

Ghana's Health System's Responsiveness to Adolescents' Mental, Sexual, and Reproductive Health (AMSRH).

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Key Messages

1. Adolescent-specific mental health services remains a neglected part of adolescent health services at the primary healthcare level.
2. An integrated MH and SRH services at the primary healthcare level can enhance adolescent user experience at primary health care facilities.
3. Strengthening feedback channels for adolescent services at primary health care level can improve adolescents' concerns about privacy, wait times, staff attitudes and cost.
4. Prioritizing adolescent-focused spaces within health facilities is essential for service uptake.

Introduction

Adolescents' experience with health systems are influenced by their expectations and relationships, alongside the system's response, which includes service providers, accessible care, and institutional processes.

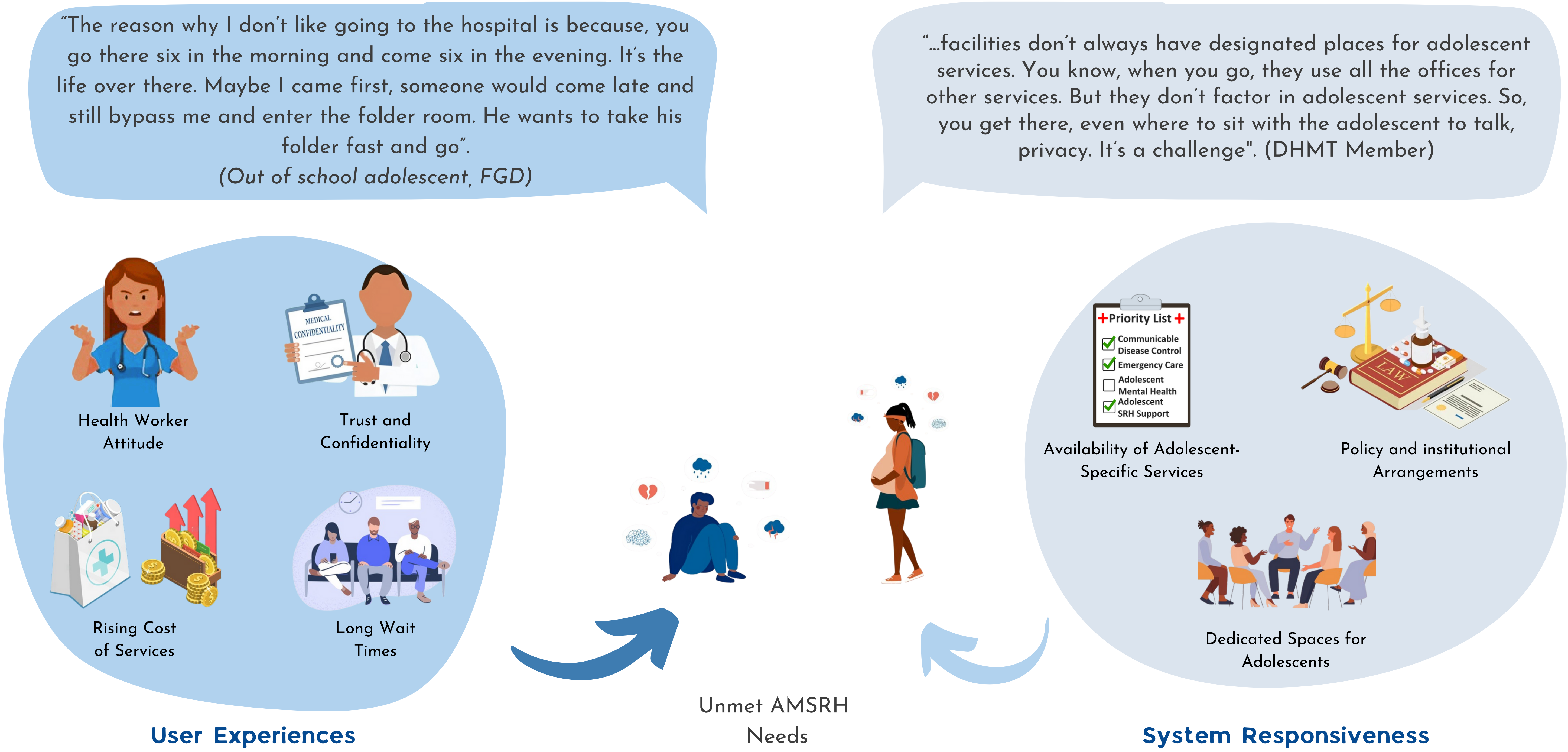
Recognizing and addressing gaps and barriers that shape these interactions is vital to building a responsive health system that meets adolescent mental, sexual, and reproductive health (AMSRH) needs effectively.

Methods

We collected data across 4 districts in the Greater Accra Region in Ghana using the following approaches:

- 36 FGDs with in-and-out-of school adolescent boys and girls
- 9 FGDs with Frontline Health Workers
- 4 FGDs with District Health Management Team
- 64 Rich Pictures
- 138 hours of observation with 4 School Clinics

Findings



Adolescents' experiences with the health system reflects how Ghana's health system's responsiveness either meet or fall short of their initial expectations. These experiences are shaped, on one hand, by the individuals and their expectations and, on the other, the health system's response. Various factors influence both sides, together determining the overall experience of people's interactions with the health system.

Recommendations

1. Provide integrated and cohesive care addressing adolescents' SRH and MH needs.
2. Strengthen systems to collect adolescent's input, enabling ongoing improvements and building trust.
3. Focus on adolescent-specific issues, confidentiality, and dignity to create supportive care environments.
4. Adopt adolescent-responsive planning by integrating youth-focused spaces and privacy standards in healthcare facilities.

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Conclusion

Recognizing that adolescent mental, sexual, and reproductive health is crucial for future well-being, it is important that Ghana's health systems' prioritize these needs to improve service responsiveness. This can enhance access, utilization, improve health outcomes, and create positive experiences for young people.

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