

Making A Difference – for mothers and infants in Somaliland.

Combined Obstetric , Gynaecology and Neonatal training in a post-graduate program for Somaliland.



EDNA ADAN
HOSPITAL

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Background

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Somaliland has the sixth highest maternal and second highest neonatal mortality rates in the world [1]. Just four percent of women give birth in a facility that can provide comprehensive obstetric care [2]. Only three hospitals provide neonatal care.

Somaliland has a shortage of specialist clinicians, even more so in rural areas[3]. No programs exist for specialty Obstetric or paediatric training. Care of women and infants falls to generalists, often with no further training beyond medical school. Existing short courses have left doctors poorly equipped to provide even the signal functions of Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (CEmONC).



Figure 1. Map of Somaliland? [4]

Objectives

- Deliver a contextualised post graduate diploma program for Somali doctors that combines Obstetrics and Gynaecology training with training in Neonatal and infant health care.
- Graduates equipped with knowledge and skills to transform health outcomes for women and infants in the communities in which they work.

Outcome and Discussion

With commencement of the program, the number of doctors in the hospital increased beyond what was needed for patient care. Trainee salaries was the biggest contributor to cost of the program. Most global grant funders restrict the proportion of funds that can be spent on wages. We are grateful that the Fistula Foundation provided funding for the program.

Clinical Academic Staff included three family physicians and pediatrician. More than a dozen specialists volunteered to assist through brief visits or online content delivery. Six trainees completed the program and were awarded a Graduate Diploma in Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Infant Health.

The skills and knowledge graduates attained have been shown to reduce all cause maternal morbidity by 25% [5] and neonatal morbidity and mortality by up to 72% [6]. At Edna Adan Hospital [EAH] the impact of having personnel trained in this area has already had much greater impact.

- EAH maternal mortality rate of 317 per 100,000 [7] is less than half the national rate [1].
- An infant of birthweight greater than 1.5kg has reasonable expectation of survival at EAH.
- Community awareness of a higher level of care has resulted in increased complexity of presenting patients.
- Graduates have led quality improvement and skills workshops at other health facilities[8].

Planning for a second cohort of trainees is underway, subject to renewal of funding and retention of Clinical Academic Staff . It is hoped that with time it will be possible to replicate this program in other regions of Somaliland. The course could also be adapted for use in other Low to middle income countries.

References

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