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Midwives' competencies in caring for high risk women: An exploration of midwives' care to women from Black Minority Ethnic Groups on delivery suite high dependency units

The Black Minority Ethnic (BME) population has increased significantly over the course of the last three decades. They have more prevalent pre-existing medical conditions and have worse health outcomes. With the increase in births from this group, it is inevitable that midwives' are increasingly caring for these women in High Dependency Units (HDU) on delivery suites and engage in a meaningful way with midwives' in understanding their experiences of HDU care on delivery suite. Little is known about midwives' competencies and experiences in caring for this group. Hence, we need to identify barriers that affect high dependency provision to BME patients. A mixed study using surveys to London based Trusts. Knowledge from this work will contribute to guidance on standardization of this area and identify areas of improvement. It will also reduce the fragmented care provision and encourage responsiveness to individual, family and cultural needs. Encourage services is to be organized more seamlessly to ensure ethnic minorities receive appropriate individualised maternity care.

Biography

Sarah Chitongo is a Nurse and Midwife with 16 years of experience in all areas of Midwifery. She is also an experienced Senior Manager who left the National Health Service (NHS) as a Deputy Head of Midwifery. She has set up a High Dependency Unit (HDU) on a delivery suite. The aim of the HDU was to offer women and their families a consistently high level of individual, medical, and psychological care, delivered by staff who understood the physiology, pathology, psychological and cultural needs of BME obstetric groups and the wider community. There was initial anxiety on the part of midwives around the mechanization of care, but competence and confidence was developed through an informal structure that she developed. She is an ambitious manager who has built a reputation developing and motivating staff. The management style focuses on three main things; innovation, quality and staff. She has excellent leadership, communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to inspire confidence and build strong stakeholder relationships to ensure that the curriculum is at the forefront of knowledge and reflects the latest research insights and materials. Further roles within current position include generating and presenting annual management review reports as well as providing consultancy for academics within the department in relation to midwifery education.

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