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## Models of preconception care implementation in selected countries.

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### Abstract

Globally, maternal and child health faces diverse challenges depending on the status of the development of the country. Some countries have introduced or explored preconception care for various reasons. Falling birth rates and increasing knowledge about risk factors for adverse pregnancy outcomes led to the introduction of preconception care in Hong Kong in 1998, and South Korea in 2004. In Hong Kong, comprehensive preconception care including laboratory tests are provided to over 4000 women each year at a cost of \$75 per person. In Korea, about 60% of the women served have known medical risk history, and the challenge is to expand the program capacity to all women who plan pregnancy, and conducting social marketing. Belgium has established an ad hoc-committee to develop a comprehensive social marketing and professional training strategy for pilot testing preconception care models in the French speaking part of Belgium, an area that represents 5 million people and 50,000 births per year using prenatal care and pediatric clinics, gynecological departments, and the genetic centers. In China, Guangxi province piloted preconceptual HIV testing and counseling among couples who sought the then mandatory premarital medical examination as a component of the three-pronged approach to reduce mother to child transmission of HIV. HIV testing rates among couples increased from 38% to 62% over one year period. In October 2003, China changed the legal requirement of premarital medical examination from mandatory to "voluntary." This change was interpreted by most women that the premarital health examination was "unnecessary" and overall premarital health examination rates dropped. Social marketing efforts piloted in 2004 indicated that 95% of women were willing to pay up to RMB 100 (US\$12) for preconception health care services. These case studies illustrate programmatic feasibility of preconception care services to address maternal and child health and other public health challenges in developed and emerging economies.