

Abstract

Introduction: Postpartum haemorrhage (PPH) is one of the direct causes of maternal death. Managing PPH requires a multidisciplinary approach with early recognition and initiation of the massive obstetric haemorrhage (MOH) protocol.

Objective: Understanding the barriers in managing PPH from a multidisciplinary perspective has the potential to improve patient care through targeted learning and simplification of the involved processes.

Methods: We conducted a short PPH survey using googleforms. Midwives, obstetricians, and anaesthetists were invited to participate. The survey was set up to capture the knowledge of the threshold for MOH activation and to collect areas of potential improvement.

Results: The survey captured 33 responses from the midwifery (18%), obstetric (61%), and anaesthetic team (19%). Participants were asked to identify the lowest threshold for MOH protocol activation. The vast majority (67%) selected a threshold >1000mls as per local policy, while others (24%) selected 1500mls and (9%) 500mls as their response. Several barriers to the activation of MOH were identified. This included reluctance to escalate, late recognition of PPH, underestimation of blood loss, hierarchical issues, limited understanding of MOH protocols, feeling like a failure, and delayed recognition of slow ongoing MOH. The majority (79%) felt that PPH is managed well while 21% were divided between 'no' and 'may be'. Several suggestions were made to improve staff engagement and response to PPH. These included training in measuring blood loss, debriefing, flattening hierarchy, building teams through PPH simulations, a cultural shift towards why we "don't" want to activate the MOH rather than "do" we want to activate the MOH, learning, and myth-busting through simulation scenarios and learning from excellence i.e., sharing good examples of PPH management.

Conclusion: Delay in recognition is a delay in treatment. Understanding clinician perspectives can provide insight that can be used to deliver targeted training to improve compliance with local and national guidance.

