
Subject: Child illness episodes

Posted by [Ibenova](#) on Wed, 02 Apr 2014 08:39:20 GMT

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My comments pertain to analysis of Egypt DHS 2008, but are potentially applicable to other countries as well.

The three questions elicit recent child illness (in 2 weeks preceding survey): Diarrhoea (628), Fever (643), Cough (644) separate the illness into diarrhoea (with following treatment questions) and fever/cough. However, a substantial proportion of children who were reported ill (yes in ≥ 1 of these three questions) that had a combination of two or more of these symptoms. It would be important to know whether these were separate illnesses or occurred at the same time. If these symptoms occurred at the same time, this means that the illness severity was higher and care-seeking behaviours/treatments would be expected differ from those pursued for children with a lighter severity/amount of symptoms.

On the other hand, question 637 "Does (NAME) still have diarrhea?" can be eliminated.

Cost of curative child health services: It would be useful to at least get a sense of whether the services accessed by families seeking curative care for children's illnesses were paid for out-of-pocket at all (binary yes/no) and if yes, the amount. Priority should be placed on the binary (paid out of pocket/with goods or did not). This would enable analysis of free care in countries where such care is supposed to be available at public facilities.

If cost of curative care for children's symptoms are to be asked, it is even more important to probe whether illness episodes (if >1 reported) were one illness or separate illnesses. For example, respondents may report having paid a certain amount for care for diarrhoea and an amount for cough and/or fever. However, without asking whether this amount was a result of one visit for the same illness or several different visits on different days, it will be impossible to use the cost information accurately.