Welcome to the 15th Edition of our Mother and Child Health Newsletter. We are trying a new format with this edition, one that we hope will be easier to navigate and to share. If you have any comments about this or any other issues, please feel free to contact the Project at etmnch@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.

Midwifery Educator Core Competencies

If used appropriately, the midwifery core competencies can contribute to the improvement of quality midwifery education and services. In a document published by the World Health Organization, eight domains are identified as core competencies for midwifery education.

They are:
1. Ethical and legal principles of midwifery;
2. Midwifery practice;
3. Theoretical learning;
4. Learning in the clinical area;
5. Assessment and evaluation of students and programmes;
6. Organization, management and leadership;
7. Communication; and
8. Leadership and advocacy and Research.

These core competencies can be used to develop innovative curriculum contents and teaching approaches and provide strong, effective links between theory and midwifery practice.

Read more here: http://www.who.int/hrh/nursing_midwifery/13012WHO_Midwifery_educator_core_competencies.pdf.

Gestational Diabetes: A hidden threat to maternal and neonatal health in Sub-Saharan Africa

A study conducted in Ethiopia suggests that high rates of gestational diabetes may be a hidden factor contributing to the high rates of maternal and neonatal mortality in sub-Saharan Africa. The study, conducted in three health centers in the Tigray region, found that 11 percent of pregnant women screened positive for gestational diabetes. Globally, the number of cases of gestational diabetes worldwide has increased significantly and, without care, diabetes in pregnancy increases the risk of eclampsia, miscarriage, obstructed labour, hemorrhage and intrauterine fetal death. Many women with diabetes respond well to behavior interventions such as dietary changes and physical activity. Researchers suggest that if we want to make further progress in reducing maternal and neonatal death and morbidity, then we need to consider diabetes as an additional factor influencing women’s health.


Proactive Labor Induction Can Improve Perinatal Outcomes

Labor induction is a procedure used to stimulate uterine contractions during pregnancy before labor begins naturally. Inducing labor comes with both risks and benefits to both mothers and babies. Now a new Danish study published in the BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology suggests that proactive labor induction can improve perinatal outcomes among full term pregnancies. Results show that labour induction may lead to a lower risk of neonatal death, asphyxia and cerebral palsy. Further research is required in this area.


The Impact of Genital Mutilation on Mothers and Babies

A new study conducted in collaboration with colleagues from the University of Sydney and funded by the Federal Department of Health is informing the development of an online FGM education package. The package is designed to equip health professionals with the education and tools required to help protect women and children from violence, including FGM. The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported extensively on the consequences of FGM, including an increased likelihood of difficulties during childbirth and, even, neonatal death. Serious complications during childbirth that can occur from the result of FGM practices include the need to have a caesarean section and dangerously heavy bleeding after the birth of the baby, both potentially requiring prolonged hospitalization following the birth.

Far Reaching Consequences of Maternal Mortality

An interesting FXB Center for Health and Human Rights blog post written by Alicia Yamin suggests that approximately 800 women die from pregnancy- or childbirth-related complications around the world every day. Almost all of these deaths occur in low-resource settings, and most could have been prevented. The blog post details Yamin’s thoughts on what the major obstacles are for reducing maternal mortality post-2015, including the need to increase meaningful accountability within the health system. She further suggests that rural women are more likely to die and argues that health systems around the world reflect and exacerbate the structural and systematic discrimination that exists in society.

For more information, read here: http://fxb.harvard.edu/on-the-far-reaching-consequences-of-maternal-mortality/.

It's Time to Learn & Value the Knowledge of Community Midwives

In this article, Sarah Prochel, a facilitator for the Birth Institute Experiential Learning in Guatemala, describes what it was like to work alongside traditional Mayan midwives. Sarah shares stories about the impressive skills of Mayan midwives, including knowing how to turn a breech baby and how to limit post-partum bleeding using a wide belt tied around the hips. Prochel's article highlights the powerful wisdom of many traditional midwives and reminds us of the value of experience and experiential learning.


The Pinard Horn - 120 Years of Fetal Heart Rate Monitoring

Created in 1895 by Adolphe Pinard, the Pinard Horn stethoscope was developed as a tool to advance pregnancy care by providing an effective method for monitoring fetal activity. A regular stethoscope may not be able to detect the fetus’ heartbeat, but the Pinard Horn amplifies the heartbeat of a fetus and produces a clear sound. The end with the opening is placed against a pregnant woman’s belly and the flat end is placed against the ear to listen to the heartbeat. Monitoring a fetus’ heartbeat and position is important as each serves as an indicator of fetal health.

Read more http://pregnancy.about.com/od/prenatalcare/ss/listeningtobaby_2.htm.

Additional Resources

Comprehensive Report Examines the Science on the Hormonal Physiology of Childbearing and Its Implications for Women, Babies and Maternity Care

Preterm Labor Assessment Toolkit — developed by March of Dimes
Teaching video: Care of the Cord: This video shows how to tightly tie or clamp the cord, several aspects of cord care, and how to apply chlorhexidine gel. This gel is an antiseptic that has been shown to be effective in reducing newborn deaths from sepsis, and is now recommended in areas of the world where newborns are at greatest risk of infection.

Village Health Team Maternal Newborn and Child Health Training Manual

Skilled Care during Childbirth: Information Kit

Resources for Labor and Delivery Care: Improving outcomes for mothers and newborns

Announcements

Add your voice to the new Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health!

The new Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health needs your views on key priorities, interventions, and principles. Please take the survey online and make a strong midwifery voice!

Fill out the survey on www.womenschildrenpost2015.org by 27 March 2015.

Welcome to the first international Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)

This is a free online course for the continuing professional development of midwives. The MOOC will provide you with knowledge and skills focusing on Evidence-Based Midwifery Practice at the introductory level. The course is targeted towards midwives and educators in clinical practice but anyone with an interest is welcome to participate. For further information, please see the attached flyer.

To register for the course: www.moocformidwives.com
**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.

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**About this Newsletter**

**Editor:** Meseret Desta Haileyesus

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![Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada](https://www.ualberta.ca/communities/globalhealth/projects/ethiopia-mnch)

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