

NURSING AND MIDWIFERY PRACTICES

Abstract

Nursing services has been evolving with growing demands of new era from basic care to independent nurse practitioner in both hospital and community areas. The practice of midwifery is imprinted from the Palaeolithic era, where pregnancy and childbirth is challenging and life threatening to women. Women supported themselves during childbirth based on knowledge and skills they learned from their elders and observing other mammals. Now midwifery has come a long way since its origin. At present a midwife is a professional who is trained with competent knowledge and skilled in advance techniques to provide obstetric and gynaecological services including prenatal and postpartum care, obstetric care, routine gynaecological care, contraceptive care and newborn care.

Keywords: Nursing, Midwife, Nurse Practitioner Midwives, Nurse Practitioner Midwives educator

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I. INTRODUCTION

Nurses are the prime pillar of the health care system. With advancing technology in medical science, nursing care is also extended and expanded with advance knowledge and skill in different area of health setting. Midwifery practice is one of the most integral part of the nursing profession. Midwives assist the women from the time of conceive till the delivery of baby and after the birth as well. “According to the WHO in India , every year 35 000 women die during pregnancy, childbirth and postnatal period. There are 272 000 stillbirths, and 562 000 babies die during the first month of their life but safe and effective midwifery care can prevent 83% of all maternal deaths, stillbirths, and newborn deaths.”

II. NURSING

Nursing is a service to humankind which includes all the care to the needful person in aspects of promotion of health, prevention of diseases, early diagnosis and providing therapy and treatment in coordination with other health care provider. Nursing services has been expanded from home care nursing to nursing educator, nursing researcher, health care informatics, nurse manager, nurse administrator, nurse epidemiologist etc. In nursing education, the nurse can do specialization in different field of area such as Obstetrical and Gynaecological Nursing, Gastroenterology Nursing, Medical-surgical Nursing, Neuroscience Nursing, Genetic Nursing, Mental Health Nursing, Occupational Health Nursing, Geriatric Nursing, Holistic nursing etc. and provide quality care to the individual and family members on the basis of evidence based practice in clinical as well as community settings.

III. MIDWIFERY PRACTICE

ICM defines a Midwife as: “A person who has successfully completed a midwifery education programme that is duly recognized in the country where it is located and that is based on the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) Essential Competencies for basic midwifery practice and the framework of the ICM Global Standards for Midwifery Education; has acquired the requisite qualifications to be registered and/or legally licensed to practice midwifery and use the title ‘midwife’ and who demonstrates competency in the practice of midwifery.”

A midwife with advance degree can practice in the hospitals, community, home and clinics. They are professional who is responsible and accountable for delivering the quality care to the antenatal, intranatal and postnatal mothers. This care includes assessment of high risk cases, routine check up, providing preventative measures such as supplementation, immunization and vaccination of mother and baby, promotion of normal delivery, immediate newborn care, and observation of mother and child for any complications and accessing medical care as early as possible.

To strengthen the midwifery practice, the government of India has launched the most prime programme as follows:

- 1. The Nurse Practitioner Midwives Educator:** The course of Nurse Practitioner Midwives educator is framed in such a degree so that the educator can achieve high intellectual and skill in regard to midwifery practices.

The duration of NPM educator course is six months residency program and followed by a 12 month structured mentorship program. During the mentorship program the NPM educators would teach the NPM students as well as practice midwifery simultaneously.

- **Eligibility for the Nurse Practitioner Midwives**
 - Registered nurse and registered midwife
 - B.Sc. Nursing with Nurse Practitioners in Midwifery with 2 years of clinical experience
 - M.Sc. Nursing in Obstetrics and Gynaecology or Paediatrics or community health nursing with minimum 2 years of clinical maternity working experience.
 - Inservice candidates are also eligible and will be receiving their regular salary. Being a residency program, the other students undergoing the program will be given salary/stipend as per their counterparts in the respective organization
 - **The curriculum is developed in four course modules**
 - **MODULE 1:** Preparing midwives for relationship based and transformative midwifery care
 - **MODULE II:** Preparing midwives for care during Pregnancy, Birth & Puerperium,
 - **MODULE III :** Preparing midwives to lead, manage and supervise quality midwifery care,
 - **MODULE IV:** Preparing midwives for evidence based midwifery practices.
2. **Nurse Practitioner Midwives (NPM):** “An NPM is one who has successfully completed the 18 months' Nurse Practitioner in Midwifery training program designed by the Indian Nursing Council (INC) based on the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) essential competencies for basic midwifery practice and recognized in India by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, and who will be registered and licensed to practice midwifery in high caseload facilities across the country under the title 'Nurse Practitioner Midwife', upon demonstrating competency in the practice of midwifery.”

Scope of Nurse Practitioner Midwives educator and Nurse Practitioner Midwives are:

- Nurse Practitioner Midwives educator and Nurse Practitioner Midwives can practice independently. They also work in collaboration with doctors and other health team members in hospital settings as well in community settings.
- **Midwife Led Care Units (MLCUs):** Midwife Led Care Units (MLCUs) are the clinics led by the registered midwives and registered nurses; these units are implemented in many hospitals of India following the guidelines given by the government of India. These units are women centric and give continuous care including preconception counselling, antenatal care, intrapartum care, postnatal care. It promotes the natural birth, family planning and reduces uses of unnecessary interventions. These units are run in collaboration with doctor's advices and other health team workers in high risk cases. In complicated cases, women are referred.

- **LaQshya:** The registered nurses and Nurse Midwives practitioner are deployed at LaQshya (Labor Room and Maternity Operation Theatre Quality Improvement Initiative programme) a certified facility which is launched in year 2017 by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India. It includes all Government Medical College Hospitals, District Hospitals & equivalent health facilities, designated FRUs as well as high case load CHCs. The main aim of the program is to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity rate by providing quality care during labour and immediate postnatal period in labour room and maternity operation theatre. The registered nurses and Nurse Midwives Practitioner prepare the labour room and maternity OT with all the necessary equipments as per the checklist, assessing and monitoring the progression of labour and complications of postpartum period and provide immediate care as per the protocols.
- The ‘Midwifery services initiative’ in India aims to develop an environment for the incorporation of Nurse Practitioners Midwives and registered nurses with the public health system to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for women centered care which includes, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health services (RMNCH+A) and nurses are assigned to give quality care services to different stage of life according to the policies.

Role of Nurse Practitioner Midwives educator and Nurse Practitioner Midwives

- Nurse Practitioner Midwives educator can play a twofold role-
 - They can give training to the NPMs at State Midwifery Training Institutes.
 - They can also do clinical practice by themselves in hospital settings.
- They can provide pre conception care and counselling to improve the sexual and reproductive health.
- They provide counselling and health education to the antenatal and postnatal mother, family and the community.
- Provide counselling and encourages pregnant women for institutional deliveries.
- They provide care to antenatal mothers which includes monitoring of fetal and maternal health, detect high risk cases and provide counselling for the preparation of the delivery.
- They provide care during labour which includes monitoring of progression of labour, arrangement of all equipments for safe and secure birth and prepared for active management of third stage of labour to prevent postpartum complications.
- They conduct spontaneous deliveries, including episiotomies as needed.
- They provide immediate newborn care and assess the need for referral.
- They conduct breech deliveries in urgent cases and identify the warning signs of abnormality and complications in the mother and baby and assess the need for referral.
- They provide care during postnatal period which includes monitoring of mother and baby’s health, advices regarding breastfeeding, intake of supplements such as iron folic acid, calcium tablets and assess for any complications.
- They provide counselling regarding spacing between childbirth and family planning.
- They provide information regarding uses of different contraceptives methods and its advantages and disadvantages.

- They provide services regarding safe abortion and post abortion care to women.

Responsibilities of midwives

- Every midwife has a responsibility to maintain professional rights and ethical principles while providing care which includes respect, dignity, accountability, confidentiality and rights of the patient.
- As the new practices, techniques and protocols are develops, the midwife need to integrate it into the range of her functions to provide quality care.
- As a midwife, make the patient and family members aware regarding various scheme and its benefits available for them which has been launched by the government.
- Provide necessary supervision to subordinate midwives while conducting deliveries and take action wherever needed.
- As a midwife conduct safe deliveries independently on her own responsibility.
- To promote normal deliveries and detect complications in mother and baby and access to medical and appropriate assistance as early as possible.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, midwife is a health care professional with advance degree trained to provide wide range of services including counselling and care during antenatal period, childbirth and postpartum. The scope of midwifery practice is emerging in numerous schemes and fields for the good promotion of mother and child health which helps in reducing maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality rate.

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