Reviewer’s report

Title: Infection Control in delivery care units, Gujarat state, India

Version: 1 Date: 27 March 2011

Reviewer: Elizabeth M Stringer

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting descriptive paper that begins to examine health facility issues that may contribute to puerperal sepsis, a major contributor of maternal morbidity and mortality worldwide.

Major compulsory reviews

Abstract

Background:

1. Such increased utilization has increased levels of morbidity and mortality at these facilities due to poor infection control. Are these authors proposing that these risks would be higher than at home? The authors might want to rephrase this.

Conclusion:

2. The authors make a conclusion about puerperal sepsis but this is the first time that they have mentioned puerperal sepsis. It needs to be mentioned somewhere in the background, methods, or results.

3. Can the authors please describe the facilities in more detail? How long are women observed after labor in the facility? Who usually delivers the infants? Of the cases of puerperal sepsis identified, where were these recorded?

4. Discussion

The authors make the claim that “too often incentivizing health uptake behavior can lead to adverse clinical outcomes”. I think statement is a bit strong and not substantiated from this current study. The authors conclude that the likelihood of acquiring an infection during childbirth is high. I think that this is a overstretching the findings of the current study. It is within the realm of possibility that the liberal use of antibiotics after delivery prevents infection.

In addition, the authors do not discuss any weaknesses of their study.

Discretionary reviews

Introduction
1. It would be helpful if the authors were able to address maternal deaths that are related to sepsis in Gujarat state or in their health facilities but it’s unclear if the authors have that information.

Methods

2. As part of the assessment, the authors asked the respondents if they had encountered puerperal sepsis. If the questionnaire included more information, it would be helpful to know a “definition” used for puerperal sepsis.

3. Are the authors able to compare what the respondents answered to what the authors found at the site?

4. I am not sure that the section “Experience of recent causes of puerperal sepsis” adds anything to the paper unless the authors choose to later mention this in the discussion.

5. It was unclear to me what “Case A, facility” meant at the end of the recent cases of puerperal sepsis on page 7.

Minor essential review

1. The authors need to utilize the same tense throughout the paper.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have not competing interests.