

Title: Ensuring fitness for clinical practice through designing an outcome based midwifery curriculum

Authors: Fantu Abebe¹, Amare Hiruy², Cheryl Portwood³, William Burdick⁴

What problem was addressed: Studies showed that majority of the higher education institutions in Ethiopia are not preparing qualified midwives who are capable of responding to the professional and health needs of their community. This is mainly attributed to the curricular model that has been employed in the country. Most of the midwifery education in Ethiopia currently follows a didactic curricular model where students learn through classroom lecture with little opportunity for skills practice, simulation and role play needed to develop critical thinking, values and the clinical decision making abilities needed for effective practice.

What was done: An innovative approach was introduced to mitigate the prevailing gaps in one of the undergraduate midwifery curriculum of Alkan University College, Ethiopia. We tried to reform and optimize the previous traditional curriculum into an outcome based. The model focuses on the desired competencies and performance characteristics of midwifery professionals in the country. The curriculum was reformed based on the eight core competency domains according to ICM and WHO definitions and three other core competencies essential for midwifery practice in the Ethiopian context were added.

As a pilot project, we made an amendment to one of the core competencies/modules in the entire curriculum-Labor and delivery module. Then, learning outcomes were determined and content mapping was carried out for each desired outcome within the module.

Teaching and learning strategies that support competency development within each domain of learning were selected accordingly. Evidence-based assessment strategies were also incorporated. The assessment system places its emphasis on the manner in which the learner can demonstrate translation of knowledge into practice and demonstration of critical thinking given circumstances of time and place.

Three faculty development trainings (Effective teaching skills, assessment methodology and simulation based teaching methodologies) were given for the faculty members. Coaching and mentorship support has been provided for the faculties while delivering their classroom and practical teaching.

What was learned: Early results show that the curricular reform is instrumental to increasing students' opportunity to have hands on practice and improve their skill competency. Gaining leadership buy-in and establishing a team of motivated and trained faculty helped to facilitate the curriculum amendment process. The curriculum team will continue revising the remaining modules and institutionalize the change process.

Key words: competency, midwifery, outcome based

¹

Jhpiego/Ethiopia

²

ALKAN University College, Bahir Dar campus

³

Drexel College of health science, USA

⁴

FAIMER institute, USA