



Quality, Equity, Dignity  
A Network for Improving Quality of Care  
for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health

Updates - January 2022

## New resources from Ghana's Quality of Care Learning Forum

As part of the 3rd National Patient Safety and Healthcare Quality Conference, Ghana held the national learning forum for quality of care for maternal and newborn health in September 2021. The learnings from this forum were documented and shared in a photography report. This report was jointly developed by Ministry of Health, Ghana, Ghana Health Service, WHO Ghana, UNICEF Ghana and partners. The photography report on learning can be accessed on: <https://www.qualityofcarenetwork.org/knowledge-library/ghana-photography-documentation-learning>

You can also find the Quality of Care Bulletin for Ghana (2021) at: <https://www.qualityofcarenetwork.org/knowledge-library/ghanas-quality-care-mnch-bulletin-july-2020-june-2021>

## Upcoming launch event in February 2022

### Launch of WHO's Step-by-Step Manual on Inequality Monitoring in sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health

Wednesday, 2 February 2022  
6.30pm New Delhi, 2pm Geneva, 2pm Lagos, 8am New York

[REGISTER](#) and add to your calendar

Inequities in sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health (SRMNCAH) throughout the world mean that certain population subgroups have systematically worse health outcomes and poorer access to services and interventions. Addressing inequities in SRMNCAH is an important part of WHO's mandate, and central to achieving universal health coverage, protecting human rights, combating discrimination and improving social determinants of health.

*The Inequality Monitoring in SRMNCAH: A Step-by-Step Manual* will serve as a practical, introductory-level guide to strengthen and build capacity for inequality monitoring in SRMNCAH. It will encourage and assist regions, countries, districts and other jurisdictions to regularly monitor SRMNCAH inequalities and



**LAUNCH OF WHO'S STEP-BY-STEP MANUAL ON INEQUALITY MONITORING IN SEXUAL, REPRODUCTIVE, MATERNAL, NEWBORN, CHILD AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH**  
WEDNESDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 14:00 GENEVA

REGISTER: [bit.ly/ineqsrmncah](https://bit.ly/ineqsrmncah)

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The *Inequality Monitoring in SRMNCAH: A Step-by-Step Manual* will serve as a practical, introductory-level guide to strengthen and build capacity for inequality monitoring in SRMNCAH. It will encourage and assist regions, countries, districts and other jurisdictions to regularly monitor SRMNCAH inequalities and will present the importance of the results of monitoring as an evidence base for equity-oriented national and subnational programming.

Interpretation will be available in French, English and Spanish.



will promote the integration of the results of monitoring as an evidence base for equity-oriented national and subnational programming.

*Interpretation will be available in French, English and Spanish.*

*This webinar is organized by the Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Ageing, the Department of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research, and the Department of Data and Analytics, WHO Geneva.*

## Upcoming Network webinar in February 2022

### Overcoming Blame culture in MPDSR

Tuesday, 8 February 2022  
12pm Accra, 1pm Geneva, 2pm Windhoek

[REGISTER](#) and add to your calendar

The webinar will include a presentation on how to overcome blame culture in the Maternal and Perinatal Death Surveillance and Response (MPDSR) process sharing 10 specific strategies on how to practically address this problem during MPDSR implementation. A rich panel comprised of representatives from Ghana, Namibia and Nigeria discuss the strategies in light of their experiences, challenges and successes in overcoming blame culture within MPDSR implementation.



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This webinar is hosted by the Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Ageing, WHO Geneva and the Network for Improving the Quality of Maternal, Newborn and Child Health.

**Register at:**  
[bit.ly/blameculture](https://bit.ly/blameculture)

**Introduction:** Ms. Francesca Palstra, Technical Officer, Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Ageing, WHO Geneva

**Part 1: Launching the webinar: Overcoming blame culture: key strategies to catalyse maternal and perinatal death surveillance and response**  
Ms. Mary Kenny, Health Policy and Systems Researcher, University of Western Cape, South Africa

**Part 2: Panel Discussion:** Facilitated by Dr. Abayn Moran, Unit Head, Maternal Health, Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Ageing, WHO Geneva

- Ms. Gloria Mubumba Shoko, Health Specialist, UNICEF Namibia
- Ms. Rita Inyang, Deputy Director of Nursing Services, Dabahu Health Research Centre, Ghana Health Service, Ghana

Questions & Answers

Closing remarks: Ms. Francesca Palstra, WHO Geneva

World Health Organization

*This webinar is hosted by the Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Ageing, WHO Geneva and the Network for Improving the Quality of Maternal, Newborn and Child Health.*

## New Network Publications

### Knowledge Briefs: Five functions to improve quality of care for maternal newborn and child health and Implementation of maternal and perinatal death surveillance and response as part of quality of care efforts for maternal and newborn health: Considerations for synergy and alignment

In 2021, the Network for Improving Quality of Care for Maternal Newborn and Child Health launched two knowledge briefs: **Five functions to improve quality of care for maternal newborn and child health** and **Implementation of maternal and perinatal death surveillance and response as part of quality of care efforts for maternal and newborn health: Considerations for synergy and alignment.**

The two knowledge briefs are developed to support policy-makers, managers, practitioners and implementing partners engaged in improving quality of care (QoC) for maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH). These briefs are informed by the implementation experience of the Network for Improving Quality of Care for Maternal Newborn and Child Health (The Network).

## Five functions to improve quality of care for maternal newborn and child health:

This brief presents the five functions to sustain and scale up the implementation of Quality of Care interventions from national and sub-national levels to the point of care, and ensure that actions targeting Quality of Care take place.

Access the brief on: <https://www.qualityofcarenetwork.org/knowledge-library/knowledge-brief-five-functions-improve-quality-care-maternal-newborn-and-child>

KNOWLEDGE BRIEF



### Five functions to improve quality of care for maternal newborn and child health

This knowledge brief is developed to support policy-makers, managers, practitioners and implementing partners engaged in improving quality of care (QoC) for maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH). The brief is informed by the implementation experience of the Network for Improving Quality of Care for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (The Network). The Network is helping to shape the guidance on how to implement QoC in a sustainable and scalable way, by holistically addressing and building the systems required to deliver Quality of Care (QoC) (1,2).

It is estimated that between 57 and 64 million deaths are attributed to poor quality care each year in low- and middle-income countries, which accounts for up to 10% of total deaths in these countries. The equivalent of around 100,000 deaths resulting from unsafe care, is attributable to the loss of 100,000 healthy babies in death and disability worldwide (3). Improving access to health services must go hand in hand with improving the quality and safety of these services. Poor quality and experience of care may also lead to low confidence in the formal health sector and adversely impact future health-seeking behaviour (4).

The Network countries have identified this interconnected evidence that underpins and links up the implementation of the QoC interventions (5). Their national and sub-national health systems are in the process of being supported, strengthened and aligned, through the Network's leadership, commitment and stakeholder engagement and programme management (Fig. 1). These functions ensure that actions targeting QoC take place and that QoC is improved. Governments and partners will need to invest in and support these functions if they want to deliver QoC in a sustainable way.

KNOWLEDGE BRIEF



### Implementation of maternal and perinatal death surveillance and response as part of quality of care efforts for maternal and newborn health: Considerations for synergy and alignment

This knowledge brief is developed to support policy-makers, managers, practitioners and implementing partners engaged in improving quality of care (QoC) for maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH). The brief is informed by the implementation experience of the Network for Improving Quality of Care for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (The Network). The Network is helping to shape the guidance on how to implement QoC in a sustainable and scalable way, by holistically addressing and building the systems required to deliver Quality of Care (QoC) (1,2).

Globally, an estimated 258,000 women die during and following pregnancy and childbirth each year, with nearly all deaths occurring in low- and middle-income countries (3). Around 2.4 million newborns die each year, with about one third dying on the day of birth and close to three quarters dying within the first 28 days of life. An additional 2 million are stillborn (4,5). Well-timed, evidence-based interventions exist to prevent the majority of these deaths (6); however, due to poor QoC and other factors, these interventions are often not available or accessed.

Universal health coverage (UHC) means that all people and communities can use the promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative health services they need, of sufficient quality to be effective, while also ensuring that the use of these services does not expose people to financial hardship (7). In many settings, poor QoC is a greater contributor to poor health outcomes than care coverage and it is estimated that about half of maternal deaths and 88% of newborn deaths could be averted with quality health care (8). UHC defines quality of care as the degree to which health services for individuals and populations increase the likelihood of desired health outcomes (9, 10) (1).

## Implementation of maternal and perinatal death surveillance and response as part of quality of care efforts for maternal and newborn health: Considerations for synergy and alignment

Maternal and Perinatal Death Surveillance and Response (MPDSR) is one important Quality of Care intervention that aims to improve maternal and newborn health outcomes. This brief showcases the importance of aligning, connecting and even integrating Quality of Care improvement processes and actions with MPDSR for improved maternal and newborn health outcomes.

Access the brief on: <https://www.qualityofcarenetwork.org/knowledge-library/knowledge-brief-implementation-maternal-and-perinatal-death-surveillance-and>

## Private sector delivery of maternal and newborn health care in low-income and middle-income countries: a scoping review protocol

This scoping review protocol was developed to map and conceptualize interventions that were explicitly designed and implemented by formal private health sector providers to deliver maternal and newborn health care in mixed health systems. <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/11/12/e055600.full>

## Experiences of private sector quality care amongst mothers, newborns, and children in low- and middle-income countries: a systematic review

This systematic review was recently published in BMC Health Services Research. It focuses on experiences of private-sector quality care amongst mothers, newborns, and children in low- and middle-income countries. It examined quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies on the provision of maternal, newborn, and child health (MNCH) care by private providers in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). This manuscript focuses on experience of care, including respectful care, and satisfaction with care. <https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12913-021-06905-3>

## New WHO Publications

### Quality of care for abortion-related complications: Insights from the WHO Multi-Country Survey on Abortion across 11 African countries

HRP, WHO and partners conducted a research study on abortion across 17 countries in the African, Latin American and Caribbean regions. As part of this study, a research looking at the experience and provision

of quality care for girls and women with abortion-related complications was conducted in 11 sub-Saharan African countries. Data were collected on over 23,000 women attending health facilities with abortion-related complications.

A supplement was recently launched in the International Journal of Gynecology and Obstetrics (IJGO). This supplement includes seven research articles and an editorial. The papers in the supplement give an insight into the clinical provision of care and the quality of care as experienced by women in the sub-Saharan African region.

Read more and access the supplement at: <https://www.who.int/news/item/26-01-2022-new-insights-into-quality-of-care-for-girls-and-women-facing-the-complications-of-unsafe-abortion>

### **WHO global report: Maintaining the provision and use of services for maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and older people during the COVID-19 pandemic: lessons learned from 19 countries**

Since May 2020, the World Health Organization through its headquarters, regional and country office teams have supported 19 countries to raise the profile of and commitment to maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and ageing (MNCAAH) through an initiative on mitigating the indirect impacts of COVID-19 on MNCAAH services. The goal was to ensure that during the response to COVID-19, actions would be taken to mitigate indirect effects on MNCAAH due to disruptions to service provision and use.

The World Health Organization has recently published the global report ***Maintaining the provision and use of services for maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and older people during the COVID-19 pandemic: lessons learned from 19 countries***. This report covers Phase I of the Initiative, from May 2020 to February 2021.

- Section A of the report presents a synthesis of information across the 19 countries, including lessons learned.
- Section B includes more detailed individual country information, drawn directly from country Thematic Working Group (TWG) and national consultant reports, country health information management system (HMIS) data, research publications and surveys that describe the impact of COVID-19 on MNCAAH services.

The report is available on: <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/351108>

### **Network December webinars in review**

All recordings and presentations from the Network webinars are available on the Network website at [this link](#). Our recent webinar in December 2021 are available by clicking the link:

- [The role of MPDSR in delivering quality care for MNH: Nigeria's experience and launch of WHO' Knowledge Brief on QoC and MPDSR](#)

The Network for Improving Quality of Care for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (Quality of Care Network) works to ensure that every pregnant woman and newborn receives good quality care throughout pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period, with the ambitious goal to halve maternal and newborn deaths and stillbirths in health facilities within five years in the participating countries.

The Network is led by countries that are already taking leadership to improve quality of care in health services: Bangladesh, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda. More countries are expected to join the Network. It is backed by the World Health Organization, UNICEF and UNFPA, and supported by a growing partnership of development organisations, NGOs, professional associations and universities.

It is underpinned by the values of quality, equity and dignity and contributes to achieving the targets of the *Every Woman Every Child Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health*.

[www.qualityofcarenetwork.org](http://www.qualityofcarenetwork.org)

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