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Evaluation of the quality and management of maternity services in the national district hospital in the Free State Province

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TITLE OF RESEARCH REPORT: Evaluation of the quality and management of maternity services in the National District Hospital in the Free State province

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Maternity services are a priority for all health care services but in most cases there have been serious challenges experienced through service performance. The National District Hospital (NDH)'s key performance indicator is bed occupancy rate which showed an underutilization of this facility. The maternity services statistics, especially did not give a clear picture of the performance of the unit. Various studies have been conducted to identify management challenges in maternity units of district hospitals, but no formal study has been done to systematically document this problem at the National District Hospital (NDH), although there has been anecdotal evidence of problems in the performance of the unit. It was therefore important to investigate the functioning of the maternity unit of the NDH and identify problems that hinder it from functioning effectively.

AIM: To evaluate the performance of maternity services in the maternity unit at the National District Hospital.

METHODOLOGY: A cross sectional study design was used comprising of a retrospective record review. The setting of this study was the maternity unit at National District Hospital. Data was collected on various variables that are relevant to the performance of maternity services.

ANALYSIS: The data collected was analyzed and revealed that the factors contributing to the poor performance of the maternity services were:

- Poor record keeping, such as incomplete recording of partograms.

- Non adherence to guidelines and protocols, such as poor management related to HIV and AIDS care and poor management of patients in the advanced labor phase.
- Failure to make informed decision due to information mismanagement.
- Poor supervision in the unit. No adherence to objectives of peer review meetings.

RECOMMENDATION: The recommendations based on the findings are:

- Establish patient centered maternity services
- Train and retraining of health care providers in the maternity unit
- Review existing strategies to improve quality of care in the maternity unit
- Improve information management and functioning of the Maternal Morbidity Review meetings

CONCLUSION: The recommendations given can be used to improve maternity services within district hospitals as well as provincial and national maternity services.