

Introduction: Utilisation of the goal oriented antenatal care services may be seen as time consuming but in reality saves mothers a lot of time while providing good care both for the baby and her mother. Under utilisation of the goal oriented ANC services has however not only become a global concern, but a problem too in Namutumba district most especially in Magada Health Centre III.

Objective: This study set out to establish the factors influencing the utilisation of ANC services at Magada Health Center III.

Methodology: Across sectional prospective study was conducted from May to August 2015. The sample size consisted of 365 pregnant women. A systematic random sampling procedure was used based on ANC attendance. This was based on Interviewer administered questionnaires, focused group discussions and key informant interviews. The data collected was entered in excel and exported to SPSS version 16.0 for analysis.

Results: The utilisation of the goal oriented ANC services for this study was 16.4%. There was a gradual decline in numbers of mothers utilising the ANC services in this study. The analysis clearly showed that the age of mothers, distance to the facility, attitude towards health workers, number of gravida, number of parity and place of previous delivery, all affected the utilisation of the goal oriented ANC services. When we look at age categories, 203 (56%) mothers in the age category of 20-29 years were more, as compared to 106 (29%) mothers between 10-19 years. 53 (15%) mothers were between 30-39 years and those above forty years were 3 (0.8%). The time of initiation of ANC visits was dissatisfying. There was a remarkable notice that 201(55%),mothers in this study initiated ANC visits between 22-32 weeks of gestation, 70 (19%) mothers initiated ANC visits at 33 weeks of gestation, and only 89 (24%) mothers initiated ANC visits at 11-21 weeks of gestation. It was only 10 (2%) mothers who initiated ANC visits between 0-10 weeks. When we look at other factors that influence mothers to attend the goal oriented ANC services, 211 (58%) mothers were influenced by the health education of health workers, 60 (16%) mothers were influenced by experiences of the previous pregnancy like obstetric complications, 39 (11%) mothers were influenced by insinuation. 36 (10%) mothers were influenced by their spouses/parents, 11 (3%) mothers were influenced by the media, 8 (2%) mothers did not know what influenced them to attend ANC services.

Conclusion: There was late initiation of ANC attendance. More mothers came in for the first visit between 22-32 weeks of gestation. This undoubtedly affected the completion of the four goal oriented ANC services by these mothers. There was a gradual decline in numbers of mothers utilising the ANC services as many came for the first visit but hardly turned up for the subsequent visits.

Recommendation: Apart from other factors, the long distances moved to the health facility, greatly affects the utilisation of the goal oriented ANC services. Magada sub County is a large area that needs to be decentralised. Health Centre IIs such as Mulama, Mazuba, and Kagulu should be upgraded to health Centre IIIs. The ANC services should be extended to these health Centres. This will help to reduce the distances travelled by these mothers and also decongest the work load at Magada health Centre III.