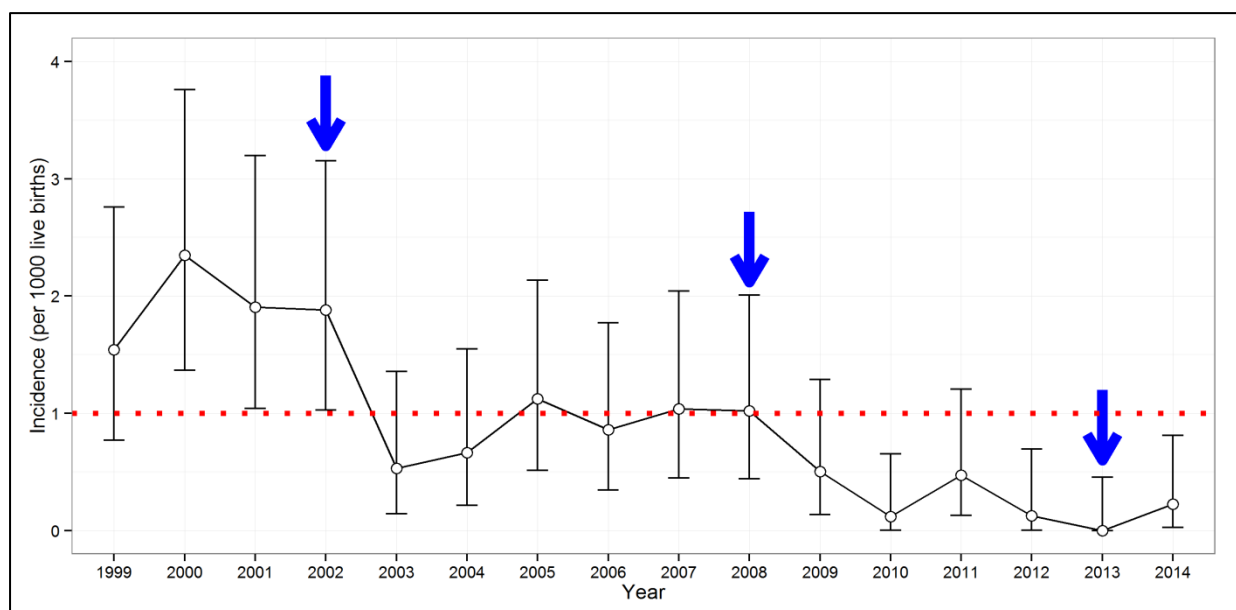


Resurgence of Neonatal Tetanus on the Kenyan Coast.

After the completion of this paper¹, three cases of neonatal tetanus were identified in 2014 of whom two died (Figure 1). This resurgence may have arisen from misconceptions about the tetanus vaccine causing sterility, which was reported in the national press.² We speculate that this disappointing resurgence from zero cases in 2013 was related to reduction in mother's willingness to be vaccinated. This year, the fight against tetanus immunisation was renewed.³ This needs to be resolved since it may lead to increased and preventable neonatal and maternal mortality.

Figure 1: Incidence of neonatal tetanus in Kilifi County Hospital



Incidence was computed as the number of Neonatal Tetanus (NT) cases within the KHDSS divided by the number of live births in that year. There were zero NT admissions in 2013. NT campaigns started in 2002 in an effort by the Kenya Ministry of Health to abate NT. Major campaigns to women of child bearing age were carried out in 2002, 2008 and 2013 as shown by the arrows. The red dashed line is the WHO target of less than one NT cases per 1000 live births.

References

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