Background

Post surgery infections (PSI) are the most common nosocomial infections. Patients with PSI may stay longer in the hospital, develop serious complications, are at risk of dying and have increased cost of treatment (John, Nimeri, & Elahham, 2015). In 2015, Chikwawa district hospital maternity unit registered 42 (6.4%) cases of PSI out of the 653 surgeries which were conducted. Out of these, three had hysterectomies and one ended up into a maternal death (MD). Chikwawa district hospital embarked on an eighteen months (April 2016 to August 2017) project to reduce the infections.

Objectives

• Identify the possible contributing factors to the infections
• Reduce the rate of infections by 50%

Methods

The project is being implemented in maternity and theatre departments. It is spearheaded by a multidisciplinary taskforce committee comprising staff from maternity, theatre, pharmacy, laboratory, administration and laundry departments. The measures employed include;

i. Training of staff in infection prevention standards
ii. Reinforcement of infection prevention standards, ensuring availability of sterile instruments for procedures
iii. Administration of pre and post-operative antibiotics
iv. Daily wound dressing
v. Mobilising infection prevention equipment and supplies
vi. Regular staff meetings
vii. Development of protocols for prevention of PSI
viii. Development of post-operative monitoring tools.

Results

There has been a change in the practices of staff in regards to infection prevention. This led to improvement in the outcomes of patients. For the period between April, 2016 to March, 2017, the rate of the PSI reduced to 0.8% (5 out of 603), there was only one hysterectomy case and no maternal death was reported as a result of PSI. The length of hospital stay also reduced with an average length of hospital stay being reduced from 12 to 6 days.

Conclusion

Simple measures such as following infection prevention standards, involvement and commitment of all cadres working in maternity, theatre and other departments has helped to reduce the infections. Good leadership skills, having a shared vision and team work are vital in reducing PSI.

References


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