

22nd Edition of International Conference on **Neonatology and Perinatology**
&
3rd International Conference on **Pediatrics and Pediatric Surgery**

May 07-08, 2018 Frankfurt, Germany

Does the use of maternity waiting homes increase skilled birth attendance, decrease maternal and newborn mortality, and lead to sustainable development goals in Ethiopia?

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Introduction: Improving maternal and child health is foundation for every nation, community and family. Millennium development goals had applied various strategies to close the gaps in maternal and child health morbidity and mortality from global to local levels. Among the strategies maternity waiting home is an important tool for those in need of access and hard to skilled birth attendance.

Aim: The aim of this review is to narrate existing, summarized outcome and impact of maternity waiting homes in Ethiopia.

Methodology: For accessing literature four databases were searched: ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, Open Access Journals Search Engine and PubMed. Both published studies and other library sources were explored to get unpublished work about the topic. Boolean connectors were used to connect the key words. Exclusion and inclusion criteria were established.

Results: From all databases five studies were identified, screened, and included. All were facility based studies. Three were cross sectional, one prospective and another retrospective cohort in their design of study. Two cohort studies claimed that there is difference in outcome of newborns and mothers following maternity waiting homes utilization. Cohort studies revealed that mothers who utilized maternity waiting homes have less likely to have negative health consequences both of themselves and their newborns.

Conclusion: Findings from these studies declared that there has been significant difference in maternal and perinatal mortality among maternity waiting homes utilizers and non-utilizers with their differences and limitations. But no trial either community or facility based was conducted. Consequently, it is vital to conduct community based randomized trials to examine the effect of maternity waiting homes in improvement of perinatal and maternal health to achieve both goals and targets of sustainable development goals.

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