

Abstract

Background: Among the criteria recommended by World Health Organization (WHO) for monitoring the health status and policies of countries is the infant mortality rate (IMR). Imbedded within the infant mortality rate are perinatal deaths, which accounts for more than one third of the IMR. Since the start of Safe Motherhood Demonstration Project: a joint project between the ministry of Health, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology University of Nairobi and Population Council no study has been done to determine the Early Perinatal Mortality at Western Provincial General Hospital, Kakamega.

Objectives: To determine the early perinatal mortality rate and associated risk factors.

Design: A prospective descriptive study

Setting: Western Provincial General Hospital, Kakamega a referral institution

Subjects: All mothers who delivered at Western Provincial General Hospital, Kakamega from 1st September 2003 to 31st December 2003 both dates inclusive.

Results: Of the 1,036 deliveries at Western Provincial General Hospital, Kakamega during this period, 992 were singletons, 19 pairs of twins, and two sets of triplets, 10 macerated still births, 17 fresh still births and 5 early neonatal deaths. The early perinatal mortality rate was 30.9/1000 deliveries.

Conclusions: Provision of appropriate antenatal care and delivery facilities is crucial for ensuring the optimal outcome of the condition of babies at birth. Maternal education is an integral part of both maternal and child survival

List of definitions

Perinatal period: All births from 24 weeks gestation to 28 completed days after birth.

Infant mortality rate: The number of deaths in children less than one year old per 1000 live births in the same year.

Perinatal mortality rate: The number of stillbirths plus neonatal deaths per 1000 total births.

Early Perinatal mortality rate: The number of stillbirths plus neonatal deaths occurring within the first 24 hours of life per 1000 total births.

Neonatal mortality rate: The number of neonatal deaths per 1000 total births.

Still birth rate: The numbers of stillbirths infant per 1000 infants born including live births and stillbirths.

Stillbirth: No signs of life are present at or after birth.

Neonatal death: Refers to death of a live born infant within the first 28 days after birth.

Early neonatal death: Early neonatal death refers to death of alive born infant during the first 7 days after birth.

Late neonatal death: Death of a live-born infant after the first week of life but before 29 days.

Low birth weight: The first newborn weight obtained after birth less than 2500g.

Very low birth weight: The first newborn weight obtained after birth is less than 1500g.

Extremely low birth weight: The first newborn weight obtained after birth is less than 1000g.

Term infant: An infant born anytime after 37 completed weeks of gestation and up to 42 completed weeks of gestation.

Preterm infant: An infant born after 24 weeks gestation but before 37 completed weeks.

Post-term: An infant born anytime after completion of the 42nd week.

Booked: Initial antenatal clinic attendance.