

Editorial

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Is lowering of maternal mortality in the world still only a “dream within a dream”?

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It passed almost thirty years since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo, Egypt in 1994 for the first time declared the connection between human rights and health, linking new conceptions of health to the struggle for social justice and respect for human dignity [1]. In 1998 in Mumbai, India, the ICPD recognized women's rights to reproductive and sexual health found in various articles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as being key to women's health [2]. Rights to reproductive and sexual health include the right to life, liberty, and the security of the person; the right to health care and information; and the right to non-discrimination in the allocation of resources to health services and their availability and accessibility [1, 2]. Of central importance are the rights to autonomy and privacy in making sexual and reproductive decisions, as well as the rights to informed consent and confidentiality in relation to health services [1, 2]. There have been many other documents produced since then on the same topic, but sparse results have been achieved to improve women's rights to life, healthcare, and information [3]. Although some improvements in maternal mortality have been made in low-income countries, still the differences between the high- and low-income countries are huge, reflecting inequity and inequality between those groups of countries, in which the maternal life does not have a comparable value. Such injustice is so obvious that the International Academy of Perinatal Medicine wanted to sensitize the world's decision-makers and policymakers to change it.

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In obstetrical practice, the prevention of the death of the mother is one central point. The maternal death risk is recently in high-income countries 1 in 5.400 and in low-income countries 1 in 45 [3]. This difference between high- and low-income countries in the risk of dying due to pregnancy-related causes is important for prevention strategies [3].

This special issue aims to analyze maternal mortality cases globally and programs that can and should be done to lower the risk.

This was the reason to edit this special issue of the Journal of Perinatal Medicine, addressing the issue of maternal mortality from different points of view, to increase the awareness of healthcare professionals involved in the care of mothers and newborns. We hope that our dreams to make improvements in maternal health all over the world will not keep being “dream within a dream”, as Edgar Allan Poe said [4].

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