

Challenges mothers face when their newborns are admitted to a neonatal unit of a teaching hospital in Rwanda.

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Key Message: Mothers and families of babies admitted to neonatal units often face financial and logistical challenges that need addressing for the benefit of family welfare and neonatal survival.

Background and Objective :

Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Butare (CHUB) admitted 654 neonates in 2022, ¼ from District Hospitals
Length of stay = one day to several months.
Cared for by the mother in the Kangaroo Mother Care ward, when stable.

Objective :

Improve neonatal outcomes and parents’ satisfaction through gaining a better understanding of the challenges mothers face when their newborns are admitted to hospital.

Methods :

In-depth interviews with 20 mothers who had their newborns admitted to CHUB in February 2023.
Open ended questions (n=4) including on finance
Analysis was conducted using a thematic inductive approach¹.



Conclusions :

Women with hospitalised newborns are challenged by the unplanned event and the distance from family support. They struggle to find suitable accommodation and food for themselves and their caretakers while needing to provide breastmilk and find funds to purchase medicines

Recommendations :

- To provide shelter, daily meals and access to toilet for mothers and caretakers of hospitalised newborns.
- Provide free medication for the newborns if families are unable to afford.

References : ¹ Bingham, A.J., & Witkowsky, P. (2022). Deductive and inductive approaches to qualitative data analysis. In C. Vanover, P. Mihás, & J. Saldaña (Eds.), *Analyzing and interpreting qualitative data: After the interview* (pp. 133-146). SAGE Publications.

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