REINFORCING MEASURES TO REDUCE POST CAESAREAN SECTION ENDOMYOMETRITIS AND HYSTERECTOMY CASES AT QUEEN ELIZABETH CENTRAL HOSPITAL, MALAWI

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BACKGROUND

Endomyometritis is the inflammation of the endometrium and myometrium, usually caused by infections after caesarean section. Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital’s (QECH) records showed that from January to July 2018, 2400 caesarean sections were conducted, and 2.8% (n=68) developed endomyometritis. Of these, 42% (n=29) underwent total abdominal hysterectomy. Contributing factors might have been lack of adherence to infection prevention standards in the wards and theatres and inadequate resources. In view of this, this project was conducted in theatre, labour and postnatal ward.

PURPOSE

The qualitative improvement project aimed at reducing endomyometritis cases by 90%, and thereby reducing hysterectomies due to endomyometritis to less than 5% through strict adherence of infection prevention practices in the targeted wards.

METHODS

An interprofessional team comprising of hospital management, doctors, domestic staff, nurses/midwives, formed the quality improvement team. The following interventions were implemented:

- Developed infection prevention protocols on cleaning of the environment, traffic control, vaginal examinations in labour ward, patient and hand hygiene
Mobilised resources like: scrubbing materials, patient’s linen, shoe rack for theatre staff’s shoes, trolleys for vaginal examination, mopping pails and bins

Obtained extra cleaning staff for the labour unit, postnatal ward and theatre, and a security guard for the postnatal ward

Conducted trainings on infection prevention to targeted sites

Provided health education to patients and guardians on infection prevention

Initiated intensified supportive supervision of the implemented strategies

Monitoring was done through monthly review of records and gaps identified were addressed accordingly.

RESULTS

Preliminary results showed that there were 2,011 caesarean sections cases from August 2018 to February 2019. Out of those cases, endomyometritis cases were 2.7% (n=62) and the total abdominal hysterectomies were 45% (n=28), but the interventions are ongoing and the results will be reported on until the end of June 2019.

CONCLUSION

The targets for reducing endomyometritis cases post caesarean section at this hospital is expected to be achieved. Following of infection prevention protocols is expected to reduce caesarean section complications and strict adherence to infection prevention measures should be a commitment by all. There is a need for continued management support and interprofessional collaboration to combat infection risks after caesarean sections.

IMPLICATIONS

Infection prevention standards are integrated into practice by interprofessional healthcare professionals and support staff. Eventually this will contribute to Sustainable Development Goal of reducing maternal mortality.

KEY WORDS

Maternal Child Health, Endomyometritis, Caesarean section, Infection prevention standards, Interprofessional healthcare quality improvement
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ETHICAL APPROVAL

Authority to conduct the project was granted by Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital management.