

AWARENESS AND PRACTICE OF POST ABORTION CARE SERVICES AMONG HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS IN SOUTHEASTERN NIGERIA

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Abstract. This study investigates knowledge and practices of post abortion care (PAC) services among health care professionals in the Anambra State of south-eastern Nigeria. This was a prospective, cross-sectional, questionnaire based study conducted between 1 June and 30 September, 2006. The study involved a multi-staged sampling of all registered health facilities in Anambra State, with the selection of 60 health facilities from which 450 participants were recruited. A pre-tested, structured questionnaire was employed to obtain information from the studied respondents. Obtained data were analyzed using Epi-Info version 2001. A total of 437 questionnaires out of 450 administered were accurately completed, giving a response rate of 97.1%. The respondents were comprised of general practitioners (214, 49.0%), nurses (161, 36.8%), specialist doctors (56, 12.8%), and resident doctors (5, 1.1%). The mean age of the respondents was 38.2±10.5 years. Most participants (203, 52.6%) were males; the majority (282, 64.5%) were working in the rural areas of the State, including mission hospitals (165, 37.8%) and general hospitals (145, 33.3%). Three hundred thirty respondents (75.5%) were aware of PAC services. Twenty-seven (6.2%) and 28 (6.4%) of respondents were aware of community partnership and family planning services, respectively, as elements of PAC. Although the majority of respondents (302, 69.1%) treated abortion complications, only 155 (35.5%) used a manual vacuum aspirator. Three hundred thirty-eight (88.8%) offered counseling services, and 248 (56.8%) provided referrals to other reproductive health services.

Key words: post abortion care services, awareness, practices, healthcare professionals, Nigeria

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