

## **Contributions of auxiliary midwives in providing maternal health care services in Myanmar: women's and providers' perspectives.**

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### **Abstract**

This study aimed to explore the maternal health care services received by the women from auxiliary midwife (AMW) and the consistency of different health care providers' perspectives on the AMW's contributions. A cross-sectional study exploring maternal health care services provided in the community was conducted in three purposively selected townships of Mandalay, Magway and Bago regions of Myanmar during 2016. This report is part of that study and included 218 postpartum women who have received antenatal care (ANC) with the AMWs and 369 providers (health assistants/lady health visitors, midwives and AMWs). Cramer's V was used to measure the strength of association and the consistency of the different health care providers' perspectives. Sixty-five percent of the women had ANC4+ and 36% initiated ANC within 12 weeks of pregnancy. Medical and obstetric history was asked for 92% and 90%, respectively. During the ANC visits, the services provided for at least four times were measuring body weight (23%), checking blood pressure (56%), and counseling on birth preparedness (49%). Women who were provided with blood for hemoglobin and urine for protein testing at least once were 63% and 37%, respectively. Sixty-two percent of the women were provided with at least 3 months of iron/folate supplementations and 91% received at least two doses of tetanus toxoid immunization. Among 207 women whose last childbirths were assisted by the AMW, 98% said they received social supports during the labour pain and delivery, 78% and 74% had received injection (types and reasons of medication were not explored) during the labor pain and immediately after delivery, respectively, 89% received oral medications, and 88% were ensured of having no heavy bleeding after the delivery. The perspectives of the different providers on the AMW's contributions of ANC and delivery care services were significantly different. However, consistent perspectives were found to be measuring body weight (40-58%), blood testing for hemoglobin (14-23%) for the ANC services, and giving injection during labour pain (29-39%) and immediately after delivery (28-39%). AMWs' contribution in the maternal health care service provision was not negligible, but having supportive supervision is essential to help them being in line with the AMW guideline.