



NEWSLETTER

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Postpartum Intrauterine Contraceptive Device Intervention in Pakistan

Pakistan is the sixth most populous nation in the world. The population was estimated to reach 200 million by year 2020. According to the recent census (2017), it is already 207.8 million with a growth rate of 2.4 percent. It is expected to become the fifth most population nation in the world. Fast growing population and low use of contraception have never received serious consideration, until lately.

Contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) is 34 percent and that of modern methods is 25 percent. Unmet need for family planning (FP) is 17 percent. Pakistan has some of the poorest maternal health indicators in the region. 46 percent of pregnancies in Pakistan are unintended. 25 percent of these end in abortion. There are many factors influencing the low CPR. Easy accessibility of FP services can easily improve this situation.

Evidence shows that contraceptive services provided immediately after the birth of a child, called Postpartum Family Planning (PPFP) is one of the most effective and cost effective intervention. PPFP provides an important intersection between maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH). The benefits associated with FP services are directly related to achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly SDG3, which aims to prevent unintended and closely spaced pregnancies. More than 84 percent of urban and 63% of rural deliveries in Pakistan, are conducted by skilled birth attendants (SBAs). *PDHS (2012-13 & 2016 -17)*

Maternal, newborn and child health provider services offer frequent points of contact with pregnant women during antenatal, intranatal and postpartum period.



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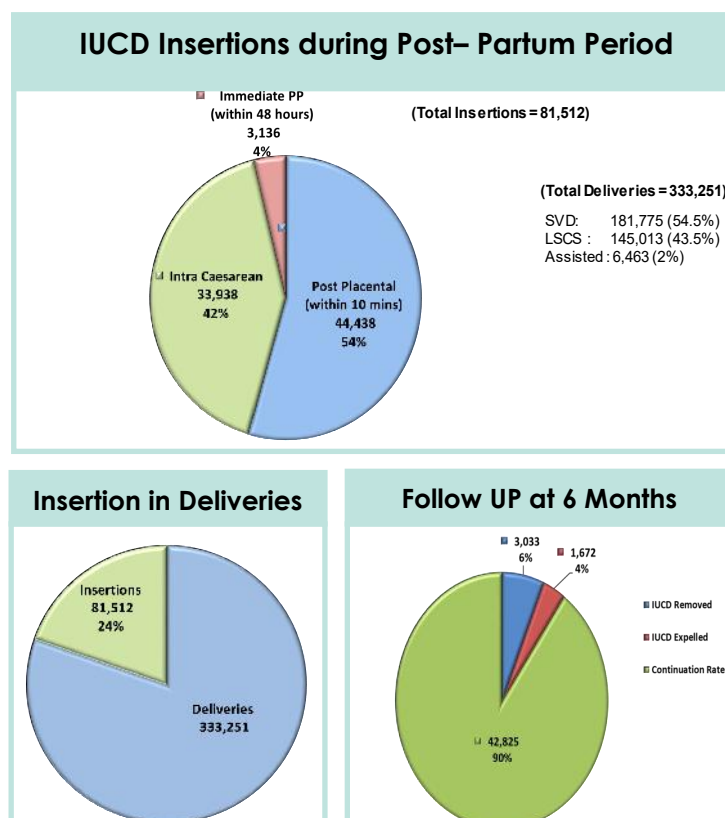
Ms. Maliha Noor

These are key opportunities to address contraceptive needs of women and couples. Unfortunately, at majority of the health facilities, many women are discharged without any counseling or information about birth spacing. Ignoring contraceptive needs of postpartum women in health service facilities are missed opportunities to ensure that every woman and her family can enjoy the health, social, and economic benefits of family planning.

In the light of socio-cultural and health service challenges related to contraception, NCMNH took the initiative of implementing Postpartum Intrauterine Device (PPIUCD) project at selected public and private hospitals in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad. The intervention aims to train Skill Birth Attendants (SBAs) i.e doctors and midwives to insert PPIUCD in women immediately after delivery of placenta of a vaginal /C section delivery or within 48 post natal hours.

From the inception of the project in March 2012 to August 2018, the intervention has been up scaled to 23 sites in Sindh and Punjab provinces. A total of 81512 PPIUCDs have been inserted successfully and 1953 SBAs have been trained.

Though the intervention is still in its infancy, thus it is too early to detect any increase in contraceptive prevalence rate attributable to the initiative. Training outputs and service delivery outcomes have been encouraging /promising.



Increasing Accessibility of Post Partum Family Planning(PPFP) in Health Facilities

While reviewing the uptake of PPIUCD insertion, it was found that low number of insertions were directly linked to non-availability of counselors and /or contraceptive commodities especially at night, when more babies are born than during the day.

NCMNH collected data of 29,520 deliveries, out of which 58.5% occurred during the day and 41.5% at night. Of all deliveries, 65% were vaginal and 35% by caesarean section. 51% vaginal deliveries occurred at night. This shows that the presence of dedicated night counselors and availability of contraceptive commodities at night are vital for increasing uptake of PPFP and PPIUCD.

Dr. Arjumand Rabbani

Sindh Province takes the lead in Family Planning

Sindh Government has launched a Costed Implementation Plan in 29 districts, to increase access and uptake of family planning in Sindh .

A Task Force has been constituted to devise sustainable development goals strategies to tackle population growth.

Chief Justice takes Suo Motu notice of the explosive increase in Population

“Increasing population is a question mark on the future generations and the entire nation needs to be united in tackling population growth.”

Justice (Retd) Mian Saqib Nisar directed authorities to take immediate action to control the situation.

Research Study: Advance Distribution of Misoprostol to Pregnant Women for Self-Administration for Timely Management of Postpartum Hemorrhage (PPH) in Home Deliveries

Postpartum Hemorrhage (PPH) is the leading cause of maternal death globally. Oxytocin is the gold standard for prevention and treatment of PPH but its use is not feasible in low resource settings. The best alternative is Misoprostol approved by WHO for prevention and treatment of PPH. It is effective, easy to store and does not require a trained person to administer.

NCMNH in collaboration with Gynuity Health Projects conducted a quasi-experimental, pre-post intervention study to determine the impact of advance distribution of misoprostol for treatment at home, in case of perceived heavy bleeding, after delivery. The study was implemented in eight union councils of two districts in Sind province (Badin and MirpurKhas).

The objective of the study was to evaluate the safety, feasibility and acceptability of advance distribution of misoprostol to be used in home deliveries by the woman herself or by her family to treat PPH. Women and families were counseled on correct use of Misoprostol and how to manage side effects, if any occur.

In pre intervention phase, 2124 women registered in the study. In intervention phase, Misoprostol 800 mcg was distributed to pregnant women in third trimester of pregnancy. 1884 women were followed after home delivery.



Health Education Sessions

The results of the advance distribution of Misoprostol study were:

- Increased timely access to management of Post Partum Hemorrhage (PPH).
- Reduced the need for seeking higher level of care for treatment of PPH (14% vs 1%)
- 87% women who took misoprostol, did so correctly in terms of dose and time
- 9.8% women had difficulty in managing side effects
- The satisfaction rate with misoprostol was 97%

To disseminate the results of the study, NCMNH held a seminar on 13 September, 2018 in Karachi. A post study conceptual plan was also presented to the participants, for utilization of results of the study in another district of Sindh with available local resources. This would ensure practicality of the model before making recommendations to the health authorities for policy implications.

The seminar was attended by Health Professionals, Policy makers, Academia and National and International organizations. The project manager presented the summary of the methodology and findings of the study.

Dr. Mobin Memon - Director General (DG) Health, chaired the seminar. At the end, he appreciated NCMNH's efforts and assured support for the planned activity.

Dr. Arumand Rabbani



Right to left : Ms.Imtiaz Kamal -Technical Advisor of the study, Dr.Sadiqua Jafarey– Principal Investigator, Dr.Mobin Memon – DG Health,Sindh, Ms. Meihgan .M. Tarnegada - Gynuity Program Officer, Dr.Arjumand Rabbani - Investigator

All About Numbers

In spite of 220 years of warning, many countries paid no attention to their fast growing population. Pakistan is one of them. In 1798, Thomas Robert Malthus known for his work on population growth, predicted that if population of a country is left unchecked, it will outgrow its resources. Pakistan's population has reached an alarming stage. Pakistan is the sixth most populous country in the world with a population of 207.8 million and growing at the of 2.4 percent per annum between 1998-2017 (Population and Housing Consul 2017). The population bulge in the country has led to issues predicted by Malthus.

These include fewer resources, food and water shortage, famine, disease and unemployment which in turn has increased incidences of lawlessness, crime and immoral acts in the society. The ongoing war on terrorism not only affected the social fabric of Pakistani society but also had economic repercussions. Major challenges currently confronting Pakistan such as climate change, deforestation, pollution and waste management are rightly attributed to rising population.



Thomas Robert Malthus

Population growth occurs exponentially, so it increases according to birth rate. Malthusian Theory

Though Pakistan was one of the first Asian countries to develop a population plan in 1960s, its fertility has declined slower than its neighboring countries. Pakistan's first Family Planning Scheme was a part of the country's Third Five Year Plan (1965–1970). This scheme became the template for all subsequent family planning strategies. The scheme's goal was to have a vast impact in the shortest time possible. At the onset of the program, condoms were the most available method of contraception, but by 1966 the Intrauterine Device (IUD) had replaced it as the "corner-stone" of the Scheme. Mass media was used as an effective tool in conveying key messages on FP. Slogans like "Kam Bachay Khushal Gharana", "Two Bachay hi Achay" were widely publicized in different media outlets (radio, magazines etc) during the 1970s.

Despite having population planning programs for more than five decades in Pakistan, its population continues to grow. The present government has taken steps in the right direction. It is hoped that the country wide awareness campaign will garner support from all segments of the society and increase demand for family planning. *Maliha Noor*

NCMNH - Presence at International Conferences

Federation International of Gynecology & Obstetrics (FIGO) Conference 2018 - Brazil

The FIGO World Congress takes place every three years, since 1958. It is unique, as it is the only meeting related to the practice of obstetrics and gynecology, which extensively addresses all aspects of women's health in the world. The lectures and sessions are provided by worldwide recognized experts in the field of obstetrics and gynecology, representatives of universities, practice, major hospitals and health care institutions from around the globe.

Our Technical Advisor Dr.Azra Ahsan represented NCMNH at a conference in Rio de Janeiro –Brazil, from 14-19th October, 2018. She presented a summary of PPIUCD intervention being implemented at 23 selected sites in Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi (Islamabad).

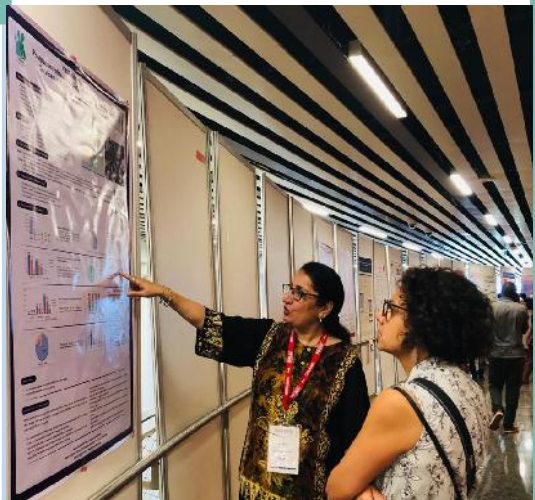


Dr.Azra Ahsan presenting at the conference

International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP) Kigali -Rwanda (2018)

ICFP 's theme for 2018 was "Investing for a Life-time of Returns." The title speaks to the various returns on investment family planning provides, from education and empowerment to economic growth and environmental health.

Dr. Aleya, Ali - Director PPIUCD intervention - NCMNH, was invited for a poster presentation at the conference in Kigali –Rwanda (November 12-15, 2018). She presented the results of the IUD insertions taking place at 23 PPIUCD sites in Sindh and Punjab provinces.



Dr.Aleya Ali presenting the poster

Naya Qadam Initiative - Improving Quality of Care

There is increasing evidence that indicates that limited knowledge and skills of health care providers (HCPs) is a barrier to improving maternal and newborn health. Building the capacity of health care providers with necessary skills and knowledge can make them competent to address family planning (FP) and other reproductive health related issues.

Naya Qadam Initiative is a project of Pathfinder International which aims to strengthen existing Postpartum Family Planning (PPFP)/ Post Abortion Family Planning (PAFP) services by providing quality trainings (theoretical as well as clinical certification) to the trainers of department of health, other consortium partners and midwifery tutors.

NCMNH one of the implementing partners, will provide trainings to Lead Trainers in 6 district levels to doctors and midwives identified by Pathfinder, the Government and other implementing partners. NCMNH will also supervise the trickle down trainings and advocate to policy makers for implementation of already existing policies on PPFP and PAFP.

So far Clinical Skills Trainings have been provided to district level Lead trainers in Karachi and Lahore. The goal of the workshop was to strengthen the capacity of trainers to design, facilitate and conduct trainings on WC-PAC, PPFP and PAFP for health care providers working in their respective districts .



Clinical Skills Training of District Lead Trainers in Karachi

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