Integration of Maternal and Newborn Health Care: In Pursuit of Quality

Dr. Rifat Atun
Professor of Global Health Systems
Harvard School of Public Health
Harvard University
Integration of targeted interventions

- Longstanding vertical vs horizontal debate
  - Polarisation: proponents and opponents of integration
  - Binary construct – reductionist arguments
- Debate rekindled with emergence of Global Health Initiatives, rapid rise then decline in Health ODA, and concerns about failing health systems
- But, is this just an academic curiosity?
Countdown 2015: median coverage of interventions across continuum of care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-pregnancy</th>
<th>Pregnancy</th>
<th>Birth</th>
<th>Postnatal</th>
<th>Infancy</th>
<th>Childhood</th>
<th>Water and sanitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demand for family planning satisfied</td>
<td>Antenatal care (at least one visit)</td>
<td>Antenatal care (at least four visits)</td>
<td>Intermittent preventive treatment of malaria for pregnant women</td>
<td>Neonatal tetanus protection</td>
<td>Skilled attendant at birth</td>
<td>Early initiation of breastfeeding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HARVARD SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Share of 57 Countdown countries with tracer policy in place, 2013-14 (%)

- Pre-pregnancy
- Pregnancy and birth
- Postnatal
- Infancy and childhood

Laws or regulations allowing adolescents access to family planning without parental or spousal consent
Midwifery personnel authorized to administer core set of life-saving interventions
Specific notification of maternal deaths
Maternity protection in accordance with Convention 183
Antenatal corticosteroids as part of management of preterm labour
Kangaroo mother care for low-birthweight/preterm newborns
Postnatal home visits in first week of life
International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes
Community treatment of pneumonia with antibiotics
Low-sodium oral rehydration salts and zinc for management of diarrhoea

a. Based on 33 countries.

Asymmetric coverage

Figure 3.12

Preventing mother-to-child transmission
Coverage of antenatal care services and services for preventing mother-to-child transmission among women living with HIV in high-prevalence countries, 2010

Source: WHO and UN Statistics Division

PMTCT coverage, ANC coverage and number of HIV+ pregnant women (bubble size)

1 Angola
2 Botswana
3 Burundi
4 Cameroon
5 Chad
6 Côte d’Ivoire
7 D.R. Congo
8 Ethiopia
9 Ghana
10 Kenya
11 Lesotho
12 Mozambique
13 Nigeria
14 South Africa
15 Uganda
16 Zambia
Integration of antenatal care with PNC and other programmes

Increased uptake of testing (HIV and syphilis) and PMTCT services, and earlier initiation of antiretroviral treatment for HIV-infected mothers were associated with lower rates of congenital infection with HIV and syphilis.

In general, women also reported improved satisfaction with integrated services.

Limited, directionally positive evidence

But...

- Non-randomised studies & high risk of bias: low quality of evidence
- Large evidence gap & lost opportunities for providing essential preventive and curative services.
Integrated delivery of PMTCT: systematic review

- 28,000+ studies reviewed
- Integrating HIV testing and ARV adherence assessment at labour ward resulted in substantial increase in mother-infant ARV coverage

Cascade of integrated perinatal PMTCT program in antenatal care
Primary Community Secondary

Care domain

Services or programs

a. Unintegrated

Primary Community Secondary

b. Partial integration

MNCH with NCDs

Integrated Primary Care

c. Horizontal or vertical integration

Potential integration strategies within and across care domains
