

Elevating Maternal and Neonatal Health Outcomes Through Simulation-Based Education in Lesotho

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Abstract

In Lesotho, the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) and Neonatal Mortality Rate (NNR) stand at an alarming 566/100,000 live births and 35/1,000 live births, respectively. These persistently high rates, despite increased access to skilled deliveries, signal a critical need for improved quality in maternal and neonatal healthcare services. To address this challenge, a multifaceted study was undertaken to assess readiness for implementing Simulation-Based Education (SBE), encompassing infrastructure, funding, human resources, and familiarity with simulation as a pedagogical tool in 18 hospitals. The evaluation revealed suboptimal knowledge of national strategic plans and the concept of simulation teaching, with an evident desire to establish simulation centers contrasted by a paucity of dedicated funds and donor support for SBE. The deficiency of SBE champions and external change facilitators was notable. This study underscores the need for integrated approach that encompasses extensive dissemination of strategic plans, enhanced allocation of SBE in facility budgets, and the nurturing of SBE champions for effective adoption. The recommendation posits the creation of a simulation hub at Queen Mamohato Memorial Hospital, linked to satellite simulation centers, to equip healthcare professionals with critical skills for high-quality care. Furthermore, tele-mentoring components are proposed to supplement traditional SBE, leveraging internet connectivity available across hospitals. This approach, will enhance skill development and continuous professional support through tele-mentoring, represents a strategic step toward decreasing MMR and NNR, propelling Lesotho towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals.

Keywords: Maternal Mortality, Neonatal Mortality, Simulation-Based Education, Tele-Mentoring, Health Service Quality, Capacity Building, Lesotho