Antenatal care for a positive pregnancy experience – Guidance for implementation of the 2016 WHO ANC model through implementation research

Current Project Brief

Objectives and Background
As part of the continuum of care, antenatal care is a critical time period for women, babies, families and communities. However as a platform to provide integrated, quality services for women, it has not been utilized efficiently and effectively. On 7 November 2016, the World Health Organization released its comprehensive recommendations on routine ANC for pregnant women and adolescent girls. Using an integrated service delivery approach, the guideline aims to create a momentum for countries to re-design or re-align their health systems ‘to provide pregnant women with respectful, individualized, person-centred care at every contact, with implementation of effective clinical practices (interventions and tests), and provision of relevant and timely information, and psychosocial and emotional support, by practitioners with good clinical and interpersonal skills within a well-functioning health system’.

Considering the importance of adaptation and implementation of the new ANC model within different health systems, the recommendations allow flexibility for countries to apply various options both for the content and delivery of ANC based on their specific needs and context. In relation to this vision, WHO is now supporting countries to assess the current status of their ANC policies, develop a decision support tool for implementation and create a portal facilitating access to ANC-related evidence. Furthermore, WHO is, in parallel, urgently addressing the need to develop appropriate indicators that go beyond capturing the number of visits at different levels (global, national, women-reported).

Geographic location
Three countries in the African region (TBC), India (Rajasthan, TBC), South Africa (M&E)

Main deliverables
As part of the initiative, the work will lead to the creation of context-specific implementation design and ANC bundles for each country developed and integrated into the investment proposal for large-scale implementation. This will be done by conducting the following activities: an ANC situational analysis, stakeholder consultations, necessary policy changes, and resource mobilization. WHO will support these efforts by providing and testing tools both at the policy and healthcare worker level; in addition to creating an online portal for increased access to evidence regarding ANC. In parallel, the development of an ANC Monitoring & Evaluation framework will include a systematic mapping of existing indicators, a global consultation process based on WHO’s ANC recommendations, and will be informed by the monitoring of implementation and indicators in South Africa (which is currently implementing the new model at scale).

Partners
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