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Discharge preparation and discharge readiness in facilities prior to discharge after birth: a scoping review of the global policies, guidelines and literature

Helen J Smith¹, portelaa², Chloe Harvey³

¹International Health Consulting Services Ltd;

²Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Ageing (MCA), WHO; ³UNICEF

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WHO discharge readiness

Helen Smith

ABSTRACT

Despite existence of global recommendations on postnatal care of mothers and newborns, care provided following childbirth is limited and often fails to address mothers' concerns about herself and her baby. Women report leaving facilities without sufficient knowledge or skills to take care of themselves and their newborns. Women experience physical and emotional changes during the postnatal period and understanding women's needs at this time is important for her subsequent health and the health of the newborn. Successful discharge happens when service providers meet the identified postnatal needs of women, caregivers and newborns.

The World Health Organization is currently developing guidance on postnatal care. One aspect of the guidance relates to readiness for women and their newborns to be discharged from a facility after birth and the steps the health providers should take to prepare a woman, her newborn and parents/caregivers for discharge. However not much is known about the current state of discharge preparation and readiness practices in order to make recommendations for global implementation. As yet there is no comprehensive map of the evidence base; very little is known about working definitions and conceptual boundaries, what criteria for discharge readiness are in use or what strategies or interventions exist for improving discharge preparation and readiness.

This scoping review will identify and map the range of policies, guidelines and literature on discharge readiness, clarify definitions of the concepts of discharge preparedness and discharge readiness, list criteria and items currently used to assess discharge readiness, and report on any tools, processes, strategies or other interventions that have been developed and/or implemented to improve discharge preparation and readiness.

ATTACHMENTS

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KEYWORDS

postnatal care, maternal health, newborn health, postnatal hospital discharge, discharge preparation, discharge readiness

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