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**Title:** Adherence to maternity care standards to improve the health of pregnant women

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**Abstract:**

Introduction: Quality has been defined in a number of different ways during the last decades. According to Crosby "quality is conformance to a set of standards and requirements". Therefore, adherence to care standards might be one of the feasible ways to improve quality of delivered care. So, this study aimed to assess providers’ adherence to maternity care standards from the perspective of pregnant women.

Materials & Methods: A cross-sectional study conducted with 185 pregnant women in their ninth month of pregnancy who were received maternity care from urban health centers and health posts in the Tabriz. All participants were selected randomly from 40 health centers and health posts. Study data collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire based on Iranian Ministry of Health standards for maternity care. Questionnaire validity was reviewed and confirmed by 10 experts.

Results: About 69 percent of pregnant mothers during their 9 month pregnancy received at least six times standard maternity care, but 31 percent had less than six times maternity care. Almost two-thirds of participants received recommended maternity care at or above minimal standards for some aspect of maternity care, such as number of care during pregnancy, referral to health center physician, and weight and blood pressure measurement. For some other services such as measuring uterus height, review of edema and varicose, referral to a dentist, listening of fetal heart sound and vaginal examination, reported adherence rates to Ministry of Health guidelines were very low. So that, some participants never receive some services during pregnancy. The results illustrated that there were significant differences between the two sources of information, which support a statistical disagreement between medical document and customers’ report for almost all services.

Discussion & Conclusion: A notable proportion of pregnant mothers reported receiving suboptimal care indicating significant room for improving the quality of maternity care based on Iranian Ministry of Health standards and guidelines. An interventional study recommended improving quality of maternity care, with special attention to health care providers training and awareness of pregnant women about standard maternity care who must receive during pregnancy period.

Adherence to standards, maternity care, quality improvement

**Presentation:** Poster