

# Readiness of Health Facilities to Provide Emergency Newborn Care in 16 Districts in Ghana

Dr Claire Bailey, Department of Social Statistics and Demography, University of Southampton  
Ms Davida Pappoe, Evidence 4 Action, School of Public Health, University of Ghana

The 2011 Ghana Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) needs assessment identified inadequate access to quality care as a major contributing factor to maternal and newborn mortality<sup>1</sup>. Availability and quality of maternal and newborn care can be measured using the signal functions, representing interventions that treat the main causes of maternal mortality; however it is acknowledged that the standard set of functions does not represent the full range of Emergency Newborn Care (EmNC) procedures<sup>2</sup>.

The Quality of Institutional Care (QuIC) survey aims to provide data on facilities theoretical ability to perform the signal functions for monitoring EmONC availability in 63 facilities in the 16 focal districts of Evidence4Action Ghana. In addition to the standard basic and comprehensive signal functions QuIC also includes an additional 3 measures of EmNC<sup>3</sup>.

The results from round 1 of the survey show that a significantly lower proportion of facilities are ready to provide the additional 2 basic signal functions related to EmNC than those related to the standard basic signal functions. Overall 60% of facilities stated they were able to provide antibiotics for neonatal sepsis if required in the next hour and this declined to 47% when only BeMONC designated facilities are included. Even fewer facilities were able to deliver corticosteroids for women in preterm labour with 21% of all facilities and only 2% of BeMONC facilities able to offer this service, primarily due to lack of available drugs.

The results suggest that EmNC may be a seriously lacking component of the Basic EmONC service delivery capability in these 16 districts in Ghana.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Health [Ghana]. (2011). National Assessment for Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care. Accra: MoH.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization (WHO) (2009) Monitoring Emergency Obstetric Care. A Handbook  
<http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/monitoring/9789241547734/en/index.html>

<sup>3</sup> Gabrysch S, Civitelli G, Edmond KM, Mathai M, Ali M et al. (2012) New Signal Functions to Measure the Ability of Health Facilities to Provide Routine and Emergency Newborn Care. PLoS Med 9: e1001340. PubMed: 23152724.