

User's Guide for Observers for the

ASSESSMENT AND OBSERVATION TOOL: “CARING” BEHAVIORS BY MATERNITY CARE PROVIDERS

developed by The CHANGE Project

Many women, although they recognize the safety and other advantages of facility-based delivery with a skilled attendant, still choose home birth with a traditional attendant because they value the caring, supportive behavior available in that environment. In Bangladesh, 92% of births take place in the home. Research has shown that the attitudes and behaviors of skilled providers affect the use of skilled childbirth care, especially facility-based maternity care.

A tool was needed to objectively assess the actual behaviors of individual midwives and other skilled providers during labor and delivery in a facility setting. **The Assessment and Observation Tool: “Caring” Behaviors by Maternity Care Providers was developed to meet this need.** It is based on scientific evidence and research.

This user's guide describes the steps which the observer should follow to use the tool. Facilities or programs can then plan strategies (including behavior change interventions), based on the assessment results, to improve maternal provider “caring” behaviors during labor and delivery and to increase utilization of skilled childbirth care.

What is it? (description)

It is a two-page observation tool that is used in a labour and delivery unit of a hospital over a period of two to three days. One or two observers sit in the labour and delivery unit and mark on the tool when a health provider performs one of the behaviors on a select patient. The tool collects data on “caring” behaviors as well as clinical care. When complete, the tool provides data on the quality of care provided to patients, both “caring” and clinical.

The tool collects data in three areas:

1. labour and delivery unit: staffing; patient to provider ratio; students
2. observations of behaviors by health patient information and clinical data on the patient.
3. patient information and clinical data on the patient.

Why would you use it? (purpose)

The purpose of the tool is to assess maternal care provider behaviors during labor and delivery. Poor provider behavior is a barrier to increased utilization of skilled childbirth attendance and facility-based childbirth. Uses of the tool include:

- an assessment tool of the quality care provided in a labour and delivery unit
- a supervisory tool to be used periodically over time
- an assessment tool and set of guidelines for quality care for pre-service training programs
- integrated into clinical skills training for nurses, midwives, family welfare visitors, and physicians.

STEPS IN THE USE OF ASSESSMENT AND OBSERVATION TOOL: “CARING” BEHAVIORS BY MATERNITY HEALTH PROVIDERS

Materials needed: Hospital uniform, white apron or white laboratory coat with name tag
Clipboard
2-3 pencils and eraser
Shoes appropriate for the delivery room
6-8 observation tools

Time in labor and delivery unit: 5-8 hours for 2-3 days

Step I. Select appropriate individuals or a team to conduct the provider behavior assessment.

Criteria: selection of observers

1. Midwife or person with midwifery skills
2. Impartial; can fill out form just as they see the behaviors
3. Not working directly on the Labor and Delivery unit
4. Available for 5-8 hours a day for 2-3 days

Step II. Review the observation tool to ensure a general agreement and understanding of the tool by the observers/assessment team

Before starting the observation procedure, you must look at and review the observation tool. A sample tool, which has been completed, is attached. Please refer to it as you read the next few pages of this User's Guide.

- Review the overall assessment tool with the assessment team members
- Discuss how to record the Data Collection, Patient Information, and Labour Ward information on the front of the card, and the reasons why the information is necessary.
- Discuss the format of the assessment part of the tool (where to mark, how to use the time and comments boxes).
- Discuss what type of entries would be placed under the COMMENTS section of the tool, and why.
(Example: "Glass of water given by midwife" is written under Comments, and next to the behavior, "Check that patient takes fluids/food". The reason is keep the patient hydrated.)
- Discuss and be sure there is agreement between the observers on how each listed behavior would be performed before placing a mark on appropriate place in the tool
- Discuss how to record the clinical care information on the back of the card, and the reasons why the information is necessary.
- Discuss how to record the maternal and infant outcome information on the back of the card, and the reasons why the information is necessary.

Step III. Conduct the Provider Behavior Assessment Activity

A. Meet with labor and delivery matron or head of unit

- Collect data/statistics on the hospital and L&D unit (see Data Collection Sheet)
- Schedule day and times of observations
- Ask for introductions to and explanations of observations to staff

Sample Explanation for Staff of Labor and Delivery Unit

Two persons will be sitting on the labor and delivery unit for 2-3 days. They are doing research and will be observing the activities that occur on the unit. When they are finished, they will share their information with us.

B. Greet and introduce themselves to the L&D staff. Explain the activity to staff (see above box). Do not share the tool with staff before the observations or the validity of the observations will be in question. If staff knows what is being observed in detail, then they are likely to behave differently.

C. Collect data on the number and types of staff on the L&D unit during the observation time period. This provides background information on the setting in which the observation takes place. The information helps provide a realistic backdrop/background in which to evaluate the observations. (e.g. with 2 midwives and 20 patients in labor, you expect to see fewer behaviors per patient than with 5 midwives and 20 patients.

D. In order to choose the most appropriate patient for observation, review the patient charts/files and discuss which patient is in active labor with the midwife-in-charge and/or the midwife doing admissions. Select the patient and write the pertinent data on the observation tool.

If there are few patients, choose the patient or two that are in active labour but not too close to giving birth. * It is suggested for the two observers choose the same patient as their first observation. When the observation is finished, the two observers can then review how they completed the tool to ensure that they have the same understanding about how to mark the behaviors.

Criteria for Selection of Patient

1. in active labor (4-5 cms.)
2. no serious complications

- E. Complete the **Data Collection information** on the front of the tool. Under the “Type & Number of Providers Observed”, identify each staff or student that provides care for the patient during the time you are observing, e.g. if there were 2 different midwives, 2 students and a physician, you would write:

TYPE & NUMBER OF PROVIDERS OBSERVED: midwife II aya _____
student II physician I

- F. **Find a location for two chairs** for the observers that does not inconvenience the providers when giving clinical care.
- G. **Sit quietly in the chair and observe behaviors** of all health providers as they interact and provide care to the selected patient.
- Write the current time in the box under the word “TIME” (Example: it is currently 9 am so write 9 in the first box, 10 in the second box, etc.)
 - **Enter a mark** next to the **behavior** the health provider is performing each time the health provider you are observing (midwife, student, other) performs the behavior with a patient. Be sure to make the mark under the correct time when the behavior was actually observed. Make a mark each time the behavior is observed.
 - As the health providers you are observing (midwife, student, other) performs clinical care for the patient:
 - **enter a mark** next to the **Patient Assessment** task the health provider is performing. (These are recorded on the back of the card and include fetal heart, blood pressure, etc.).
 - Be sure to make the mark under the correct time when the behavior was actually observed. Make a mark each time the patient assessment task is observed.
 - You do not need to record the actual fetal heart rate, blood pressure measurement or urine/fluid amounts – only make a mark when the assessment is taken.
 - For Cervical Dilation, it can be useful to write the dilation in the box, e.g. the patient is 5 cms at 9 am so write 5 in the box. For Status of Membranes, write “I” for Intact or “R” for Rupture.
 - If you see an exam performed but the results are not announced, look at the patient chart to get the data.
 - observations should continue for 5-8 hours. This should be adequate time to document the type and amount of ☐caring☐ and clinical behaviors performed

- a break or time away from observation can occur after the birth of each patient observed and before the next patient is selected.
- OR
- a 10-minute break every three hours is advised with a one-hour lunch or dinner break.

H. After daily assessments are completed,

At the end of each day, when observations are completed (after 5-8 hrs.)

- return chairs to where you found the chairs
- thank staff and inform them of your departure
- inform staff of the time and day of your return

I. After all the assessments are completed:

On the last day of observations:

- express sincere appreciation to the staff for the assistance provided you and their willingness to participate in the observation. If possible, provide snacks and drinks for the L&D staff
- make a visit to the in-charge of L&D, the matron and head of hospital (as appropriate) to express appreciation for allowing the observations. Advise them when you will provide them the results of the observations and discuss next steps
- complete the Summary of Data sheets.

Step IV: Review and analyze the data collected during the behavior assessment activity

What does the data you collected mean?

After you complete the Summary of Data sheet, you will see the number and type of caring behaviors that the staff of the labour and delivery unit perform. Share this data with the hospital leadership, L&D matron and in-charge and staff. Assist them in interpreting the data.