Addressing violence against women among patients seeking antenatal care

Partner violence among pregnant women is associated with higher rates of:
- preterm labour
- antepartum hemorrhage
- intrauterine growth retardation
- low birth weight, and lower rates of breastfeeding.

Partner violence is also associated with increased infant mortality.

Objectives

1. Develop and test a counselling intervention for abused pregnant women in resource-poor antenatal care settings.
2. Improve safety, empowerment, and help-seeking of abused pregnant women.
3. Improve the capacity of health-care providers in identifying and addressing violence against women.

Methodology

A randomized controlled trial will be conducted to test a counselling intervention which includes:

- evaluating danger and current level of risk
- discussing options for support and reducing abuse
- developing safety strategies
- understanding warning signs
- seeking available resources to address psychological, legal, social, and health-related needs.

Women that screen positive for abuse will be randomized to the intervention group, or to the control group (only information on local referrals for addressing abuse).

The trial design will be informed by prior formative research (interviews, focus group discussions, site visits), and pilot testing.