



## Equity in Maternal and Child Health: Ensuring Universal Access

Rose Mary\*

Department Medicine, UCAM Catholic University of Murcia, Murcia, Spain

### DESCRIPTION

Healthcare systems are designed to serve populations broadly, yet persons with disabilities often encounter unequal access and outcomes. Disabilities may be physical, sensory, intellectual, or psychosocial and each type presents unique challenges in healthcare settings. Barriers include physical inaccessibility of facilities, communication gaps, limited availability of assistive technologies and inadequate provider training. Improving healthcare for persons with disabilities is essential not only to ensure equality but also to promote inclusion and dignity in society.

#### Physical Accessibility

A fundamental barrier to healthcare access for people with disabilities is the physical design of healthcare facilities. Many hospitals and clinics lack ramps, wide doorways, or adjustable examination tables, making it difficult for individuals using wheelchairs or mobility aids to receive care. Accessible transport options to and from healthcare facilities are also limited in many regions, particularly in rural areas. Implementing universal design principles in healthcare infrastructure is a necessary step toward ensuring equal access.

#### Communication Challenges

For people with sensory impairments such as hearing or vision loss, communication gaps can prevent effective healthcare delivery. A lack of sign language interpreters, limited access to braille or large-print materials and inaccessible digital health platforms reduce the ability of patients to understand medical information or participate in decision-making. Training healthcare providers in basic communication strategies and adopting assistive

technologies, such as screen readers and captioning systems, can improve interactions and outcomes.

#### Provider Training and Attitudes

Negative attitudes or misconceptions about disability among healthcare providers often create additional barriers. Some providers may underestimate the quality of life of individuals with disabilities, leading to biased decisions about treatment options. Others may lack knowledge about how to adapt procedures or equipment to accommodate patient needs. Integrating disability awareness and rights-based training into medical education helps combat stereotypes and equips providers to deliver care that respects the autonomy and dignity of persons with disabilities.

#### Preventive Care and Health Promotion

Individuals with disabilities are often excluded from mainstream preventive health programs. For instance, women with physical disabilities may be overlooked for routine cancer screenings, while people with intellectual disabilities may not receive tailored health education. As a result, conditions that could be prevented or managed early may go undetected until they become severe. Inclusive health promotion strategies such as mobile clinics, targeted awareness campaigns and adapted health materials are essential for reaching these populations.

#### Assistive Technologies and Rehabilitation

Access to assistive technologies, including wheelchairs, hearing aids and prosthetics, plays a significant role in enabling individuals to participate fully in healthcare. Yet, these technologies remain unaffordable or unavailable for many. Rehabilitation services, which can improve independence and quality of life, are similarly

**Received:** 03-September-2025; Manuscript No: IPDEHC-25-22821; **Editor assigned:** 05-September-2025; PreQC No: IPDEHC-25-22821 (PQ); **Reviewed:** 19-September-2025; QC No: IPDEHC-25-22821; **Revised:** 26-September-2025; Manuscript No: IPDEHC-25-22821 (R); **Published:** 03-October-2025; DOI: 10.35248/2049-5471.25.22.69

**Corresponding author:** Rose Mary, Department Medicine, UCAM Catholic University of Murcia, Murcia, Spain; E-mail: maryrose@yahoo.com

**Citation:** Mary R (2025) Equity in Maternal and Child Health: Ensuring Universal Access. 22:69.

**Copyright:** © 2025 Mary R. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

underdeveloped in many regions. Expanding access to assistive devices and integrating rehabilitation into primary care systems can help reduce disparities and improve overall health outcomes for persons with disabilities.

### **Intersectionality and Multiple Barriers**

Disability often intersects with other factors such as gender, socioeconomic status and rural residency. Women with disabilities, for example, may face compounded barriers in accessing maternal health services. Similarly, individuals living in low-income or remote areas may have limited access to both healthcare and disability-related services. Addressing disability in healthcare requires an intersectional approach that considers how overlapping disadvantages affect access and outcomes.

### **Policy and Legal Protections**

National and international frameworks, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), provide a basis for promoting equal healthcare access. However, implementation remains inconsistent. Some countries lack clear guidelines on accessibility standards, while others do not allocate sufficient funding to disability-inclusive health services. Enforcing legal protections, allocating resources and monitoring implementation are key steps toward improving healthcare access for persons with disabilities.

### **Role of Technology and Innovation**

Advances in technology have opened new opportunities for disability-inclusive healthcare. Telemedicine platforms, if designed with accessibility in mind, can expand services to individuals with mobility limitations or those living in remote areas. Artificial intelligence and digital health tools can also

support early diagnosis and personalized care for people with specific impairments. However, digital exclusion remains a risk if technologies are not designed inclusively or if internet access is limited.

### **Community-Based Approaches**

Community organizations play an important role in bridging gaps in disability healthcare. Grassroots initiatives often provide support services, rehabilitation and advocacy for the rights of persons with disabilities. Collaboration between health systems and community organizations can improve service delivery by ensuring that interventions are tailored to the needs of local populations. Community health workers, when trained on disability issues, can also extend services to underserved areas.

## **CONCLUSION**

Healthcare for persons with disabilities requires deliberate action to remove barriers in accessibility, communication and provider attitudes. Inclusive infrastructure, tailored health promotion strategies, assistive technologies and comprehensive legal protections are essential for achieving equality. By integrating disability into all aspects of health planning and policy, societies can ensure that persons with disabilities are not left behind. Achieving equity in healthcare is not only a matter of access but also a recognition of the rights, dignity and contributions of individuals with disabilities.