Neonatal Mortality of Inborns in the Neonatal Unit of a Tertiary Centre in Lagos, Nigeria.

E N Ekure, V C Ezeaka, E O Iroha, M T Egri-Okwaji

Abstract

Background: Neonatal mortality is a useful index of assessing the socioeconomic development of an area. Its periodic evaluation is therefore a necessary and valuable audit index of the care given. The aim of this study is to document the neonatal mortality rate of inborn babies at Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH) and describe the pattern of these deaths.

Study Design: In-born neonatal admissions at the LUTH over a five-year period (January 1996 – December 2000) were retrospectively reviewed. Data on mortality, pregnancy, delivery and neonatal indices were extracted from ward records.

Results: There were a total of 6,272 live births of whom 2,496 (39.8%) were admitted into the neonatal unit. One hundred and forty one of the neonates died giving a mortality rate of 22.5/1000. The neonatal deaths comprised of 120 early neonatal deaths and 39 late neonatal deaths. The yearly neonatal mortality rate showed a steady decline except for 1999 during which there was a slight rise.

The incidence of neonatal deaths decreased with age, weight at birth and maturity. Low birth weight and birth asphyxia were the leading associated causes of death.

Complications of pregnancy occurred in 45.4% of the mothers of these neonates with pregnancy induced hypertension as the most prevalent (62.5%).

Conclusion: An overall inborn neonatal mortality rate of 22.5/1000 in our institution is still high but a declining trend is portrayed and will be further improved with the institution of measures to control or reduce the incidence of pregnancy induced hypertension, low birth weight and birth asphyxia.

Keywords: Neonatal mortality, inborn babies, low birth-weight, hypertension, birth asphyxia, Lagos, Nigeria.

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