Adapting Antenatal Care in a Rural LMIC During COVID-19: A low literacy checklist to mitigate risk for community health workers



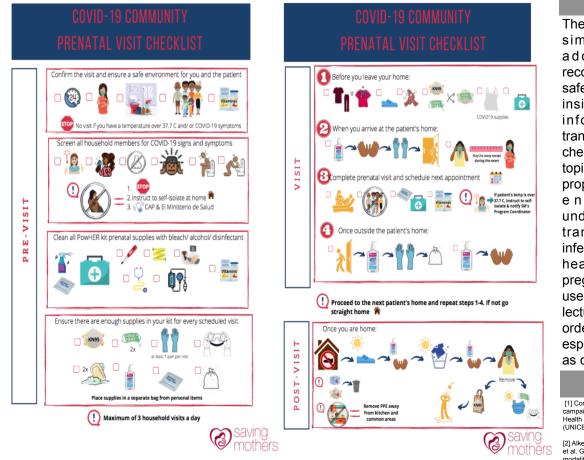
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INTRODUCTION

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].



CONCLUSION

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 [5]. In the evolving global setting of COVID-19, the low literacy checklist described here allows for ease of PPE execution and reinforcement of infection control.

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. Training was both lecture and simulation based in order to assure understanding. especially for novel topics such as donning and doffing of PPE.

REFERENCES

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