



December 16, 2008

Tuesday

Zilhaj 17, 1429

Midwives' role being enhanced

By A Reporter

ISLAMABAD, Dec 15: Minister of state for health Chaudhry Mohammad Afzal Sandhu on Monday said the government would enhance midwives role as health service provider as it would help reduce the infant and maternal mortality rate.

He was speaking at the inaugural session of a two-day midwives conference at Pims College of Nursing.

He said the government was committed to reforming the nursing and midwifery sector in its various facets and it had been placed among the priority areas.

“The centuries-old profession of midwifery has a significant role in our country which has a high ratio of maternal mortality rate (MMR) and infant mortality rate (IMR) as 75 per cent deliveries are conducted by untrained birth attendants while in developed countries 80 per cent of deliveries are conducted by midwives.”

An effective and enhanced role of midwives in simple cases of child birth could be an important contributing factor to bring about significant and sustained reduction in maternal and infant mortality he said adding globally many countries had been successful in reducing maternal mortality rate with the active support of trained midwives, “keeping in view this concept we have also started to give training to new cadre of community midwifery (CM) in 12 districts across the country for an active service delivery at the doorsteps of people”.

"Every CM will have to serve 5000 population in the catchments area," he said.

He appreciated the role of Pakistan Nursing Council being the regulatory body and its inputs for the preparation of standardized curriculum, training package, selection criteria and code of uniform examination system.

He also stressed the need for a proper coordination between ministry of health and child health programme, provincial health departments and Pakistan Nursing Council for the uplift of midwifery services in the country.

He termed the initiation of midwifery education as a step forward to overcoming the existing gaps and making coordinated effort for the well planned activities relating to the enhancement of midwifery and referral services in the country.

Executive Director PIMS Dr Majid Rajput said the midwives are the backbone of health profession. “Without the training of midwives we cannot reduce the infant and maternal mortality rates”, he said.

Ms Imtiaz Kamal president midwifery association of Pakistan, Dr Nabeela Ali Chief of party PAIMAN, Dr Zafarullah Gill chief of party TACMIL health project and Professor Ghazala Mehmood Head of Gyne PIMS also made speeches highlighting the role of midwives.

<http://www.dawn.com/2008/12/16/nat15.htm>