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Effect of the implementation of quality assurance for Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (EmONC) in maternity in the Collines department in Benin

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CONTEXT

Reducing maternal and neonatal mortality remains a challenge for the health system in Benin, particularly in the Collines department where, in 2021, 207.9 maternal deaths (MD) per 100000 live births (LB) and 20.4 neonatal deaths per 1000 LB were recorded. The low quality of care in maternity is one of the main causes. In 2022, the EQUITE project in its first phase, funded by the AFD and implemented by Enabel, organized together with the Ministry of Health the establishment of quality assurance for care in maternity to improve the quality of care.

Objective: Evaluate the effect of implementing quality assurance for EmONC in maternity in the department on obstetric complications and maternal and neonatal deaths.

METHOD

It is a descriptive and analytical study. Quality criteria for EmONC were developed and used to determine quality scores. At the beginning, the baseline quality score was determined and the factors associated with good quality. These results have allowed for the development of a problem-solving plan: strengthening of medical-technical equipment, formative on-site supervisions, establishment of care protocols, periodic measurement of client satisfaction levels. Monitoring was carried out by the Quality Improvement Teams (QITs) , who met monthly for learning sessions, quality and results analysis, as well as feedback sharing. One year after the start, an evaluation of the quality score was carried out to assess the effects of the intervention, as well as indicators related to obstetric complications and maternal and neonatal deaths.

RESULT

A total of 18 health facilities (HFs) were included, including 3 hospitals. Only 22% had a quality score above 75% (Expected score) at the baseline evaluation. The factors associated with quality were periodic assessment of the technical skills of providers (OR=1,7, p=0.03), sharing of best practices (OR=10.5, p=0.03), equipment maintenance (OR=4.9, p=0.01), adherence to hygiene and sterilization procedures (OR=16.3, p=0.01). The technical skills and platform have been strengthened in the 18 HFs. After one year, 83% of the HFs had a quality score above 75%. The in-hospital mortality ratio per 100000 live births decreased from 91.5 in 2022 to 81.7 in 2023. 190 neonatal deaths were reported in 2022 compared to 154 in 2023 . The proportion of managed obstetric complications increased from 40.9% in 2022 to 51.7% in 2023.

Source : Données d'enquête, Annuaire des statistiques sanitaires au Bénin 2021, 2022, 2023

LESSONS LEARNED

The Quality Improvement Teams (QITs) that are part of the health system, played a significant role in achieving outcomes through their active involvement in implementing problem-solving plans. Self-assessments also contributed to greater ownership of the approach. In addition, on-site formative supervision was instrumental in continuously enhancing the technical competencies of healthcare providers.

CONCLUSION

The Quality Improvement Teams (QITs) that are part of the health system, played a significant role in achieving outcomes through their active involvement in implementing problem-solving plans. Self-assessments also contributed to greater ownership of the approach. In addition, on-site formative supervision was instrumental in continuously enhancing the technical competencies of healthcare providers.

KEYWORDS

Collines, Quality assurance, EmONC