

**RESEARCH ABSTRACT FORM**

**NAME:** Sasha Hernandez, MD

**RESEARCH TITLE:** Adapting Antenatal Care in a Rural LMIC during Covid-19: A Low Literacy Checklist to Mitigate Risk for Community Health Workers

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**INTRODUCTION:**

The COVID-19 pandemic is challenging health systems across the world. In LMIC, maternal healthcare is focused outside a health center through the use of community health workers and birth attendants. These essential workers are ill prepared for the highly transmissible nature of this novel virus [1]; this holds true in the rural region of Sololá, Guatemala. This is alarming given that Mayan women living in rural Guatemala have a maternal mortality rate double that of their non Mayan counterparts (163 per 100,000 compared to 78 per 100,000) [2].

**METHODS:**

Saving Mothers Guatemala has piloted an ANC low literacy protocol (Figure 1). A total of 8 traditional birth attendants skilled in ANC delivery were trained. Implementation was feasible due to an existing collaboration between the municipal branch of the MOH and Saving Mothers Guatemala, a local NGO with vast experience in training traditional birth attendants in basic ANC [3].

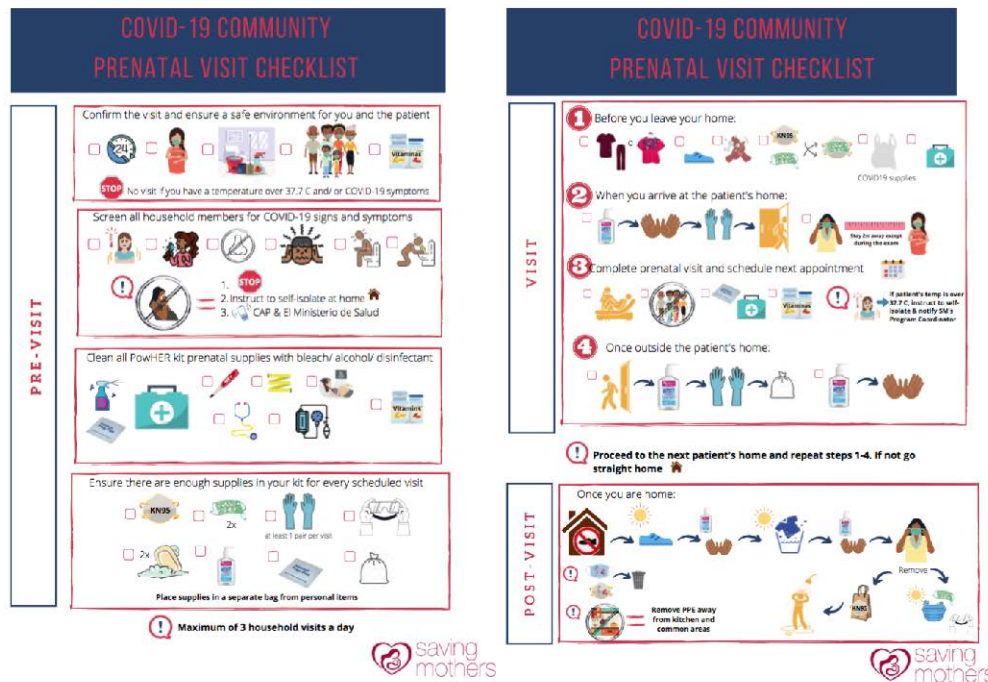
**RESULTS:**

The five session lecture and simulation based training addressed two recently recognized barriers (1) feeling safe having healthcare providers inside their home (2) false information regarding the transmission of COVID-19. The checklist emphasized four major topics to address these barriers; proper risk assessment prior to entering the home, understanding of COVID-19 transmission in pregnancy, infection control for both the healthcare worker and the pregnant woman, and proper use of PPE.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Successful training using our low literacy checklist as part of a larger COVID-19 training program is a valuable tool in improving ANC care in LMICs [4].

**FIGURE 1:**



## REFERENCES:

[1] Community-based health care, including outreach and campaigns, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2020. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.

[2] Alkema L, Chou D, Hogan D, Zhang S, Moller A, Gemmill A, et al. Global, regional, and national levels and trends in maternal mortality between 1990 and 2015, with scenario-based projections to 2030: a systematic analysis by the UN Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group. *The Lancet* (2016) 387(10017):462-74.

[3] Hernandez S, Oliveira J, Shirazian T. How a Training Program Is Transforming the Role of Traditional Birth Attendants from Cultural Practitioners to Unique Health-care Providers: A Community Case Study in Rural Guatemala. *Front Public Health* (2017) 5(11).

[4] Nelson BD, Ahn R, Fehling M, Eckardt MJ, Conn KL, El-Bashir A, et al. Evaluation of a novel training package among frontline maternal, newborn, and child health workers in South Sudan. *Int J Gynaecol Obstet* (2012) 119(2):130-5.