Near-miss Obstetric Events in a Tertiary Care Teaching Hospital in Nepal: An Audit

Gurung BS¹, Koju RB², Dongol Y³
¹Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, KIST Medical College, Lalitpur, Nepal, ²Department of Anaesthesia and Critical Care, KIST Medical College, Lalitpur, Nepal, ³Department of Biochemistry, KIST Medical College, Lalitpur, Nepal

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INTRODUCTION
Maternal near-miss case is defined as “a woman who nearly died but survived a complication that occurred during pregnancy, childbirth, or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy”.¹ Until few years ago, there were no set criteria for identification of these cases for routine implementation, and application of this concept was limited.² But in 2009, WHO has come up with hypertension and sepsis. Major organ-system disorders observed were coagulation disorder, cardiovascular, respiratory and uterine disorders. Almost all the cases were managed in ICU and majority of them required blood transfusion.

Keywords: maternal mortality; obstetric haemorrhage; obstetric near miss.

METHODS
This hospital based prospective descriptive study was done from August 2011 to February 2015. Case eligibility was defined by WHO Near-Miss Guideline.¹ A questionnaire was designed to collect the information of the cases. In-patient medical records of the patients verified with the treating physicians were used as the primary source of information. However, in order to complete the information gaps in the patient’s files as well as to facilitate the institutional

that, if addressed, would improve the quality of services offered.³ A clinical audit also identifies the determinants of near misses and contributes to improving the management of a mother’s severe life-threatening complications.⁴-⁶

In this medical audit, we analyze and present the various determinants and complications associated with the near-miss events encountered at KIST Medical College Teaching Hospital.

CORRESPONDENCE
Dr Bandana Sharma Gurung
Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology
KIST Medical College, Lalitpur, Nepal
Email: drbandanamd@gmail.com
Phone: +977-9841341744
audit in near-miss cases, an interview was conducted with the patient and accompanying family members, health workers from referral centre relevant person involved in her care.

Near-miss cases were identified by trained nurses or attending gynaecologist according to the WHO 2009 criteria and approved by the principal investigator or the second gynaecologist and the intensive care specialist.

Data generated and analyzed primarily included age and gestation weeks, parity, mode of intervention, associated organ dysfunction, reasons for near miss and critical intervention accompanied to manage the near-miss cases. Results were presented in mean ± SD and percentages, wherever applicable.

RESULTS
There were 4617 deliveries with 28 near-miss cases (i.e., 6.06 per 1000 births).

| Table 1. Age and Gestation Week of Near-miss Cases (n = 28). |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Age             | Mean ± SD:      | Range:          |                |
|                 | 24.29 ± 5.36 years | 17-36 years     |                |
| Gestation Week  |                 | Range:          |                |
| Live Birth      | Mean ± SD:      | Range:          |                |
| (n = 25)        | 37.68 ± 1.44 weeks | 35-40 weeks    |                |
| Abortion (n=1)  | 16 weeks        |                 |                |
| Still Birth (n=1) | 36 Weeks       |                 |                |
| Ectopic Pregnancy (n=1) | 6 weeks |     |                |

Table 1 depicts the age and gestation week distribution of the near-miss cases along with the frequency of live birth, abortion, still birth and ectopic pregnancy. Figure 1 illustrates that 46.43% of near-miss cases were multigravida whereas 53.57% cases were primigravida. Similarly, table 2 enlists the identified reasons for near-miss cases – obstetric haemorrhage comprising the maximum cases (50%) followed by hypertension (32.14%).

Likewise, figure 2 demonstrates the percentage of associated organ dysfunction encountered in near-miss events.

DISCUSSION
We observed a near-miss event rate of 6.06 per 1000 birth compared to 3.8 per 1000 births in a national multicentre surveillance led by Rana et al and between 3.8 – 12 per 1000 births in high income countries. Our study shows that obstetric haemorrhage was the most common cause of obstetric near-miss event being the commonest followed by hypertensive disorders.
during pregnancy. Similar results were observed in a study done at Kathmandu Medical College Teaching Hospital (KMCTH) where haemorrhage (41.66%) was the commonest cause for obstetric near-miss event followed by hypertensive disorder of pregnancy (27.77%). Likewise, in 2012, a big multicentric study done in Nepal by Rana et al also highlighted PPH (40%) as the commonest cause for maternal near-miss event followed by hypertensive disorders of pregnancy (17%).

Similarly, the study also depicts that major organ-system dysfunction associated with obstetric near-miss event includes coagulation, cardiovascular, respiratory and uterine atony with almost all patients requiring ICU management and three fourth of cases demanding blood transfusion. Complications observed in near-miss cases were as per the expectation and included PPH, pre-eclampsia and sepsis in common.

Obstetric deaths represent the quality of maternal care. But for the present scenario it may not reflect the global situation with regard to obstetric care. Hence, new "near miss" criteria take over maternal mortality ratio. Although near-miss criteria were in vogue for some years, lack of uniformity was the hindrance. WHO criteria, 2009 are unique in considering not only clinical but also laboratory and management-based criteria. Hence, it incorporates both Mantel’s and Waterston’s criteria. So, if one of the criteria fails to pick the case, the other makes it up, thus minimizing the chance of missing the case.

**CONCLUSIONS**

This study highlights obstetric haemorrhage as the most common serious obstetric complication leading to near-miss event followed by hypertension during pregnancy. Almost all the patients were managed in ICU and majority of them required blood transfusion. There were various other reasons noted for near-miss events with lesser frequencies and several different complications observed which were managed accordingly. Therefore, reduction of maternal mortality may best be achieved by developing evidence-based protocols and improving the resources for managing severe morbidities.

**DISCLOSURE**

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**REFERENCES**