

WEBINAR **SERIES**



**Promoting
health throughout
the life-course
during the
COVID-19
pandemic**

WEBINAR-11: OPTIONS TO MAINTAIN ESSENTIAL HEALTH SERVICES DURING COVID-19

**Self-care interventions to support
maintain essential health services
for SRHR**



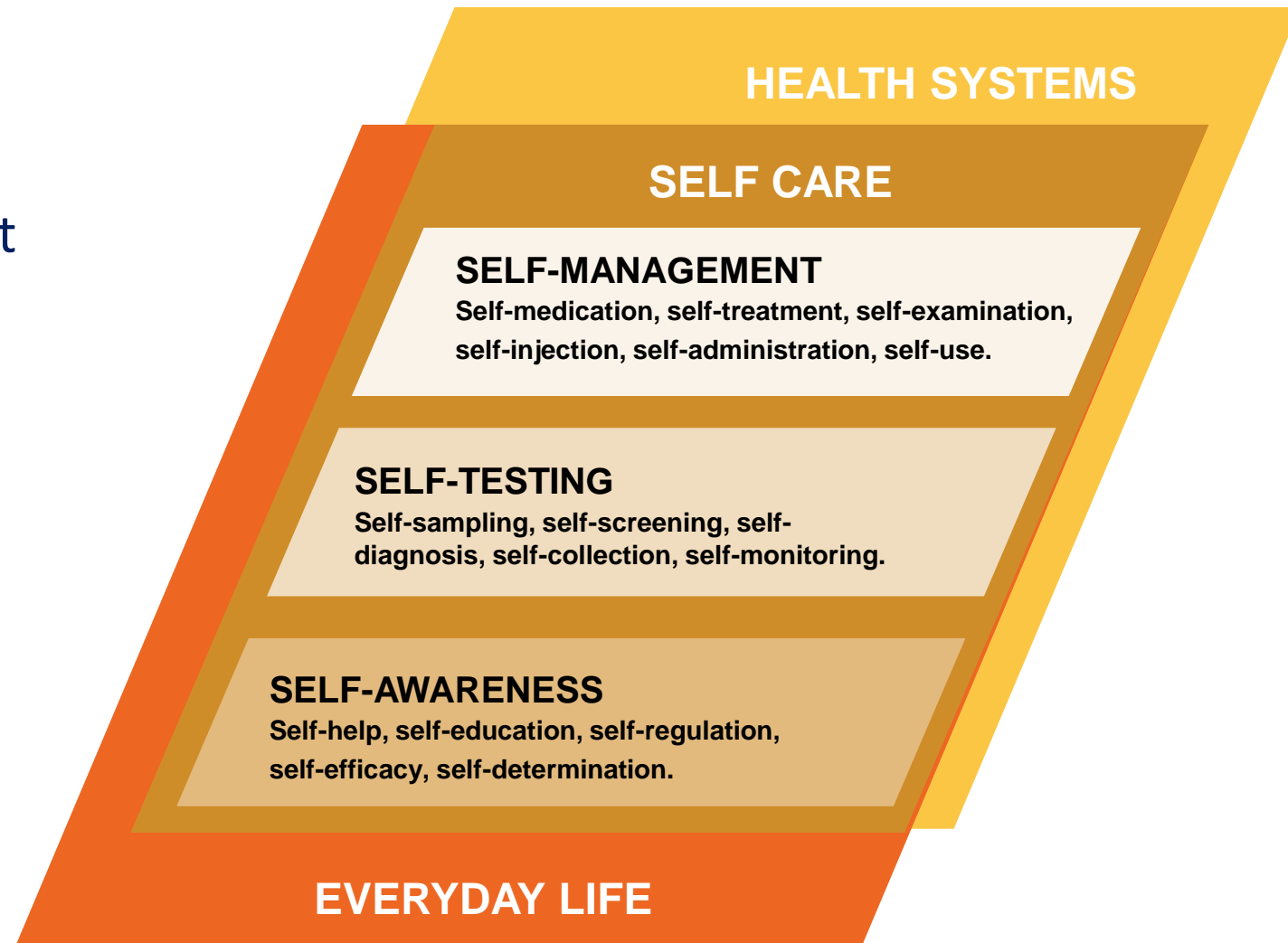
Dr Manjulaa Narasimhan

**Department of Sexual and Reproductive Health and
Research**

**Development and Research Training in Human
Reproduction (HRP)
WHO, Geneva**

Self care is the ability of individuals, families and communities to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health, and to cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a health-care provider.

Self-care interventions are tools that support self care. These can be evidence-based information, medicines, diagnostics, products and technologies that, depending on the intervention, can be used with or without the direct supervision of a health worker.



WHO's strategic goals to promote health, keep the world safe, and serve the vulnerable

1 billion more people benefitting from universal health coverage:

- Increasing health coverage through acceptable, affordable, accessible quality self-care interventions (to cover promotive, protective, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative needs of individuals) within supportive health systems;

1 billion more people better protected from health emergencies:

- Evidence-informed guidance on self-care interventions which is grounded in human rights, gender equality and determinants of health (including social, economic and environmental factors, as well as individual characteristics and behaviours) to support individuals and communities in pandemic and other humanitarian crises;

1 billion more people enjoying better health and well-being:

- Empowering individuals, families and communities, whether they are self-carers or caregivers, to optimize their health as advocates for policies that promote and protect health and well-being, and as co-developers of health and social services.

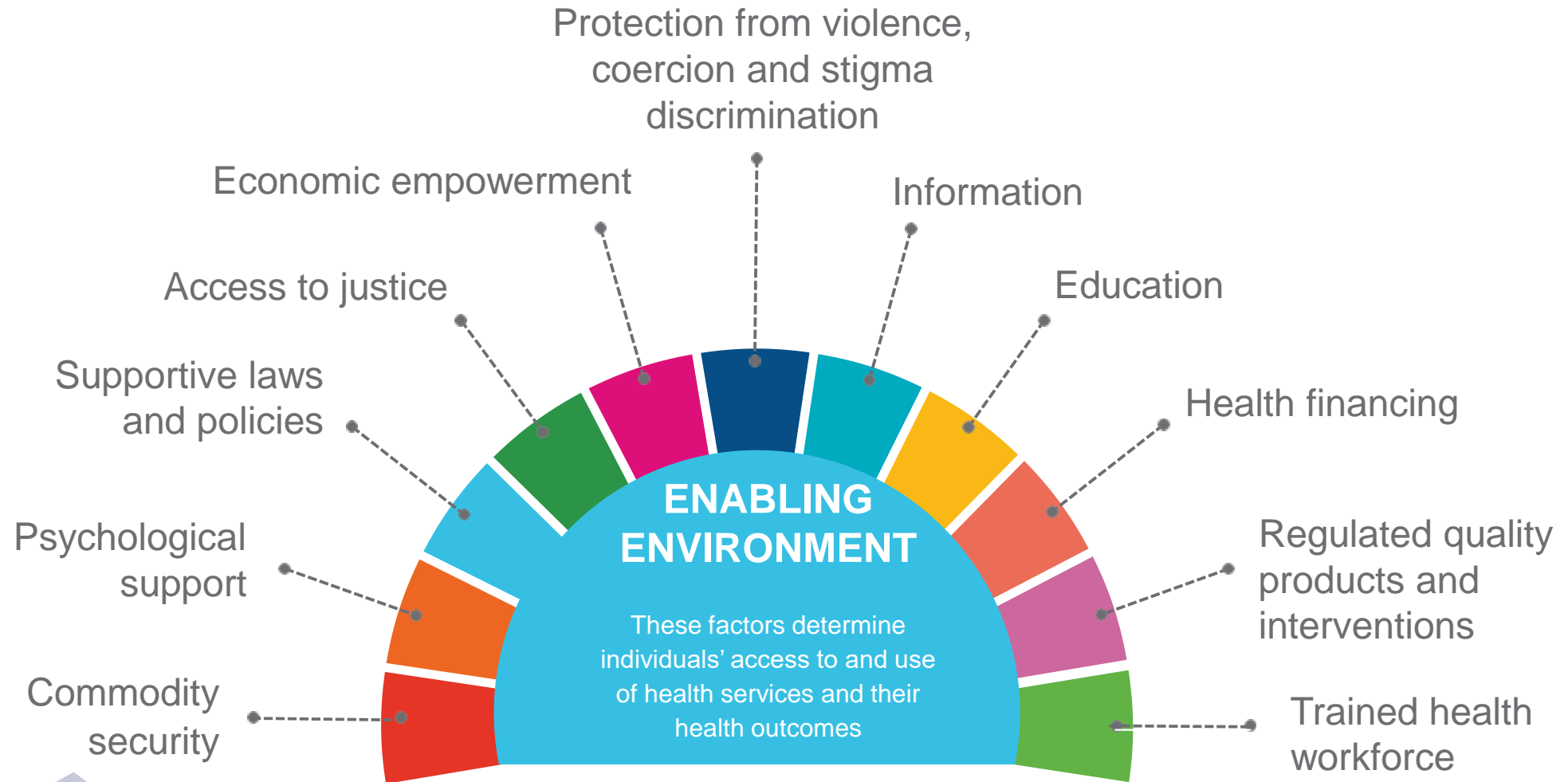


WHO's conceptual framework for self-care interventions



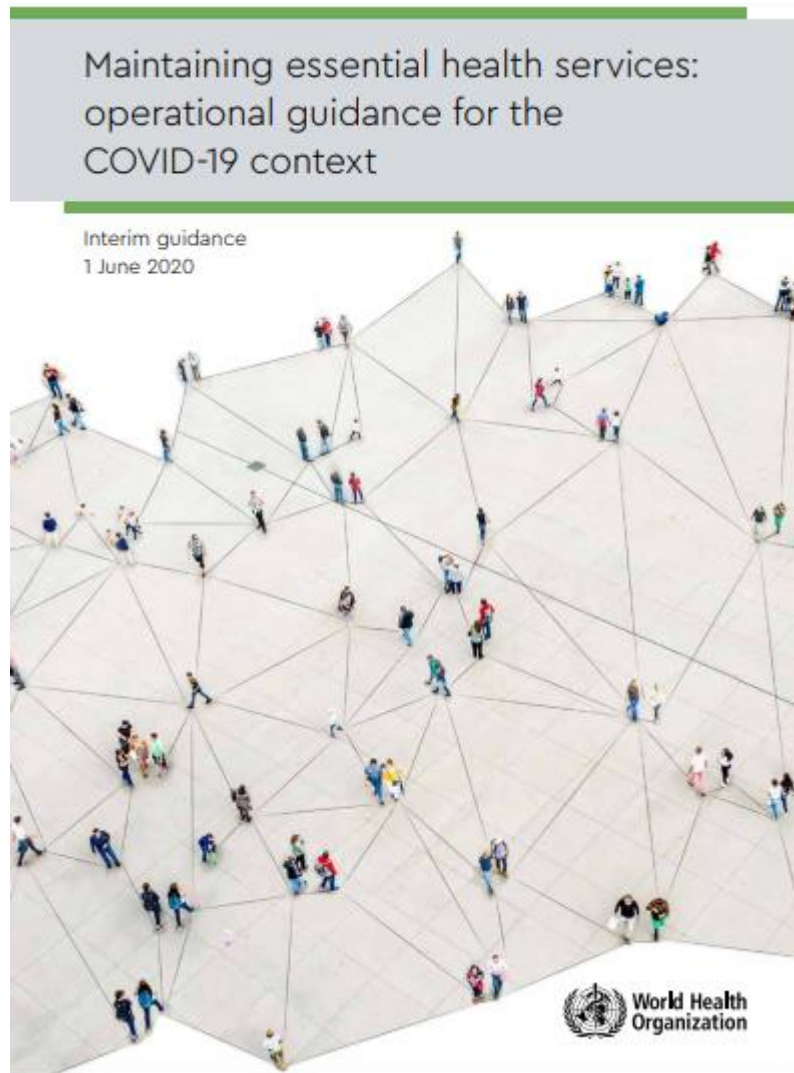
Source: adapted from Narasimhan M, Allotey P, Hardon A. Self-care interventions to advance health and well-being: a conceptual framework to inform normative guidance. *BMJ*. 2019;365:l688. doi:10.1136/bmj.l688.

Characteristics of the enabling environment





Maintaining essential health services: WHO operational guidance for the COVID-19 context



Self care during COVID-19:

10 key actions people can take to improve their SRH during COVID-19:

<https://bit.ly/3cULCmd>

WHO Q&A: Self-care interventions for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and COVID-19:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/q-a-on-self-care-interventions-for-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-and-covid-19>

1. Leverage digital technologies and platforms

- Client-to-provider telemedicine where provision and delivery of health services are provided at a distance, such as remote consultations or follow-up, including referrals for self-administering injectable contraceptives and/or self-testing for HIV .
- Targeted client communication to provide health education content to certain audiences about health seeking behaviors, such as education on condom use, sexual health and safer sex messages.
- Targeted client communication can also provide notifications and reminders for medication adherence and follow-up services which can support use of regulated medicines, such as women managing post-abortion care.



2. Ensure availability of over-the-counter (OTC) devices, drugs, information, and diagnostics

- Increase access to condoms and lubricants for safer sexual practices by using different outlets.
- Promote self-sampling for HPV testing, facilitating the collection of specimens through pharmacies or drop-offs at facilities.
- Prioritize the need for menstrual products and ensure they are included in lists of priority health products needed to mitigate supply disruption.
- Enable pharmacies and drugstores to increase the range of contraceptive options they can provide and allow for multi-month prescriptions and self-administration of subcutaneous injectable contraceptives if available.



World Health
Organization

human
reproduction
programme
hrp
research for impact
UNDP · UNFPA · UNICEF · WHO · THE WORLD BANK

3. Provide access to referrals and health facilities for non-COVID-19 related SRH conditions.

- Prioritize ANC contacts for low-risk pregnant women during the third trimester and for all pregnant women assessed as high risk.
- Increase the availability of self-testing for HIV and self-collection of samples for STIs, including syphilis, and referrals to treatment if needed.
- Ensure adequate access to essential commodities for people under long-term treatment (e.g. HIV medications, menopause management or hormonal therapy as part of gender-affirming care).
- Identify safe houses, shelters or social service referrals for individuals at risk of or facing intimate partner violence and/or sexual violence during quarantine periods.



World Health
Organization



SELF-CARE INTERVENTIONS FOR HEALTH: SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

Communications Toolkit

01 Introduction to this toolkit

02 Overview: Background to self-care
interventions and key messages

03 Technical resources
on self-care interventions

04 Communications resources
on self-care interventions



Click to
view the
toolkit



Community of Practice on Self-care Interventions for Health



Sign up to the new Self Care Community of Practice on the @WHO Knowledge Action Portal and join an inspiring #SelfCare_COP global conversation: www.who.int/kap

Thank You

<https://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/self-care-interventions/en/>

For more information, please contact:

Department of Reproductive Health and Research
World Health Organization
avenue Appia 20

1211 Geneva 27 Switzerland

Email: narasimhanm@who.int

https://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/about_us/en/

**#SRHR #UHC #selfcare
@HRP_research @WHO**



Credits: PATH/Gabe Biencycki, rawpixel.com/Shutterstock, Jonathan Torgovnik, UNICEF/Mani