

Quick Facts

More than two out of five maternal deaths occur within 24 hours of delivery due to hemorrhage or sepsis¹



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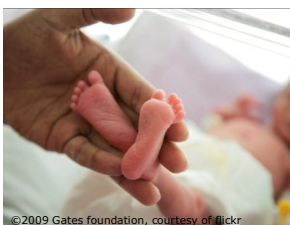
A woman dies from complications in childbirth every two minutes. And for every woman who dies, 20 or more experience serious complications²



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Of 54,507 health care facilities recently surveyed by the World Health Organization in 40 countries, only 46 percent had access to safe drinking water³

More than 10,000 newborn babies die every day; almost four million deaths each year⁴



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Soap Matters

Issue six
June 2014

... Saving a million lives with clean safe care at birth

Welcome to Soap Matters, Soapbox's quarterly newsletter.

We're delighted to bring you up to date with our latest news and share some of our highlights from the last three months.

In April we welcomed two international health professionals from Nigeria and The Gambia who spent a month with Soapbox to take part in a quality improvement programme made possible with funds from the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship Scheme and top up funds from Soapbox.

Lessons Shared and Lessons Learned

NHS Grampian, The Soapbox Collaborative and Impact, University of Aberdeen recently welcomed two health professionals from The Gambia and Nigeria. They joined us to take part in a quality improvement programme that is part of the Commonwealth Professional Fellowship Scheme.

Dr Jibril Abdullahi Randawa is an Honorary Consultant/Senior Lecturer and Head of Department, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital in Nigeria. Mr Kebba Manneh is Chief Executive of the Jammeh Foundation Hospital, in the Gambia. Both took time out of their busy schedule to participate in a four week programme. This involved a series of workshops, coaching sessions and clinical visits to Peterhead Community Maternity Unit, Aberdeen Maternity Hospital and Aberdeen Health Village to learn more about the practical implementation of quality improvement for maternity care in



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Scotland and to share lessons and experiences.

The purpose of the Fellowship scheme is to support and strengthen leadership, management and technical oversight of mid-career professionals from developing commonwealth countries. Dr Randawa and Mr Manneh concluded their visit by speaking at a seminar organised by the three hosts; NHS Grampian, The Soapbox Collaborative and Impact, University of Aberdeen. They were joined by Professor Will Stones from the University of St Andrews and Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Blantyre, Malawi. Also joining the discussion were Dr Roelf Dijkhausen, NHS

Improving Newborn and Maternal Health in Zanzibar

Towards the end of 2013 we reported on the partnership formed between Soapbox, WaterAID, the Zanzibar Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOHSW) and the Pemba Public Health Laboratory (PPHL) in Zanzibar. The aim of the partnership was to assess the quality of healthcare services and the state of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and infection prevention and control (IPC) in maternity units in Zanzibar. Soapbox's role was to provide coordination and technical assistance throughout the assessment; the results of which are expected to assist planners in designing appropriate WASH services and IPC to reduce maternal and newborn infection related health risks in health facility maternity units.

Soapboxers Giorgia Gon and Dr Susannah

A few weeks ago at the end of May we welcomed two new team members, Joy Gillespie and Lorna Bell.

Taking full advantage of an expanding team and a growing number of exciting new partnerships we've been able to make excellent progress this quarter with our projects in Zanzibar, the Gambia and Bangladesh.



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Grampian Medical Director and Dr Debbi Marais, Senior Teaching Fellow and Director of Postgraduate Programmes, University of Aberdeen. Professor Wendy Graham of Impact and The Soapbox Collaborative chaired the seminar. The seminar prompted some interesting discussion giving fascinating insights into the many challenges faced by health care providers in maternity units in Nigeria and The Gambia.

Reflecting back on their four-week fellowship programme, the visitors spoke of their aspirations for quality improvement in their own institutions and about their determination to implement their plans for quality improvement. They were impressed with the emphasis placed on patient centred care in NHS Grampian and said a clean labour ward not only leads to patient satisfaction but also helps to prevent infections. They were also impressed at how well infection prevention procedures such as hand washing are strictly adhered to in NHS Grampian.

Woodd recently returned from a trip to Zanzibar, the purpose of which was to meet with stakeholders, pilot data collection tools adapted from the WASH & CLEAN project, train enumerators and supervisors and prepare for data collection roll out.

Overall the trip was a great success. Feedback received from stakeholders was invaluable to the streamlining of the data collection tools and further development of the project. Following the piloting of the tools, data collectors and facilities are now poised for the data collection roll out which will see several facilities undergo an in-depth needs assessment, collecting both qualitative and quantitative data on the state of WASH and IPC, while the adapted WASH & CLEAN Facility Questionnaire will be applied to the remaining facilities.

In the longer term, the results of the

partnership between Soapbox, WaterAID, MOHSW and the PPHL will help inform the design of a phased improvement plan to provide appropriate WASH, IPC and the quality of care in maternity units. The partnership is envisaged to contribute towards the wider improvement of quality of care and infection control systems which may also include the enhancement of health facility monitoring systems and the adoption of service guidelines.



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Gambia Maternity Cleanliness Challenge Initiative: Update Meeting and Workshop

The "Maternity Cleanliness Champions Initiative" (MCCI) is the outcome of discussions between the Soapbox Collaborative, the Horizons Trust, a Gambia based charity, and the Gambian Ministry of Health (MOH). The three organisations agreed at a meeting in February 2013 to work together to create the MCCI programme to help reduce health-care associated infections in childbirth and related maternal and newborn deaths in Gambia. The Gambia is the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to embrace the programme as a focused set of activities to infection prevention control (IPC) on maternity units.

Following the success of the first Maternity Cleanliness Champions Initiative (MCCI) workshop in June last year, Soapbox Strategic Director Professor Wendy Graham, in partnership with the Horizons Trust Gambia and the Ministry of Health, recently hosted the second MCCI workshop and update meeting.

The meeting, held in March, allowed representatives from the participating six Western Region healthcare facilities to share their experiences and challenges in providing clean care at birth and discuss some of proposed next steps for the MCCI.

Progress Made Since June 2013

The first MCCI workshop helped identify and target many existing challenges across the six health centres with regard to infection prevention and control (IPC). Common challenges included lack of knowledge around IPC, resource shortages and poor cleaning and maintenance of delivery beds.

Since mid-2013 several of the participating facilities were able to revise and strengthen their existing hygiene policies and increase the availability of essential equipment. Cleaning of delivery beds across all facilities improved while three facilities were also able to either replace or repair a number of their delivery beds.

Several participants reported an improvement in overall cleaning of labour wards and increased hand hygiene, training in IPC was also reported by two facilities.

Remaining challenges reported by facilities included poor staff attitudes and behaviour related to IPC practice, a still inadequate number of delivery beds, and poor ongoing supply of gloves, cleaning products and delivery instruments.

MCCI Next Steps

As the workshop came to a close the next steps for the MCCI were discussed with a focus on the initiative's fourth objective – to identify effective and affordable interventions to sustain impact on healthcare associated infections. Discussions centered around the provision of clean birth kits for facility delivery to address shortfalls in supplies and to support best practices.

Both the Gambian Director of Health Services and Trustee of the Horizons Trust Gambia, Dr Melville George, were on hand to address the workshop participants. They emphasised the need to work together towards finally making puerperal sepsis a thing of the past, encouraging all the participants to rise to this challenge and become leaders in infection prevention and control.



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International Day of the Midwives- 'Celebrating Women'



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Midwives from across Scotland and even as far away as Malawi, came together at Robert Gordon University (RGU) recently at a conference to celebrate the International Day of the Midwife.

The student-led "Celebrating Women" conference was held at RGU's Faculty of Health and Social Care and brought together a number of inspiring speakers from academia, the NHS and from overseas.

Professor Wendy Graham, co-founder and Strategic Director of Soapbox, was among the line up of speakers, which included a number of student midwives from RGU. The presentation themes focused on women's global health, quality of maternity care and experiences of midwifery around the world.

The title of Wendy's address to the conference was 'Midwives and Mothers: shared priorities for quality care' the student midwife organisers were so inspired by the work Soapbox is doing in developing countries they donated a very generous gift of £200 from the funds they raised during the conference through a raffle and home baking sale. The Soapbox team wishes to say a big thank you to all of them.

The Newest Members of Soapbox

We'd like to extend a very warm welcome to Joy Gillespie and Lorna Bell who joined the Soapbox team in May.



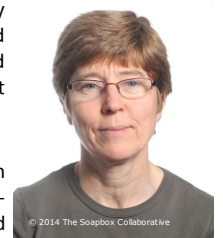
Joy has joined as Operations Manager and will be responsible for the day to day operation of the Soapbox Collaborative and will also contribute to its future direction. Lorna has joined as Country Liaison Officer; her role will be to co-ordinate Soapbox's projects in partner countries making sure each project fulfils its objectives. She will also be the main focal point for in-country partners.

Joy has many years' experience of management in the third sector both here in the UK and internationally. She is passionate about the development of sustainable health improvements for women and the wider society in developing countries.

Lorna's former professional career was at the University of Aberdeen's Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology where she was a Clinical Embryologist and Laboratory Manager in the Assisted Reproduction Unit at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital.

Lorna has been involved in a voluntary capacity with various charities providing aid and support in developing countries including two local charities Books Abroad and Famine Relief for Orphans in Malawi.

She is looking forward to developing her role and getting to know about the different aspects of the individual projects and ensuring their implementation.



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