HOW FREQUENTLY SHOULD MATERNITY CARE PROVIDERS RECEIVE EMERGENCY OBSTETRIC CARE TRAINING IN SUB-SAHARA AFRICA-THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS RETENTION STUDY

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Background
Improving the quality of skilled birth attendants (SBA) and the availability of Emergency Obstetric Care (EmOC) are key strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals 4 & 5. Maternity care providers (MCP) need regular practice and updates to remain competent.

Objective
To assess the level of knowledge and skills retention by MCPs after training in EmOC.

Method
A pilot for a larger operation research (OR) study-the Knowledge and Skills Retention Study (KSRS), under the Making it Happen programme (MiH) being implemented in 11 countries (2012-2015), was carried out in Sierra Leone between September 2012 and February 2013. The knowledge/skills of 29 MCP were assessed before, immediately after training and at 6 months post-training, using randomly generated, validated multiple choice questions, scenario based tests and skills assessments using mannequins. The mean difference in scores was determined by paired T tests using a p-value of 0.05.

Results
Compared to the baseline pre training levels, there was a statistically significant increase in knowledge: n=25 (86.88 vs 116.48 p<0.001) and skills: n=29 (14.34 vs 34 p<0.001) immediately after the training that was sustained at 6 months post training for Skills: n=29 (34 vs 57.38 p<0.001) but not knowledge: n=29 (113.24 vs 112.55 p<0.875).

Conclusion
This pilot study showed that MCP improved their knowledge and skills after the training and this was sustained at 6 months post training.
A larger study involving 630 MCPs from 6 MiH SSA countries is ongoing under the MiH programme, KSR will be determined at 3, 6, 9 and 12 months post training. The association between KSR and health care facility caseload, type of maternity care provider and additional training/updates will be determined.
Findings from this OR can improve planning for regular EmOC updates for SBAs in resource poor countries.