

Building a Culture of Quality Maternity Health Care Service Delivery in Sierra Leone.

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Cross section of participants, and trainers

Every pregnant woman's dream is to give birth to a healthy baby. Providing every pregnant woman, lactating mother, child, and potential pregnant woman the opportunity to give birth in a decent, healthy, and dignified space with state-of-the-art care is our aim; providing preferential care to the poor.

The two health crises (the Ebola epidemic and the COVID-19 pandemic) severely impacted our healthcare system in Sierra Leone as we saw firsthand the terrible loss of many of our senior and experienced nurses, midwives, and other medical professionals in our healthcare institutions. "Every day in 2020, almost 800 women died from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Almost 95% of all maternal deaths occurred in low and lower middle-income countries in 2020," according to the WHO. To maintain our team of trained and qualified personnel in sufficient quantity to respond to our patient needs, we are beginning routine in- and out-of-health facility training for our health workers, particularly in the maternity department, as we are working towards maintaining the lowest mortality rate in Kono and nationwide and keeping up with the rising patient volume and demand for high-quality care delivery.

"The cry of a healthy baby and the voice of the mother are the dreams of every worker at the maternity ward."

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We are in support of the WHO proposition that being cared for by skilled health professionals before, during, and after childbirth can save the lives of women and newborns.

Strengthening our human resources has helped us to maintain consistency in our quality service delivery mission, which is one of our key aims, given that we place a significant emphasis on providing safe environments for our staff, beneficiaries, employees, and donors. In keeping with this, an intensive sixteen-day theoretical and practical training on maternal and child health, leadership, and quality improvement for nurses and midwives was conducted at the Kono Musu Vocational Hall as part of the GAIN initiative.



Maternal Care Training

On the maternal-child health side of the training, the GAIN-funded programme focuses on topics like dignity and safe birth for women, as well as birth companionship as a technique to help women feel comfortable and confident both before and after giving birth. The training targets staff from different Community Health Center (CHC) and Peripheral Health Unit (PHU), and to be able to get a good representation of each of the CHCs and PHUs, senior mentors were asked to select representatives from their health facilities for the "Maternal Child Health, Leadership, and Quality Improvement Training" and these representatives will communicate the information and skills acquired during the training to their respective Community Health Center (CHC) and Peripheral Health Unit (PHU)



Neonatal Training

"Taking care of patients also means taking care of their data."

The training was divided into two cohorts, each consisting of 23 participants, for a total of 46 participants in the two cohorts. Each cohort trained for a total of eight (8) days; both lasted for sixteen (16) days. The theme of the training was "Maternal-Child Health Leadership and Quality Improvement." Birth companionship, safe birth, and respectful maternity, neonatal, and child health were topics taught. This is an active attempt to bring patients' home to the hospital by incorporating practices like birth companionship and dignity to enable women to give birth in a

dignified manner in our facilities. To maintain a culture of quality maternal health care service delivery, trainers train staff to be good leaders who will be able to figure out problems, provide effective solutions, and be cogent in information collection, documentation, and dissemination: leadership, quality improvement (QI), and data collection. Trainees learned about leadership skills and how leaders should act when providing care, emphasizing effective communication. One of the trainers, Sr. Patricia, said, "the training is essential to equipping our nurses and midwives with skills that will help them provide quality care at the maternity ward to their patients. Because the cry of a healthy baby and the voice of the mother are the dreams of every worker at the maternity ward."

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They were also taught how to collect patient data accurately and avoid mistakes in recording, emphasizing the importance of keeping patient information safe and free from errors. Gladys Jepkogei, the M&E specialist, said "Taking care of patients also means taking care of their data". Quality improvement was another key topic, where participants learned how to spot problems in the various Peripheral Health Unit (PHU) and government hospitals and how to use quality improvement (QI) skills to come up with solutions to the identified problems. This all-round training not only improves maternal and child healthcare but also strengthens leadership, ensures data accuracy, and enhances the overall quality of healthcare delivery at Partners In Health (PIH) in Sierra Leone.

Participants thanked donors and instructors and reaffirmed how much they appreciated and had been looking forward to this kind of training because it had given them the tools they needed to provide better service. They received certificates of accomplishment and expressed their gratitude to their mentors for choosing them to represent their healthcare facilities.



GAIN cross site lead and GAIN Sierra Leone team



Thank you for reading.

To keep our staff abreast of what is happening internally, we are committed to providing informed information on internal happenings.

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