Background: Continuous support by a partner of a woman’s choice has been shown to improve labor and birth outcomes. A quality improvement project to involve female birthing partners in providing continuous support and non pharmacological pain relief during labor in a low risk maternity unit at Mulago Hospital was developed.

Purpose: To conduct baseline assessment of project indicators; train midwives on continuous support and non pharmacological pain management; train and involve female birthing partners; and monitor and evaluate project outcome indicators.

Methods: Quantitative study design. Data was collected using questionnaires. Participants were postpartum women within 24 hours of delivery at Mulago Hospital Ward. Data was entered into Epi Data version 3.3 and analysed using Stata soft version 11. Ethical approval was obtained from Mulago Hospital research and ethics committee.

Outcomes:

- Continuous advocacy for birth partner support during labor.
- Involvement of all midwives and other relevant stakeholders

Discussion: Majority of women in labour come with female birthing partners. Very few are allowed to remain in labour ward to offer support and non pharmacological pain relief. It is therefore important to carefully assess and consider the role of female birthing partners in offering support during labour.

Sustainability Factors:

- Continuous advocacy for birthing partner support during labor.
- Involvement of all midwives and other relevant stakeholders

Next Steps: An implementation study to evaluate the effect of involving female birthing partners on the birthing experience of women in midwifery led centres is ongoing.

Implications for Advancing Inter-professional Practice in Caring for women in labor

Holistic care for women during labor and child birth does not only involve midwives but requires participation of other players such as obstetricians, support persons, social workers etc.

References:


Next Steps: A study to evaluate the effect of involving female birthing partners on the birthing experience of women in midwifery led centres is ongoing.