Welcome to the 22nd Issue of Our Newsletter

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Us

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Wednesday, July 15, 2015

Welcome to the 22nd Edition of our Mother and Child Health Newsletter. If you have any comments about this or any other issues, please feel free to contact the Project at emtnch@ualberta.ca or contact our editor Meseret at mesidesta@gmail.com.

If you prefer a PDF version, you can generate this by clicking on "Printable Version" at the top of the page.

In this issue we include updates from the workshops, technical guidelines, and some recent publications and news. Our goal is to keep you informed on Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health Care in Ethiopia, in Africa and beyond.

Do you have an idea or a success story to share? Maybe you’ve heard of an upcoming event? Did you just find a solution you’d like to suggest to others? Send us your ideas so we can learn from each other!

Cuba is the first country to end mother-to-child HIV transmission

On Tuesday, June 30, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Cuba as the first country in the world to eliminate the transmission of HIV and syphilis from mother to child. Dr. Margaret Chan, Director General of WHO, shared that, 'This is a major victory in our long fight against HIV and sexually transmitted infections, and an important step towards having an AIDS-free generation.’

Every year, it is estimated that 1.4 million women living with HIV become pregnant. These women have a 15-45% chance of transmitting the virus to their children during pregnancy, labour, delivery or breastfeeding. With antiretroviral medications, this risk drops to just over 1%.

In Cuba, efforts to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis included ensuring early access to prenatal care, HIV and syphilis testing for pregnant women and their partners, treatment for women who test positive and their babies, caesarean deliveries and substitution of breastfeeding. These services were all provided as a part of the universal health system in Cuba, in which maternal and child health programs and integrated with programs for HIV and sexually transmitted infections.

To learn more or to read about the indicators used by WHO to determine that Cuba has eliminated mother to child transmission of HIV and syphilis, please see: http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2015/mtct-hiv-cuba/en/

Health information causing new moms anxiety

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Pregnancy and motherhood are both wonderful and worrisome times – could public health campaigns and social stereotypes be contributing to anxiety for mothers? Researchers suggest that perinatal anxiety disorders are common but much less attention has been paid to anxiety than depression. Researchers found that health and social messaging about pregnancy are often single-message health promotion campaigns that influence a woman’s ‘maternal image’. These messages can lead to perinatal anxiety, are often unrealistic and may lead to confusion and stigma that can undermine a mother’s confidence. As a result of the study, researchers recommend that health professionals address the stereotype that mothering is instinctive, which can create highly idealized images of how motherhood should be and, instead, focus of messages that emphasize caretaking for children as a set of learned skills that develop over time. Read more http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2015/07/150702094914.htm

Barriers to Early Abortion for Women

Women in developed countries still find it very difficult to get an abortion in early pregnancy, despite the fact that they face fewer legal constraints than women in other parts of the world.

New research published in the Journal of Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care identifies barriers to early abortion services in developed countries. These barriers include moral opposition of some health care providers, lack of suitable training, too few health care professionals able or willing to carry out the procedure and the high cost of the procedure. These barriers are more pronounced for women living in rural areas.

Based on these findings, researchers suggest that access to early abortion services could be improved by increasing training, particularly for mid-level practitioners, making services more affordable and developing clear guidelines and referral protocols related to abortion services.

For more information, please see: http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2015/06/150626083447.htm

Umbilical Cord 'Milking' Improves Preemie Health

A study published in Pediatrics describes a new technique to increase blood flow from the umbilical cord to the circulatory system of preterm infants delivered by cesarean section. The technique – known as umbilical cord ‘milking’ – involves encircling the cord with the thumb and forefinger and gently squeezing the blood through the cord toward the infant’s abdomen and was found to improve blood pressure and red blood cell levels.

Cord ‘milking’ appears to offer benefits, including greater blood flow to and from the heart, higher red blood cell levels and higher blood pressure, over delayed cord clamping for preterm infants delivered by cesarean section. No differences in blood volume or quantity of red blood cells were noted for infants delivered vaginally. See:

http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2015/06/150629080246.htm

The start of life: a history of obstetrics
Over the years, the way in which obstetric care is provided has changed. This article, published in the Postgrad Medical Journal, chronicles the changes that have occurred from the time that forceps were introduced in the 17th century to the advent of antibiotics and the introduction of cesarean sections to the integration of obstetric and antenatal care in the 20th century. Worldwide, childbirth still causes approximately 600,000 maternal deaths each year. For a more detailed read, please see: http://pmj.bmj.com/content/78/919/311.full.pdf+html

Loss of health staff could increase maternal mortality in Ebola-hit countries:

Ebola-hit countries due to a lack of health workers. A new report published by the World Bank in The Lancet Global Health, suggests that maternal mortality could increase by 38% in Guinea, 74% in Sierra Leone and 111% in Liberia as a result of an increased shortage of health care workers following the Ebola outbreak. This equates to an additional 4000 deaths of women each year across Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

The report further suggests that to save the lives of 240 doctors, nurses and midwives would need to be hired immediately across the three countries and represents only a fraction of the 43,565 health care workers that need to be hired to help Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone achieve the Millennium Development Goals.


Fathers can be a crucial factor in lifesaving decisions about maternal health

The first State of the World’s Fathers report was published this year providing a global view of the state of men’s contributions to parenting and caregiving. Studies from South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria show HIV-positive mothers-to-be are more likely to maintain their treatment plans and save their baby’s lives if their partners are supportive and attend testing and counselling sessions with them. Many other benefits are noted when men are involved in parenting and caregiving. The report suggests that programmes that incorporate peer education, workplace-based initiatives and mass media campaigns are useful strategies for engaging men in contributing to maternal and child health. To read more, please see: http://263chat.com/2015/07/fathers-can-be-a-crucial-factor-in-lifesaving-decisions-about-maternal-health/

Resources

- How attractive can Midwifery be to Youths?
- The prevalence of mental health morbidity and its associated factors among women attending a prenatal clinic in Tanzania
- Risk factors for antepartum stillbirth: a case-control study in Nepal
- The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015
- Global elimination of mother-to-child transmission of hepatitis B: revisiting the current strategy
- Effects of a parenting intervention to address both maternal psychological wellbeing and child development and growth in rural Uganda: a community-based, cluster randomised trial
Announcement

Registration for Woman Deliver Conference 2016 Now Open

Women Deliver’s 4th Global Conference, taking place 16-19 May 2016, will be the largest gathering on girls’ and women’s health and rights in the last decade and one of the first major global conferences following the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Invitation for YOUR Contribution

We would like to invite all Senior Midwives Tutors to share your Dreams for overall maternal and newborn health. We will share it in the next issue. Please submit your Dream directly to Meseret Desta Haileyesus. It’s wonderful to see your Dreams from all over our Senior Midwives Tutors united for mothers and their babies. Keep the Dreams coming!

Senior Midwife Tutor Story Corner—Tell us what’s in yours!

Do you have an idea or a success story to share? Maybe you’ve heard of an event that we should all support. Did you just find a solution you’d like to suggest to others? Please send us your news, events and postings for future editions. There are so many interesting experiences to share and opportunities to learn in our newsletter.

Please submit your stories directly to Meseret Desta Haileyesus.

About this Newsletter

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