

Challenges in Improving Newborn health in Uganda

Jolly Nankunda
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“Newborn babies not mini-adults”



Levels of care for newborns

- Newborns cared for at different levels
 - Individual/family
 - Community
 - Institution/Systems

Individual/Family level

- Beliefs – myths, cultural
- Knowledge
- Practices
 - Newborn care (best practices??)
 - feeding
 - skin care
 - cord care
 - dangerous practices to well being of Nb??
- Poverty at household level
 - accessing care
 - priority setting for available resources

Individual/Family level

- Late reporting for childbirth by mothers leading to complications in babies
- Delay appreciation of danger signs in Nbs
- Late reporting for sick Nbs

Community level

- Beliefs, knowledge, practices, norms – passed on from generation to generation
- Traditional health system
 - Home remedies - some may be dangerous
 - Where care is first sought
 - Traditional healers
- Weak linkage between health unit and community

Institutions/Systems

- Newborn care policy
 - Available
 - How widely disseminated
 - Accessed by those who need its guidance?
- Unfavourable policies affecting Nb care negatively e.g do all units offering Nb care access the required drugs?

Health unit level

- Poorly equipped units providing Nb care e.g source of warmth for the baby
 - lack of resuscitation corners in delivery rooms
 - ambubags and masks – of appropriate sizes
 - suction devices
 - appropriate size sundries like cannulas, feeding tubes
 - Availability of necessary drugs e.g vitamin K
 - Lack of Nb corners/units in health units- sick Nbs mixed with the rest of the sick children

Human resource for newborns

- Low numbers of staff
- ? Skills for caring for newborns
 - Best practices for Nbs - initiation of breastfeeding within 1hr, postnatal care in 2 days
 - Lack of job aides for neonatal resuscitation and care
- High patient numbers
 - Missed opportunities for critical interventions
- “maldistribution of skilled health care staff” –urban-rural disparity

Institutions/Systems

- Poor infrastructure e.g roads, electricity
 - Delays in accessing care
- Hard to reach areas also have Nbs in need of care
- Difficulties in referral
 - Poor infrastrucure
 - Willingness of referred clients to go to next level

Thank you for listening

