For Improved Population Health Access And Empowerment, Enugu, Nigeria,
²SonoHealth Technologies, Huangpu District, China.

The Global Health Network

URL: https://tghncollections.pubpub.org/pub/beqf2puy
License: Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY 4.0)
This study examined the accessibility of mobile point of care ultrasound among doctors in Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to determine the awareness and availability of mobile point of care ultrasound devices among doctors in clinical practice in Nigeria. This was a descriptive cross-sectional study of which both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were applied. Data was obtained using a self-administered questionnaire. Data was collected from 396 doctors engaged in active clinical practice across Nigeria. Findings from the study revealed that, whereas 92.6% of these doctors require ultrasound services in their practice, only 58% have direct or indirect access to ultrasound services in their facilities. For 23.1% of the doctors, their patients are sent away to other recommended facilities to access ultrasound services, while 16.9%, do not know where their patients source their ultrasound services. The study further revealed that 55% of the doctors are unaware of the existence of any form of mobile point of care wireless ultrasound devices. However, an overwhelming 93.1% of doctors are convinced that using the device in their practice could enable them improve on the clinical assessment of their patients. Whereas 68.3% of doctors are willing to procure and use the device where available, 31.7% are concerned about the affordability of the mobile device. It is evident that mobile wireless ultrasound device is an innovative technology that is sure to significantly improve clinical diagnosis and case detection, enhance service delivery and overall patients outcome especially for those in resource poor environments. This device has the potential to practically eliminate barriers to accessibility of ultrasound guided diagnosis for prompt case detection for population in remote communities. There is therefore the need for increased investment in making this technology widely available to clinicians wherever they are needed. Further research would be required to ascertain the general ultrasound knowledge of these clinicians and routine capacity building provided to continually strengthen their ultrasound guided diagnostics skills.