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RESEARCH TITLE: Adapting Antenatal Care in a Rural LMIC during Covid-19: A Low Literacy Checklist to Mitigate Risk for Community Health Workers

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INTRODUCTION:

The COVID-19 pandemic is challenging health systems across the world. In LMIC, maternal healthcare is focused outside a health center through the use of community health workers and birth attendants. These essential workers are ill prepared for the highly transmissible nature of this novel virus [1]; this holds true in the rural region of Sololá, Guatemala. This is alarming given that Mayan women living in rural Guatemala have a maternal mortality rate double that of their non Mayan counterparts (163 per 100,000 compared to 78 per 100,000) [2].

METHODS:

Saving Mothers Guatemala has piloted an ANC low literacy protocol (Figure 1). A total of 8 traditional birth attendants skilled in ANC delivery were trained. Implementation was feasible due to an existing collaboration between the municipal branch of the MOH and Saving Mothers Guatemala, a local NGO with vast experience in training traditional birth attendants in basic ANC [3].
RESULTS:
The five session lecture and simulation based training addressed two recently recognized barriers (1) feeling safe having healthcare providers inside their home (2) false information regarding the transmission of COVID-19. The checklist emphasized four major topics to address these barriers; proper risk assessment prior to entering the home, understanding of COVID-19 transmission in pregnancy, infection control for both the healthcare worker and the pregnant woman, and proper use of PPE.

CONCLUSIONS:
Successful training using our low literacy checklist as part of a larger COVID-19 training program is a valuable tool in improving ANC care in LMICs [4].

FIGURE 1:
REFERENCES:


