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Data on antenatal care in Kosovo

UNICEF and the Ministry of Health publish data on antenatal care in Kosovo

Pristina, 14 May 2009- UNICEF in collaboration with the Ministry of Health launch a report on Antenatal Care Services in Kosovo - Quality and Access

Main objective of the study was to evaluate the quality and access to antenatal health care services (during pregnancy). In addition, the study aimed at offering information about participation and number of the antenatal visits, knowledge, awareness and practices in the frames of antenatal healthcare services.

This study brought to light many interesting arguments like the significant number of women (over 60%) starts to use antenatal care services from the fourth month. Number of the antenatal visits during the whole pregnancy period in 78.1% of the cases was equal to or more than 4 antenatal visits.

Private institutions are the most visited institutions during the pregnancy (71.3%) Only 28.7% of women visited public institutions for antenatal services. More concerning are the results related to examination and instruction of the patients, 16.5 % of women claimed that they were not offered any health advice for pregnancy. 22.2% of women claimed that they were not asked for details of history of previous diseases, while 65.9% reported that they didn't undergo any physical examination.

Coping with travel costs was an additional problem confirmed in the study. From interviewed women, 30% in Mitrovica and 55% in Ferizaj claimed that they can cope partly with travel costs related to use of antenatal care services, while from 10% to 18% (depending on region) declared that they couldn't cope with those costs. There is still a high percentage of cases (from 15 to 45% depending on region), where decision for an antenatal visit is made by somebody else instead of pregnant women.

12.9% of responders confirmed that they smoke, whereas use of alcohol and narcotic substances was almost inexistent. During the discussion, health workers emphasized that ultrasound examination is often done in private institutions and mostly as a mean to detect gender of the embryo. inappropriate reference of pregnant women through health institutions of different levels of care is apparent as one of key complaints of physicians working in regional hospitals as well as UCCK.

The study aimed t qualitative visits during pregnancy, to offer information regarding the participation and number of antenatal care visits and to reveal information regarding awareness, knowledge and practices of pregnant women, concerning antenatal care services and healthy behaviour during pregnancy.

For further information please contact:

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Arbena Kuriu, Communication Officer, UNICEF Kosovo, e-mail: akuriu@unicef.org, +381 38 249 230/1/2/3, mobile: +377 44 221 935