

**BIRTH PREPAREDNESS AND COMPLICATION READINESS****Mrs. P.L. Murugalakshmi\* | Dr. Manjubala Dash\*\****\*Ph.D. Scholar, Himalayan University, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, India.**\*\* Research Guide, Professor & HOD, Department of OBG Nursing, Mother Theresa Post Graduate & Research Institute of Health Sciences, Puducherry, India.*DOI: <http://doi.org/10.47211/idcij.2021.v08i01.005>**ABSTRACT:**

*Birth preparedness and complication readiness (BPACR) is one intervention that addresses these delays by encouraging pregnant woman, their families and communities to effectively plan for births and deal with emergencies if they occur. It means preparation of pregnant women for a safe delivery. A women needs to be physically, psychologically and financially prepared for a safe and easy child birth.*

*Birth preparedness helps ensure that women can reach professional delivery care when labour begins. In addition, birth preparedness can help reduce the delays that occur when women experience obstetric complications*

*Maternal and new born morbidity and mortality is a global burden especially in the developing countries. The barriers like inadequate knowledge, cost, distance, transportation and lack of awareness lead to reduced use of skilled care during delivery.*

**Key Words:** *Birth preparedness and complication readiness (BPACR), safe delivery, child birth.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Maternal mortality is a substantial burden in many developing countries. Globally more than 40% of pregnant women may experience acute obstetric problems. The world health organization (WHO) estimates that 300 million women in developing world suffer from short-term and long-term morbidities brought about by pregnancy and childbirth.

Birth preparedness and complication readiness (BPACR) is one intervention that addresses these delays by encouraging pregnant woman, their families and communities to effectively plan for births and deal with emergencies if they occur. It is a key component of globally accepted safe motherhood programme, which helps to ensure the women to reach professional care when labour begins and to reduce delays that occur when mothers in labour experience obstetrical complication.

## MEANING OF BIRTH PREPAREDNESS

It means preparation of a pregnant woman for a safe delivery. A women needs to be physically, psychologically and financially prepared for a safe and easy child birth.

## DEFINITION

Birth preparedness is advance planning and preparation for delivery, which can do much to improve maternal health outcomes. Birth preparedness helps ensure that women can reach professional delivery care when labour begins. In addition, birth preparedness can help reduce the delays that occur when women experience obstetric complications



## AIM OF BIRTH PREPAREDNESS

To assist women and their partners and families to be adequately prepared for childbirth by making plans on how to respond if complications or unexpected adverse events occur to the woman and/or the baby at any time during pregnancy, childbirth or the early postnatal period.

## NATIONAL PROTOCOL FOR BIRTH PREPAREDNESS & COMPLICATION READINESS;

- Encourage all pregnant women to have institutional/trained service providers for delivery.
- Introduce the concept of a birth plan on a second visit and reinforce on the follow up visits.
- Confirm the place of delivery and the provider with the pregnant women and family.
- Give information on how to recognize onset of labour and when to seek assistance including danger signs in the pregnancy and labour

## FOR INSTITUTIONAL DELIVERY;

- Advise the pregnant woman and her husband / family about when to go to the hospital and take along the necessary things.
- Arrange to have a second person of the women own choice to be present and give support during delivery

## TARGET BEHAVIOURS OF BIRTH PREPAREDNESS;

- Pregnant woman attends at least 4 antenatal visits and the 4th is in late pregnancy.
- Pregnant woman is tested for HIV, knows her HIV status so she can help protect her baby.
- Pregnant woman and her family consider giving birth in a facility with skill birth attendant.
- Household knows the location of the closest facility.
- Pregnant woman selects a birth companion to accompany her to the facility and stays to support her during labour and delivery.
- Household prepares by gathering clean births supplies, prearranges transport and saves money needed to pay for the delivery and any emergency care.
- Household prepares for care of other children whilst the mother is away.

## BENEFITS OF BIRTH PLAN;

- A birth plan lets health care providers and staff know the expectant mothers wishes during labour, delivery and postpartum. Such a plan can help the expectant mother feel confident and in control as

much as possible. A plan also can be part of the decision making process, even if unexpected events occur.

- The more prepared families are for the birth and the new baby the more chance that the mother and the newborn baby will survive, especially if there is an unexpected emergency. It takes time to save up the money needed for items like baby clothing, clean birth materials and mother hygiene and it is best to keep them in a bag ready for the birth.
- It helps to ensure that women can reach professional delivery care when labour begins. It helps pregnant women to acquire skills and confidence needed to make birth a positive experience. It reduces fear and anxiety during the labour process.

## COMPONENTS OF BIRTH PREPAREDNESS:

- Decision making in an emergency
- Skilled attendant at birth
- Supplies needed for clean delivery
- Identify support people
- Establish a financing plan for delivery
- Saving cost for normal delivery
- Blood donor
- Transportation
- Danger signs

### 1. DECISION MAKING IN AN EMERGENCY

- Appropriate place of birth home or health care facility and referral
- Depending on the woman's condition the health worker may need to recommend birth in a specific level of health care facility
- A facility should have staff, equipment, supplies and drugs and available to provide best care.



### 2. SKILLED ATTENDANT AT BIRTH

- A birth attendant, also known as a skilled birth attendant, is a health professional who provides basic and emergency care to women and their newborn during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period.
- A birth attendant who may be a midwife, physician, obstetrician, or nurse, is trained to be present at (attend) child birth, whether the delivery takes place in a health care institution or at home to recognize and respond appropriately to medical complications, and to implement interventions to help prevent them in the first place, including through prenatal care.
- The health worker should discuss the need for a skilled birth attendant, if possible someone trained to ensure that labor and delivery progress normally and to manage complications that arise. Different birth attendants are able to provide different levels of care.

### 3. SUPPLIES NEEDED FOR CLEAN DELIVERY

- The health worker should advise the needed items, clean, dry, and warm clothes for drying and wrapping the baby, sanitary pad, clean clothes, soap, placenta receptacle, clean and used razor blade, water-proof plastic cover, clean cord ties, clothes for baby.
- All births, whether they happen at home or in the health facility, need to be "clean" otherwise the mother and baby can become very sick from infection entering the birth canal or via the baby's umbilical cord.
- Seven Principles of Cleanliness for Birth (WHO): Clean Birth Site, Clean Hands, Clean Ties, Clean Razor, Clean Gauze, Clean Umbilical Cord, and Clean Perineum.



#### 4. A BIRTH COMPANIONS:

- How to make the decisions if the main family decision maker is absent in an emergency.
- How to access community resources and supports. An appropriate blood donor who will be available in case of emergency
- Birth companion are women who have experienced the process of labour and provide continuous one-one support to other women experiencing labour and child birth.



#### ADVANTAGES OF INVOLVING BIRTH COMPANIONS;

- The presence of female relative during labour is a low cost intervention that has proved to be beneficial to the women in labour.
- Birth companions provide emotional support (continuous reassurance), information about labour progress and advice regarding coping techniques; comfort measures (comfort touch, massage, promoting adequate fluid intake and output) and advocacy helping the women articulate her wishes to the other.

#### PRE –REQUISITES FOR A BIRTH COMPANION;

- The birth companion has to be a female relative and preferably one who has undergone the process of labour.
- She should not suffer from any communicable diseases, she should wear clean clothes.
- She should be willing to stay with the pregnant women throughout the process of labour.
- In facilities where privacy protocols are followed in the labour room, the husband of the pregnant women can be allowed as a birth companion.

#### PROMOTION OF BIRTH COMPANION;

- The world health organization promotes labour companionship as a core element of care for improving maternal and infant health. (WHO2002).
- The regional plan of action for maternal and neonatal health care includes the monitoring of maternal & fetal wellbeing and encourages the presence of a companion to provide support during labour and delivery as one of the intervention to improve neonatal health.
- A trained birth companion contributes to reduce tension and short duration of labour, increase mother's feelings of control, decrease interventions and caesareans.
- It also enhance the partner's participation improves outcomes for the newborn, facilitates parent/ infant bonding, and decrease postpartum depression while increasing positive feelings about the birth experience.

#### 5. ESTABLISH A FINANCING PLAN FOR DELIVERY

- The health worker should discuss the need to have money available for such things are

- The women and her family should be given an estimate of the expenses for the delivery and the related aspects (such as transport etc.,)
- They should also be advised to keep some emergency fund, or have a source for emergency funding, should a complication arise and more money is required than initially anticipated.
- Assistance by skilled health care provider during delivery and family service

## 6. SAVING COST FOR NORMAL DELIVERY

- Assist the women in planning to have funds available when needed to pay for health care during normal birth or if danger signs arise
- Putting a side small amount of money in weekly basis, Saving extra money and top to reliable relatives for financial supports



## 7. BLOOD DONOR

- Ensure that the women has identified an appropriate blood donor and that this person will be available in care of emergency
- Hemorrhage both antepartum and post-partum is an important cause maternal mortality. Blood transfusion can be lifesaving in such, cases.
- As blood cannot be brought one needs a voluntary donor to replace the blood before it is issued for Transfusion. Such donors (2-3 in number) must be ready, should the needed for transfusion arise.



## 8. TRANSPORTATION

- Arrangement of transportation system for reaching health care facilities
- Delay in reaching a health care facility is one of the major delays responsible for maternal mortality. If the women has decided to deliver at a health facility, a vehicle should be identified which should be available whenever the women needs it, to take her to the health facility. Even if the women decides to deliver at home a vehicle should be identified and ideally be kept ready to transport her to the nearest health facility or referral center in case she develops some complications that needed immediately referral and care.
- The various schemes which are presently available for assisting the women with transportation facilities should be kept in mind. Ex., JSSK.( Janan ishishu suraksha yojana)



## DANGER SIGNS:

### AIMS

- Overall reduce maternal and perinatal morbidity and mortality

- Timely detection and management of complications
- Ensure the healthy mother and birth of a healthy child
- Provide essential health education to the mother including information on the danger signs of pregnancy.

## DANGER SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Anytime during pregnancy, especially in 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester, you must report to the hospital, if you have following signs:-

- Excessive vomiting, severe bleeding p/v at any time in pregnancy, blurring vision,
- Excess swelling in legs, convulsions, decrease or absent fetal movement.
- Generalized weakness, easy fatigability and breathlessness, fever, severe headache
- Decreased urine output, Leaking of fluid from vagina and Pregnancy induced hypertension



## CONCLUSION:

Maternal and new born morbidity and mortality is a global burden especially in the developing countries. The barriers like inadequate knowledge, cost, distance, transportation and lack of awareness lead to reduced use of skilled care during delivery. Birth-preparedness and complication readiness is a comprehensive strategy to reducing the pregnancy and labour related complications and improve the maternal and neonatal outcomes.

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