



3rd Vanuatu Health Research Symposium
26-28 October 2022
Luganville, Santo, Vanuatu

The association between early initiation of antenatal care and birth outcomes in teenage mothers at Northern Provincial Hospital in Santo, 2021-2022

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Abstract

Background: Antenatal services can be important for teenage mothers as they promote and maintain the wellbeing of the mother and baby through education on nutrition, personal hygiene, breastfeeding, family planning and birthing process. It also helps to detect and manage complications during pregnancy whether medical, surgical, or obstetrical. The aim of this study is to propose a framework for making early antenatal care in teenage mothers as an effective strategy to promote safe motherhood in the Northern Provincial Hospital.

Methods: This study uses retrospective data collected from client's files and charts between January 2021 to July 2022 among teenage women under the age of 19 years of age before 12 weeks of gestation initiating antenatal care at the northern provincial hospital in Santo.

Results: The prevalence of teenage pregnancies in this study represented 11% of total pregnancies; (n=262, -(; age 13 to 19 years). -72% of teenage mothers had their first appointment at the antenatal clinic in their second trimester. Delivery outcomes showed that 3% were considered significantly preterm delivery, 2% were moderately preterm, -9% were late preterm and 87% were delivered at full term (37-40 weeks). Birth outcome showed that 82% of deliveries were normal vaginal deliveries, whilst 80% had some form of intervention. Of this cohort 1% of babies born to teenage mothers had extremely low birth weight, 6% had very low birth weight, 13% had low birth weight and 80% had normal weight.

Conclusion: Late booking remains a challenge to improve the maternal health in Northern Provincial Hospital. Therefore, health education/ awareness and creating policies for early initiations to antenatal services for teenage pregnancy is significant for optimal birth outcome.