

# IMPROVING PERINATAL OUTCOMES THROUGH CLINICAL MENTORSHIP: A CASE OF BUSIA COUNTY

**Shikuku D<sup>1</sup>, Friday J<sup>2</sup>, Mudanya E<sup>1</sup> and Kanyuuru L<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Save the Children International (Kenya)

<sup>2</sup>Busia County Department of Health

**Background:** Clinical mentorship, a system of practical training consultation that fosters ongoing professional development to yield sustainable high quality clinical outcomes as recommended by WHO, complements the intensive clinical trainings. For quality healthcare delivery, service providers in maternity and child health units are periodically trained in obstetrics and neonatal care skills and followed up (mentored) at intervals until they demonstrate high self – efficacy in the skills. This study demonstrates the effect of clinical mentorship on perinatal outcomes in a BEmONC<sup>1</sup> and CEmONC<sup>2</sup> referral hospitals respectively.

**Methods:** Twenty one and 10 healthcare providers at the CEmONC and BEmONC facilities respectively working in maternity and maternal and child health units were mentored. Mentorship sessions focused on management of pregnancy, labour and childbirth complications. A 10-month pre-and post-review of maternity records for perinatal outcomes from October 2015 to May 2017 were conducted. Percentage means and two – sample mean comparison t – tests to assess the effect were performed.

**Results:** Means of total deliveries conducted for pre and post period were 305 vs 224 (**P=0.0366**) and 108 vs 111 (**P=0.3707**) for the CEmONC and BEmONC facility respectively. Referrals for caesarean delivery from the BEmONC facility reduced from 4.71% to 4.25%. Percentage means for pre and post periods showed significant changes in vacuum extractions (CEmONC, 0.92 vs 0.26, **P=0.0218**) and (BEmONC, 0 vs 2.44, **P=0.0001**). Marginal reductions were observed in the caesarean sections (14.36 vs 11.01, **P=0.0991**). Macerated stillbirths (1.62 vs 1.05, **P=0.0504**) and neonatal deaths (2.9 vs 1.4, **P=0.0439**) at the CEmONC facility and fresh stillbirths (0.45 vs 0.07, **P=0.0414**) at the BEmONC facility significantly reduced.

**Conclusion:** Regular mentorship improves the quality of obstetrics care contributing to improved perinatal outcomes.

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<sup>1</sup> BEmONC – Basic emergency obstetrics and newborn care

<sup>2</sup> CEmONC – Comprehensive emergency obstetrics and newborn care