Health workforce and stillbirths: Impact of midwifery care

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Stillbirth affects millions of families and every midwife, obstetrician and other skilled birth attendant around the world.
The Lancet Series on Midwifery

• Published June 2014
http://www.thelancet.com/series/midwifery

• Films of launch, presentation by lead authors, comment by organisations
http://www.youtube.com/user/midwiferyaction

• Two papers still in preparation

@midwiferyaction
#LancetMidwifery
‘Midwifery is a vital solution to the challenges of providing high quality maternal and newborn care for all women and infants, in all countries’
Quality maternal and newborn care

For all childbearing women and infants

Practice categories
- Education
- Information
- Health promotion
- Assessment
- Screening
- Care planning
- Promotion of normal processes, prevention of complications

Organisation of care
- Available, accessible, acceptable, good-quality services—adequate resources, competent workforce
- Continuity, services integrated across community and facilities

Values
- Respect, communication, community knowledge, and understanding
- Care tailored to women’s circumstances and needs

Philosophy
- Optimising biological, psychological, social, and cultural processes; strengthening woman’s capabilities
- Expectant management, using interventions only when indicated

Care providers
- Practitioners who combine clinical knowledge and skills with interpersonal and cultural competence
- Division of roles and responsibilities based on need, competencies, and resources

For childbearing women and infants with complications

First-line management of complications
Medical obstetric neonatal services
The projected effect of scaling up midwifery

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- **Aim**: To estimate the effect of midwifery care, as defined in this Series, on maternal and newborn outcomes

- **Objectives**
  - To estimate maternal, fetal, and neonatal deaths averted using the Lives Saved Tool (LiST) under different coverage over 15 years in 78 low-income and middle income countries
  - to estimate the value of the incremental addition of specialist care to midwifery on maternal, fetal, and neonatal lives saved
The 78 countries ....

• All 58 countries in *The State of the World’s Midwifery 2011*
  • plus all additional Countdown 2015 countries

• High-burden, low-income and middle-income countries accounting for 97% of maternal and 94% of neonatal mortality

• We used the HDI to classify the countries into 3 groups of 26 countries each
The interventions …

• Identified in the *Essential interventions, commodities and guidelines for reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health* and in Paper 1
  • delivered as part of midwifery services, particularly by midwives educated to international standards and who are integrated into the health system.
  • Specialist medical interventions were those requiring medical assistance such as blood transfusions or caesarean sections (CEmONC)
## Scenarios ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of changes</th>
<th>Percentage change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>No change in coverage or fertility rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Modest scale-up in coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Substantial scale-up in coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Universal coverage of all interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Attrition back from current status</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

• Universal coverage of midwifery reduced maternal deaths, **stillbirths**, and neonatal deaths

• In low HDI countries
  • modest (10%) increase in midwifery reduced stillbirths by 26%
  • substantial coverage increase (25%) reduced stillbirths by 50%
  • universal coverage (95%) reduced stillbirths by 76%

• Similar reductions in maternal and neonatal deaths
Summary

• Even modest increases in coverage can reduce stillbirths

• Family planning is important:
  – reduces pregnancies that are of potential risk for mother, fetus and newborn

• Access to specialist care when needed makes a difference
  – but not as much as family planning

• Midwives can efficiently and effectively deliver the majority of the interventions as a package of care
Midwifery – a Package of Care
