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Quality of Neonatal health care: Learning from health workers' experiences in critical care in Kilimanjaro Region, Northeast Tanzania

Bernard Mbwele

University of Dar es Salaam - Mbeya University College of Health and Allied Sciences, Tanzania

Background: Neonatal deaths are generally attributed to suboptimal standards of health care. Health care worker motivation and adherence to existing guidelines are rarely studied. The objective: To assess the performance of health workers for neonatal health care in the hospitals of Kilimanjaro region.

Methods: A descriptive study using a semi-structured interview for health care workers at a tertiary referral hospital and peripheral health facilities (regional referral, district hospitals and health centres) was used. Health Care Workers (HCW) were asked to recall a scenario of a critically ill neonate admitted in the wards and the treatment that was provided. The WHO Emergency Triage Assessment and Treatment (ETAT) guidelines were used as a standard reference for knowledge of critical care.

Results: Birth asphyxia was the most recalled health problem requiring critical care, reported by 27.5% of 120 HCW at both peripheral hospitals and by 46.4% of 28 health workers in tertiary referral centres. Half of the HCW commented on their own performance (47.5%, n=140). HCW presented with low to moderate levels of knowledge for critical care were at 92%. Supplementary training was associated with a higher level of knowledge of neonatal critical care (p value 0.05). HCW in peripheral hospital

had lower levels of knowledge (only 44.7% at peripheral hospitals had enough ratings compared to 82.1% at the referral centre). [Pearson χ^2 (2) = 12.10, p value = 0.002].

Conclusion: Guided Practical-Competence Diagnostic Specific neonatal health care training is highly needed in the peripheral facilities of rural Kilimanjaro region.

Speaker Biography

Bernard Mbwele is a lecturer at the University of Dar es Salaam for Epidemiology. He is a Tanzanian Medical Doctor graduated Medical school in 2004 at University of Dar es salaam – Muhimbili University College of Health and Allied Sciences. He was trained by special attachment for clinical trials at Bagamoyo Research Training Center and National Institute for Medical Research for Malaria vaccine, RTSS at NIMR-Tanga. In 2007, He Worked for Tuberculosis diagnostic trials as in Tr DNA, ADAT and Enose, at Mbeya Medical Research Program, MMRC. He obtained his Master of Science in Clinical Research from London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, LSHTM and Duke University at KCMC and he was trained by the Institute for Quality of Health Care at Radboud Medical University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands for Quality Improvement in Infectious diseases. Currently, Worked for Christian Social Services commission (CSSC) as a Continuous Quality Improvement Specialist and Clinical Team Lead for HIV/AIDS care and treatment program.

e: benmbwele@gmail.com



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