EFFECT OF KNOWLEDGE AND AVAILABILITY OF WORKING TOOLS ON THE MANAGEMENT OF SEVERE PRE-ECLAMPSIA/ECLAMPSIA AMONG HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IN KANO, NORTHERN NIGERIA.

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Introduction: Severe Pre-eclampsia /Eclampsia (SPE/E) are leading causes of maternal mortality in Northern Nigeria. Availability of equipment and competence of health care providers are important for the management of SPE/E.

Methods: A cross sectional study was conducted among health workers of 31 hospitals in Kano, Northern Nigeria. The data was analyzed to test the association between correct knowledge on SPE/E management, availability of working tools and the respondents’ professional and work-related characteristics.

Results: A total of 183 health care providers responded. Of these, 65% were nurses/midwives, 10% were physicians while 25% were low cadre health workers (Community health extension workers, Community health officers and others). Only about 8% worked in units where Sphygmomanometer, stethoscope and magnesium sulphate (MgSO₄) were available and routinely used. While less than 40% had correct knowledge of “blood pressure levels considered hypertension in pregnancy”; “use of dipstick in ANC”; and “symptoms that may be experienced by a pre-eclampsia patient”, only about 6% demonstrated correct knowledge of pre-eclampsia management. Further analysis showed that those working in two or more units (OR= 6.5; 95%CI=1.7-25.6) and those working in units where Sphygmomanometer, stethoscope and MgSO₄ were available and routinely used (OR= 16.3; 95%CI=4.0-65.7) were more likely to have correct knowledge of pre-eclampsia management.

Conclusion: Improving the competence of health care providers and provision of essential kits for the detection, management and monitoring of SPE/E are keys factors in the efforts aimed at reducing the contribution of SPE/E to maternal mortality.