

clinical characteristics and outcomes were retrospectively collected for all patients that presented to MRRH with a neurosurgical condition between January 2012 to September 2015.

Findings: During the study period, 1854 patients presented to MRRH with a neurosurgical condition. Over 50% of patients were between 19 and 40 years old and the majority of were males (76.10%). The overall median length of stay was 5 days (IQR:2.50–10.00). The majority of admissions were due to trauma (87%), with almost 60% due to road traffic incidents (RTIs). The overall mortality rate was 12.75%, with a 9.72% mortality rate for patients who underwent a neurosurgical procedure, and 13.68% mortality rate for patients who did not undergo a neurosurgical procedure. A multivariable logistic regression model revealed that age, ICU admission and admission GCS have a strong positive correlation with mortality while getting a diagnostic image and surgical treatment were negatively correlated with mortality.

Interpretation: Neurosurgical conditions, especially traumatic brain injury, represent a huge disease burden in Uganda, yet neurosurgical capacity is lacking. Currently, the ratio of neurosurgeons in Uganda is 0.02 per 100,000 people. Establishing training programs in order to expand the surgical workforce, improve surgical capacity, and ultimately improve outcomes is a necessary step to meet the demand for neurosurgery given the current burden of disease. In addition, targeted injury prevention programs are needed to reduce the overall burden of neurosurgical trauma.

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Emergently Accessing a Higher Level of Care: Referral System Strengthening Efforts to Improve Maternal and Child Health in Cambodia

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Program/Project Purpose: Despite advances in BEmONC and CEmONC services in Cambodia, referral of women and children suffering from emergencies is often significantly delayed due to systemic barriers. These shortfalls disproportionately impact poor and rural patients.

In 2014, Stanford Emergency Medicine International partnered with University Research Co. in the 5-year, USAID funded Quality Health Services Project to improve maternal and child health outcomes in nine Cambodian provinces.

Working closely with the Ministry of Health (MOH), gaps in the current referral system were identified and capacity building interventions were crafted to address them. Implementation and follow up was also done in conjunction with government partners to maximize uptake and long term sustainability.

Structure/Method/Design: Recognition of sick patients: A simple, Cambodia specific triage system was effected at referral hospitals to help providers rapidly identify and prioritize sick

patients. Emergency care and referral guidelines were also distributed to hospital providers to assist them in recognizing critical patients and administering evidence based treatments.

Enhanced communication: A standardized, MOH approved, referral slip was implemented to communicate clinical data between treating providers at each level of care. Provincial referral hotlines were established at all referral hospitals, streamlining the referral process and facilitating real time communication between providers at referring health centers or hospitals and higher level receiving hospitals. An ambulance Patient Care Report form was also created to relay ambulance care information.

Education, quality improvement and feedback: Utilizing a quality improvement approach, quarterly education and feedback forums were established, assembling providers from each level of the referral system to analyze referral data, discuss difficult cases, provide feedback and address systems challenges. Prehospital care training was also given to previously untrained ambulance providers to enhance their transports care skills.

Outcome & Evaluation: Impact metrics related to these efforts are 1) the number of complicated deliveries referred to a higher level of care and 2) the number of newborn complications referred to a higher level of care.

Going Forward: Gains are being made, however progress has been gradual. Incorporating proposed changes into institutional culture has been a challenge. Thus, project partners are restructuring reinforcement strategies to better align with provider values and facility goals.

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Social Media and disease surveillance in Nigeria – the Role of WhatsApp

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Program/Project Purpose: Disease surveillance requires multiple avenues for data collection, information dissemination and connecting people to experts (Forster, 2012). Nigeria currently maintains a paper based surveillance system with vertically transmitted facility-based reports (FMOH, 2005). There are limited ways for the public to learn about trending disease outbreaks and the information is not readily available. University of Maryland Baltimore, Nigerian program implemented a CDC funded Strengthening Emergency Response Systems (SERS) project aimed at strengthening existing reporting surveillance systems. To address inefficiencies in the system we introduced the concept of a Connect Center that integrated people, information technology and social media to improve access to critical disease surveillance information.

Structure/Method/Design: We engaged and trained 8 customer care agents to respond and provide feedback to the public on incidences or emergencies. In the event of a disease outbreak. They received weekly education on notifiable and non-communicable