

‘Workforce excellence is essential for sustainable health supply chains’

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Introducing an enhanced cadre of pharmacy assistants to improve dispensing management and availability of medicines at the health center level in Malawi

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VillageReach

Financial sponsors:



# Pharmaceutical staff are designated to higher levels of the health system

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Health Facility Level

Training Level of Pharmacy Staff

Central  
Hospital

District and  
Rural Hospital

Health Center and  
Community

Pharmacist  
(Degree)

Pharmacy  
Technician  
(Diploma)

None



# Pharmaceutical staff shortage results in clinicians and unqualified staff performing pharmaceutical and medicines management

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- Limited availability and poor quality of data from health centers.
- Poor inventory management leading to stock outs and wastage.
- Unqualified personnel dispensing to patients.
- Clinicians spending more time on logistics and dispensing
- Poor quality of care



# Pharmacy Assistant Training Program

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- 3 year initiative to train 150 students
- Partnership between Malawi Ministry of Health, Malawi College of Health Sciences, VillageReach and University of Washington Global Medicines Program
- MOH goal to train and deploy 650 Pharmacy Assistants by 2020
- Support from Barr Foundation, USAID | DELIVER project, and Vitol Foundation

VILLAGE REACH<sup>®</sup>



USAID | DELIVER PROJECT

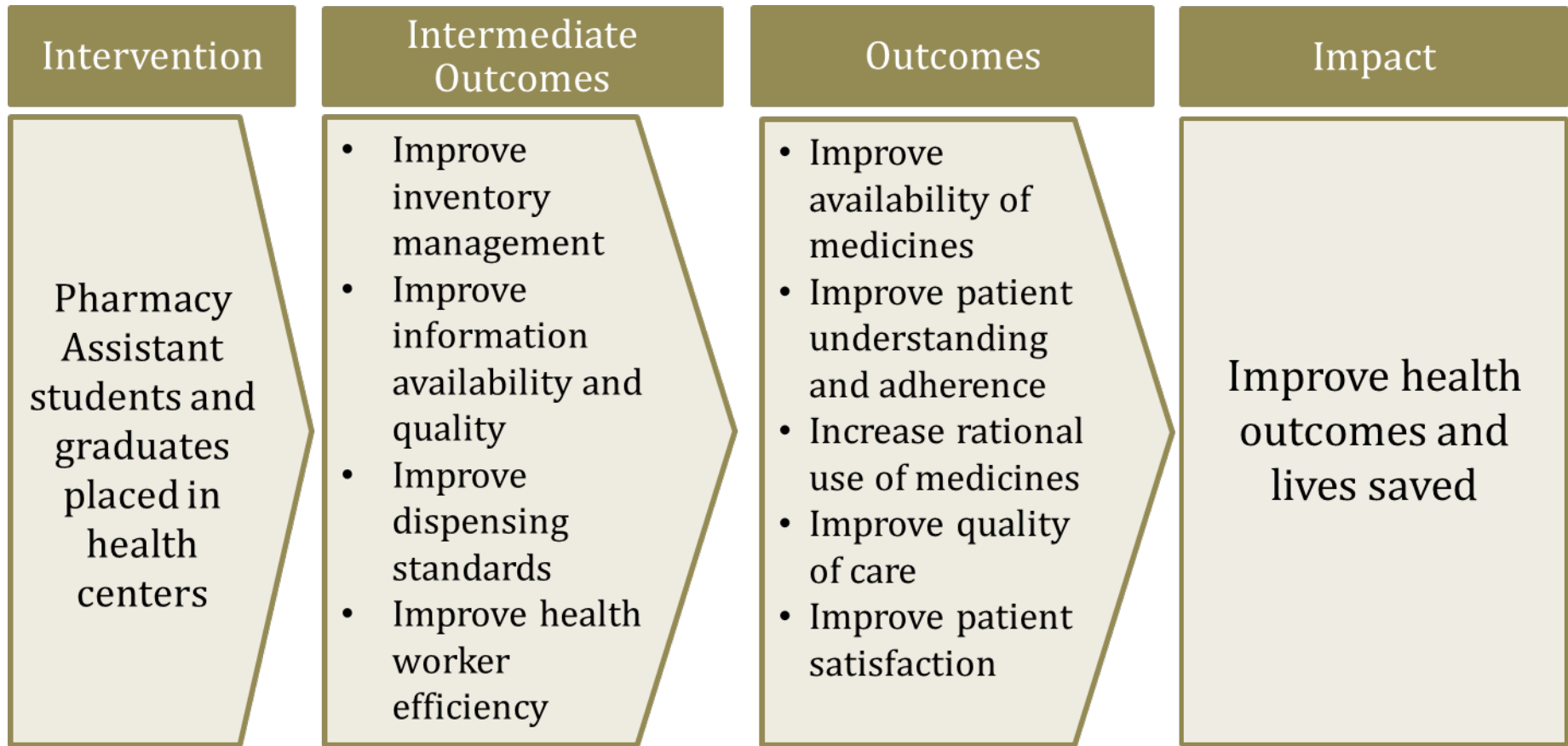
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GLOBAL MEDICINES PROGRAM

UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON



# Theory of Change





# Curriculum with strong emphasis on supply chain management and practical based learning

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- Provides **immediate benefit to the hospitals and health centers** to address imminent human resource constraints and;
- **Prepares students for the reality of the environments** in which they will work after completing their training.



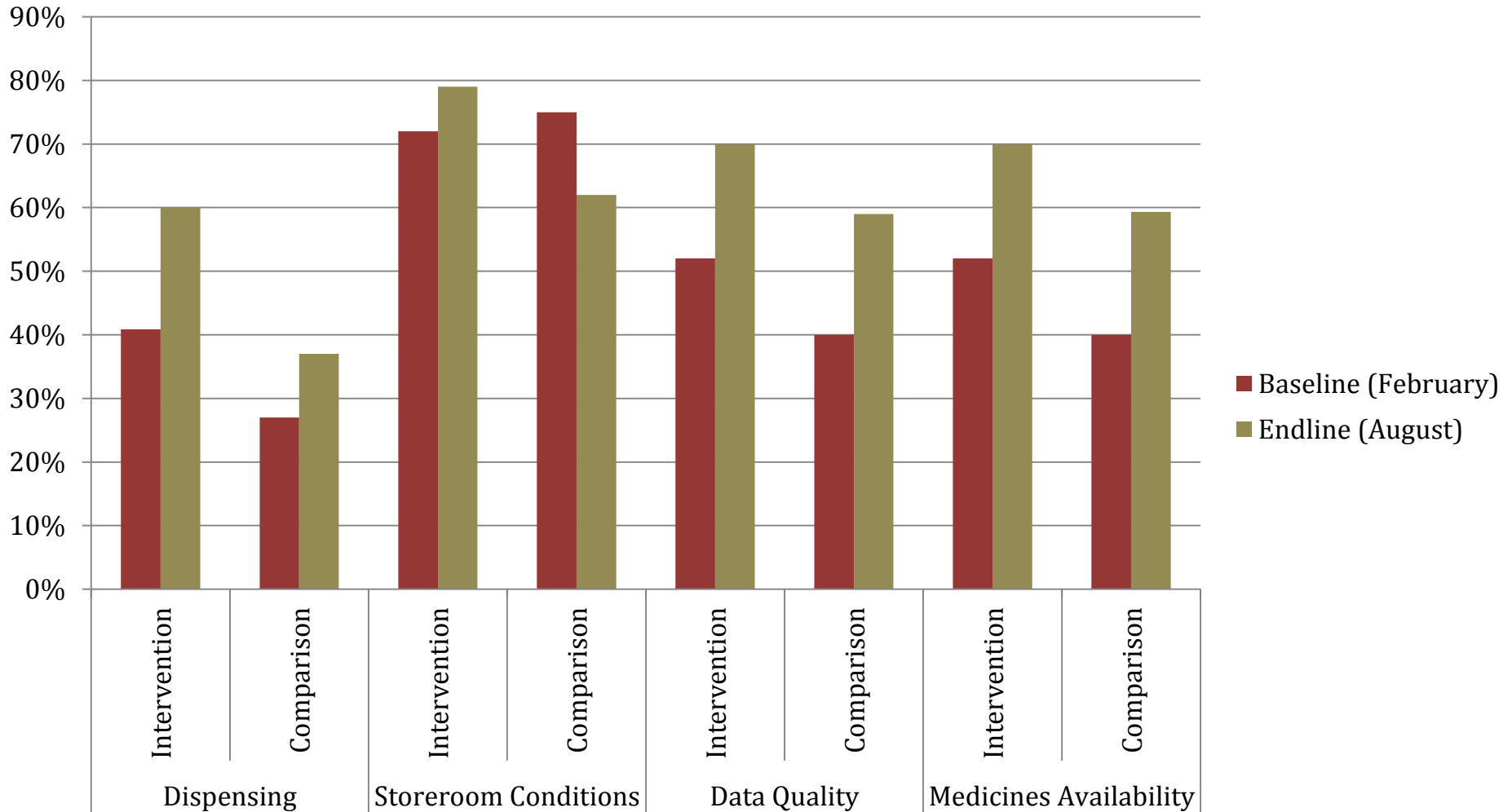
# Health Center Perspective

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“Through this program, our health center receives one student who has already received training in the areas of dispensing and inventory management – more training than anyone currently working at the health center, including myself.”



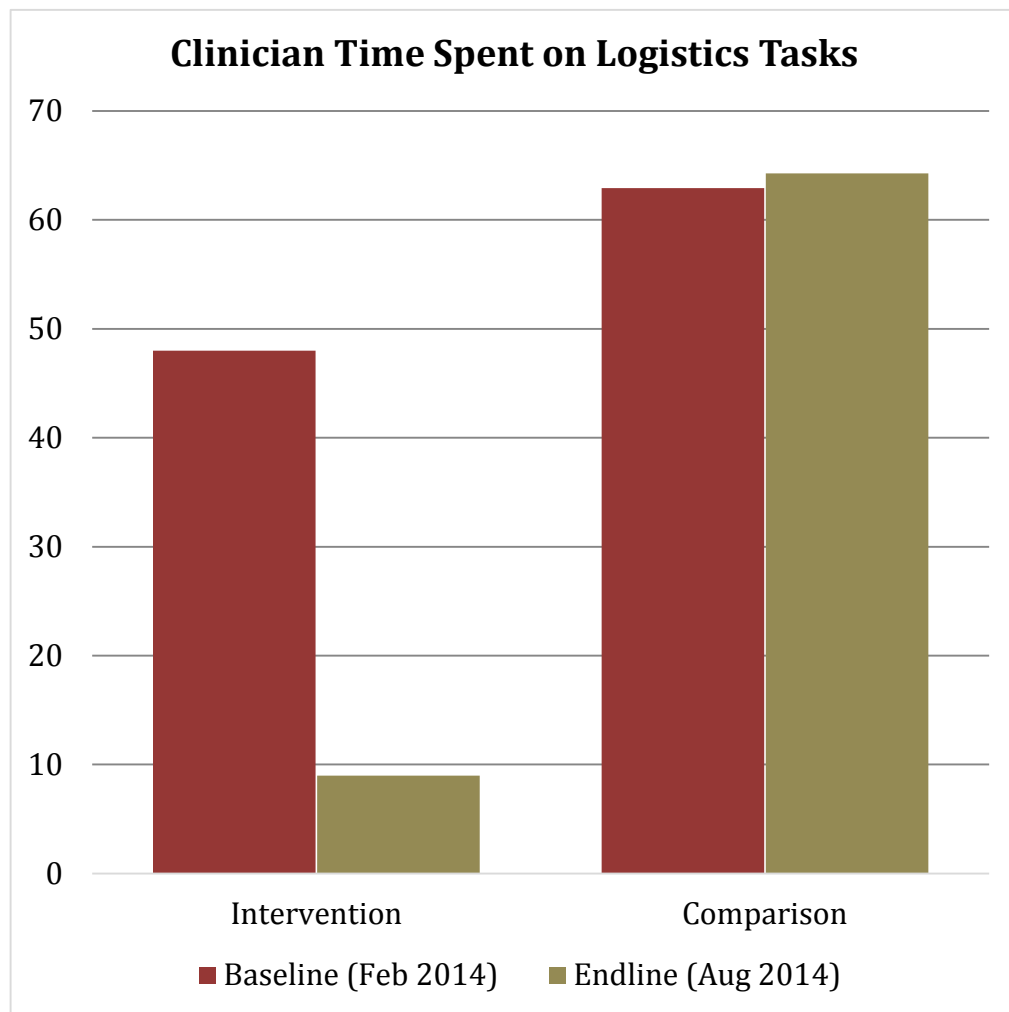
# Health centers with students showed improvement in dispensing standards & storeroom conditions





## Clinicians at health centers with pharmacy assistant students spent dramatically less time on dispensing and logistics tasks.

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“I am completely relieved to have this additional workload of dispensing and inventory management taken over by those specially trained to do the job.”

“I am no longer dispensing, or dealing with supply chain issues other than approving issues and orders. Now, I am able to see more patients in a day, and provide more thorough examinations.”

“This program is a big relief to us clinicians working in the rural and remote health centers. I am already getting calls from fellow in charges who are enquiring on how they can get a placement at their facility.”

# Conclusions and Recommendations

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- Pharmacy personnel at a health center level can bring forth significant benefits to the health system and people of Malawi.
- Training of Pharmacy Assistants addresses staff shortage by shifting logistics and dispensing tasks away from currently overloaded clinical staff.
- We anticipate impact evaluation results to demonstrate improved access to and uses of medicines.
- The Malawi MOH and partners should continue to support training of Pharmacy Assistants.
- Other countries should consider using the Pharmacy Assistant Training Program model to improve rational use of medicines and medical supplies





Thank you!



# The PtD Board:

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