

Dialog with USAID: Fistula Research Priorities

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Objective

- Review potential areas for obstetrical fistula investigation
- Create possible rank list of feasible and high impact studies that could be accomplished in reasonable time frame

Background

- Lack of data about many social, demographic and clinical factors
- Most studies have collected data *retrospectively*, so results are limited to information available in the records being reviewed
 - Collection of consistent information from multiple sites/countries has not been conducted
 - Additional indicators that could provide a more nuanced description of fistula clients are needed

Needed Studies

- Studies looking at the association of current clinical practices at the study sites with the outcome of repair surgery
- *Prospective* data collection at fistula care sites
- Studies that help answer pressing clinical epidemiological and Operations Research questions, and that inform future interventions and further research in fistula treatment and prevention

Identification of Optimal Clinical Management Regimens

- **For simple and moderate complexity fistulas**
 - **Criteria to identify and grade complexity (in absence of a standard classification system)/optimal pre-op evaluation**
- **Prophylactic antibiotics**
 - **What is the optimal regimen for antibiotics before/during/after surgical therapy**
- **Place of Catheterization in management**
 - **RCT of duration, open vs closed drainage, women ambulatory vs in bed**
 - **Optimizing cost-effectiveness of care, e.g. in duration of hospitalization for post-op care**

Management Regimens for Complicated Fistulas

- **Stress incontinence post fistula repair**
 - incidence
 - prediction pre-op
 - management (pre-emptive and post-op)
- **Repeat fistula**
 - Causative associations e.g. cultural factors, repeat lack of access to EmOC, lack of counseling, FP, iatrogenic fistulas
 - Repair algorithms used, how to avoid complications
- **Irreparable fistulas**
 - Incidence, and non-repair management

Identification of the Best of Emerging Technologies

- **Urethral plugs for stress incontinence**
 - **Fistula plugs for small VVF and RVF**
 - **Other emerging technologies**
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Epidemiology

- Details of the circumstances surrounding development of fistula
 - Including iatrogenic; and preventive interventions needed
 - Availability of and access to obstetric services

Traumatic Fistula

- Severe trauma
 - Case studies of what surgeons are seeing in the field
 - Description of range of cases seen,
 - Approaches, principles and techniques for repair and outcomes-different than obstetrical fistulas?

Short Term Intervention

- Timing of surgical repair
- Role of early catheterization in fistula management
 - as prevention
 - as treatment
- Elective c section post repair
 - necessity and best program models
 - (E.g. voucher system for c section)

Discussion

- What are the potential areas for additional investigation?
 - *WHO creation of classification system
 - *Surgical approaches
 - *Creation of evidenced-based data

Discussion

➤ What are the potential areas for investigation?

*Optimal clinical regimens

Diagnosis

Antibiotics

Catheterization

*Best models of early intervention

Timing

Catheterization

Discussion

- What is a possible rank list of feasible and high impact studies that could be accomplished in reasonable time frame?

Most important

Time frame

Discussion

- How can further discussions occur?

Thank you!

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