

Evidence Update

Health Sector Development Series

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Do community animal health services with paraveterinary workers improve the wealth and health of households in low-income farming communities?

It is unknown whether community-based paraveterinary services are of benefit.

Inclusion criteria

Studies:

Randomized and quasi-randomized controlled trials. Controlled before-and-after studies.

Participants:

Communities keeping livestock in low-income countries.

Intervention:

Basic preventive and curative animal health services provided by a community paraveterinary worker.

Outcomes:

Primary: children sent to school, household expenditure, household income, possession of consumer goods, nutritional status of children, infant mortality.

Secondary: livestock productivity, livestock mortality, livestock fertility, livestock illness episodes, animals seen, visits, workers active two years after programme started, drugs sold, community animal health workers trained.

Adverse events: any adverse events.

Results

Fourteen potentially relevant studies were identified, but none met the inclusion criteria.

Authors' conclusions

Implications for practice:

Community animal health services have not been evaluated in any well-designed study. It is therefore not clear whether they make a substantive contribution to important health and economic outcomes.

Implications for research:

Well-designed randomized or quasi-experimental designs using standard pragmatic outcomes are needed to evaluate community animal health services.



DFID Department for International Development

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