Labour Rooms Assessment

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Introduction

“To accelerate the decline in Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) it is necessary to improve the quality of care being rendered at public health facilities. Timely provision of emergency obstetric care and routine essential obstetric and new-born care are the key strategies for reduction of maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality”\(^1\). Assessment of labour rooms – quality and functionality is a key component in delivering these strategies efficiently. The Earth Institute team has been conducting a comprehensive assessment of the labour rooms at major facilities and delivery points across Dausa district, since March 2014.

Objectives of Labour Room Assessment

1. Assess the capacity of high-case load facilities in order to deliver high quality maternal care services (essential equipment, trained human resources, protocols, quality of services etc.)
2. Identify best practices and gaps to reinforce the facility and staff to provide sustainable quality services by setting benchmarks for other institution.

Conceptual framework and Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment using checklist</th>
<th>Immediate Action</th>
<th>District Level Orientation</th>
<th>Follow-up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify gaps and best practices</td>
<td>Share findings with facility incharges to address gaps within a timeline</td>
<td>Share findings with District Level Administration (CMHO, RCHO, DPM)</td>
<td>Status of gaps being addressed at facilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 38 facilities - 10 Community Health Centers and 27 Primary Health Centers and 1 District Hospital, were selected in consultation with the Chief Medical Health Officer (CMHO) and District Program Management Unit (DPMU).
- An evaluation of 23 selected facilities was done from March to June 2014.
- All 23 sites were re-visited during August-October 2014 for a post-evaluation. During this period 15 new facilities were also assessed.
- A checklist was adopted and developed from the ‘Maternal and New-Born Health Toolkit’ guideline by Government of India to assess the labour rooms focusing on:
  - Basic labour room equipment and materials
  - New-Born Care Corner
  - Infection Prevention – Supplies and Practices within the labour room
  - Record-keeping
  - Training of the staff

Results

\(^1\) Maternal and Newborn Health Toolkit, Maternal Health Division, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, November 2013
Improvements after Assessment

- **Availability of essential seven trays** at majority of the facilities.
- **Privacy and dignity of the patient being maintained** by having plastic curtains can be found in majority of the labour rooms.
- **Protocol posters** for Antenatal care, Post-natal care and Labour rooms have been provided and placed in majority of the facilities. However segregation and re-location of posters is needed.
- **Initiation of breast feeding within first hour of birth and making a note of the time in delivery registers** under district officials order.
- **Availability of separate slippers for labour room** now found in some of the facilities.
- **Availability of stock medicine** for the labour room.
- **Record keeping** for delivery, breast feeding and out-referral were maintained at the facilities. In-referral register was found only at District Hospital.

Steps taken by district administration with technical support from Earth Institute:

- **Government orders**: Based on the findings reported the CMHO issued a letter to facilities to make necessary changes.
- **Constant feedback by Earth Institute**: The assessment was reviewed during District Health Society meetings on monthly basis. Earth Institute shared their visit reports and technical concern which helped the district collector and CMHO to take necessary action.
- **District collector Engagement**: The DC visited PHC Sathel along with MLA of Dausa and conducted a labour room assessment on 20\(^{th}\) June, 2014. This action sent a strong and positive message within the health system and motivated the district and block officers to consider the issue of labour rooms more seriously.
Addressing the gaps

- **Ensuring all delivery tables are equipped with foot stool, mattresses, Macintosh, sheets, pillow and light source (lamps)** to make the process of delivery a comfortable one. CMHO should provide guidance to all facility in-charges for procurement of these items.

- **Strict Implementation and orientation of partograph filling exercise**, by issuing strict instructions to all institutions conducting deliveries and orientation of how to fill Partograph.

- **Strengthening of Infection Control Practices**
  - Strengthening the use of bleaching powder solution for sterilization at sub-centres
  - Use of separate slippers in labour room by health staff and by attendants of patients
  - Use of Elbow-Operated Taps

- **Formation of high risk pregnancy register** for identification, tracking and timely referral of high risk pregnancy to reduce Maternal Mortality Rate and Infant Mortality Rate.

- **Use of radiant warmer**. Refresher training is required to make the staff well equipped with the usage of radiant warmer.