

Abstract

Kalmunai RDHS division is a part of Ampara District and the Department of Health is headed by RDHS Kalmunai. It has five base hospitals of which three Base hospitals are managed by consultant VOOG and under the line ministry administration. The other two base hospitals BH Sammanthurai and BH Pottuvil and 13 Divisional Hospitals' maternity units are managed by grade medical officers, under the RDHS Kalmunai.

Most of the deliveries (80%) are taken place in specialized units and the rest 20% are at non specialized units. Though all the maternity units under the RDHS Kalmunai are managed by grade medical officers there is a significant variation observed in the utilization pattern of these units. The main objective of the study is to describe the factors influencing the utilization pattern of these units.

The main components of the study were to describe the utilization pattern, to determine the factors influencing in deciding the place of delivery through an interviewer administrated questionnaire, 346 pregnant mothers who are thirty six weeks of pregnancy or more and visited institutional and field antenatal clinics during the study period were interviewed, and ascertaining available resources in the institutions using a check list and the opinion of the relevant staff were obtained.

The results of the study were entered in MS Excel Sheet, transformed to SPSS and analyzed by appropriate cross tabulation with significant testing. The hospitals were grouped as relatively well utilized and relatively underutilized from the results obtained from the specific objective one. The factors influencing the mothers were taken in deciding the place of delivery such as Parity, present and past obstetric problems had significant association with their choice for place of delivery. Educational level, distance of the specialized unit and the

residence of mother did not show significant association. The most common problem were identified from the response of the mothers were inadequate facilities in non – specialized units, lack of caring attitudes of the staff lesser availability of doctors especially during night hours in certain institutions were some of the main reasons why the mothers avoid going to non – specialized maternity units for deliveries.

Availability of VOG facilities, blood transfusion facilities, and emergency management facilities are some of the reasons for the mothers to choose specialized units for delivery.

Strengthening in maintaining partogram improving emergency preparedness, maintaining proper record systems for handing over and taking over are necessary to improve the quality in the local institutions. Regular in- service training program, regular clinical auditing, proper supervision by all the levels of officers are necessary to improve the situation. Since the VOGG are the main axis of the maternity system the VOGG, RDHS, MOICC, MOHH and their staff cooperation and cordial functioning is very essential to improve the utilization of these maternity units. These recommendations should be applied in Kalmunai district and implemented in the other parts of Sri Lanka depending on the outcome of the recommendation.