Obstructed labour resulting in ruptured uterus is the second most common cause of death related to pregnancy in Ethiopia.

Methods
Medical records were reviewed retrospectively to determine the incidence and circumstances associated with uterine rupture for a study period of 18 months from August 2011 to January 2013.

Results
A total of 92 cases were identified. However, only 47 notes were retrievable. The mean age was 27 and the mean parity P3. Only 23% of patients received antenatal care. 64% of patients self referred after labouring at home unattended. The average length of labour prior to arrival was 20 hours and the average distance travelled was over 40 kilometres. 80% of patients arrived in the second stage of labour. All neonates were stillborn. 74% of patients underwent a hysterectomy. The uterus was reparable in 26% of cases accompanied often with bilateral tubal ligation. Average blood loss was 1500mls and 22% of patients received a blood transfusion. 6% of mothers died post operatively and a further 15% suffered significant post-operative complications.

Discussion
The frequency of ruptured uterus was 5%, giving an incidence of 1 in 19 deliveries. It is urgent that a regional and national effort is made to reduce this unacceptable high incidence. Providing community based health education, devising efficient referral systems and increasing comprehensive emergency care by trained and skilled professionals is essential to reduce this completely avoidable obstetric catastrophe.