

Assessment of Indigenous Knowledge and Practices during Pregnancy, Labour and Delivery in Selected Villages of the Limpopo Province, South Africa

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ABSTRACT Indigenous knowledge is shared and communicated orally through different cultures. Indigenous practices have been undermined especially in treatment of illnesses. Western practices were regarded as the only acceptable ways of treating illnesses amongst African cultures whilst before arrival of Western medicine children were born in families using their own Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Despite all these it was found out that the traditional health practitioners (THPs) are the first to be consulted before the patient can go to the hospital and on coming back from the hospital they go to the THPs to give them feedback of what transpired at the hospital. This study aimed at determining indigenous practices that were used during pregnancy, labour and delivery among different cultural groups in the Limpopo Province. A qualitative, exploratory, descriptive and contextual research method was used. Data were collected through in-depth individual unstructured interviews in three villages of the Capricorn District with THP and through focus group interviews with professional nurses undergoing PHC diploma training in one nursing school of the Limpopo Province. Five themes and their categories emerged from the data analysis. Recommendations suggest IKS Health Promotion Network which has to concentrate on several aspects regarding pregnancy, labour and delivery.