



Society for Pre and Post Natal Services

PVO 12/2015

### Concept Note

#### **ORGANISERS OF INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH IN AFRICA**

Society for Pre and Post Natal Services (SPANS) is a non-profit, private voluntary (PVO 12/2015), supporting the National Health Strategy (NHS) of the Republic of Zimbabwe (ROZ) Minister of Health and Child Care, To improve pre and post-natal mental health services and Solve social problems/ issues that affect mental health in pre and post-natal care.

International Conference on Maternal Mental Health in Africa (ICAMMHA) is an activity for Society For Pre and Post Natal Services (SPANS) which seeks to provide a strategic platform for interaction, sharing experiences, fostering innovative thinking and encourage mental illness prevention across the life cycle, with a robust beginning in the pre and post natal phase of life, which is an essential dimension of the paradigm shift that's will enhance emotionally health living, access to care, improving maternal health and reducing child mortality, quality and affordability and reduce shame, stigma and discrimination towards a happier, healthier, wealthier lifestyle and emotional relief and personal growth for individuals, couples and families.

Research shows that In Zimbabwe, maternal mortality rate is still very high as it stands at 614 per 100 000. The current 300 000 women who die annually while giving birth and an estimated three million children who die within the first four weeks of their birth globally, are a far cry from the Millennium Development Goals Number Four and Five of reducing child mortality and improving maternal health.

ICAMMHA will be the best platform for interactions and presentations of findings and best practices to solve emotional and psychological distress emerged before, during and after pregnancy which is very crucial in the upbringing of emotionally health child, father and mother.

ICAMMHA serves as the regional conference across Africa to unit mental health practitioners, donors, researchers, scientists, cooperate world, activists and families all over the world to pool together their knowledge and resources in an effort to stop the great suffering of several emotional and psychological traumas and their effects on humanity thus improving maternal health.

Life occurs within the context of many realities of upsetting personal and family conflicts which include divorce, separation, domestic violence, unplanned pregnancies, early marriages, sexual abuse, HIV/AIDS, failure in life and unmet needs and so on. These affect people across the life-span, from childhood to old age. They cause great suffering and have many negative

implications on women's maternal health, social health threat to communities and pose danger to our community health thereby destabilizing the economic health of the nations as well as that of their children and families. By adequately addressing emotional and psychological distress for couples and families all sectors of the society will benefit.

The benefits will include well-functioning families, breaking vicious cycles of poverty, decrease dependency syndrome, families' resilience to stress, self-understanding, self-esteem, reducing child mortality and improving maternal health, development with communities and peace of mind.

Mental health issues is not solved in isolation and often requires a person with an executive power (decision making) to intervene on the behalf of the potential client in our community context this executive power is often a male figure. By default women are in the fall front because we are talking about issues of pregnancy. However, man plays a pivotal role. Women can develop a mental instability before, during pregnancy and labor and after birth and during breastfeeding or within the first year after having a baby.

### **The key Objectives of ICAMMHA**

- 1) To improve pre and post-natal mental health services
- 2) Solve social problems/ issues that affect mental health in pre and post-natal care
- 3) Document lessons learnt and advice for the program implementation

### **Expected Outcomes**

- 1) Fathers, Mothers and Child are healthier, happier, less stressed and more rested and thus improving maternal health and reducing child mortality.
- 2) Health communities
- 3) Strong family unit
- 4) Increased well-being
- 5) Sensitization of the general populace on the importance of pre and post mental health
- 6) The entire family benefit from peace of mind and emotional relief
- 7) The mobilization and participation of all international experts from different disciplines coming together for a common cause, promote the multi-sectorial approaches to address maternal mental health.
- 8) Well- functioning individuals, couples, and family able to cope very well with troubling life dilemmas.

## **Expected Participants**

- 1) Mental Health professionals (Family Therapist, Counsellors, Sociologist, psychologist, Social workers, Doctors, Nurse, Psychiatricians, etc)
- 2) Representatives from Civic Society Organizations,
- 3) Churches/ Community Based Organizations
- 4) Representatives from the Cooperate world
- 5) Donor Community
- 6) UN Agencies
- 7) Government Ministries( Ministry of Health and child Care, Ministry of Women Gender and Community Development, Ministry of education, Affairs, Ministry of Public Services Labor and Social Services etc
- 8) Family members
- 9) International Mental Health Organizations
- 10) The general public

## **Programme Overview**

**The Conference consists of a 6 (six) day program including invited:**

- 1) Non- Abstract Driven Sessions
  - a) Plenary Sessions- mainly for those well respected delegates
  - b) Symposia- address critical upsetting issues on maternal mental health, sharing of experiences and speakers
- 2) Abstract- Driven Sessions
  - a) Oral presentations- power point presentations from different selected topics supporting the theme. These will be facilitated by experts with the chairs
  - b) Poster Exhibition- selected topics will be displayed for one day per individual and authors will stand by their poster to give full explanation on their findings.

## **Program activities**

- 1) Invited Local, international organizations, groups and individuals will display work complimenting research.
- 2) Roundtable discussions, Learning sessions and panel debates and lectures.