Information related to good practices in adopting human rights based approach to eliminating preventable maternal mortality and morbidity, provided by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania

Key human rights related to maternal mortality (Equality and non-discrimination, Right to health, Right to reproductive self-determination) are embedded in Lithuanian legislation.

The Law on the Rights of Patients and Compensation for the Damage to their Health of the Republic of Lithuania **prohibits restriction of the patient’s rights on the grounds of gender, age, race, citizenship, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, belief, views, sexual orientation, genetic qualities, disability or on other grounds, except for the cases specified by laws, without prejudice to the general principles of human rights.** According to the Law, **patient shall have the right to high quality health care services.**

Sexual and reproductive health care in Lithuania is integrated in the primary health care. Primary health care services are accessible to majority of population. Free accessible reproductive health services are provided by family doctors (general practitioners).

Woman can directly consult with her family doctor on family planning, sexual and reproductive health issues. In case of reproductive disorders family doctor refers a woman to an obstetrician gynaecologist.

Almost all women give birth in hospitals and only few women choose home delivery.

**Women have right to decide on the number and spacing of children** in Lithuania. They have access to modern contraception and safe abortion.

There are no special legislations restricting contraception in Lithuania.

The issue related to abortion is regulated by the order No. 50 “On Approval of the Procedure of Abortion” of the Minister of Health from 1994. The Order states that termination of a pregnancy is performed upon the woman’s request up to 12 week of gestation. After this term abortion might be performed only in cases when pregnancy threatens woman’s and fetus life and health. Abortion upon the woman’s request is fee-paying procedure. The fee for the abortion depends on the type of anesthesia. Abortions performed for medical reasons are free of charge.

According to the Law on Health Insurance of the Republic of Lithuania, women who are granted a maternity leave and unemployed women during the period of pregnancy 70 days before child birth (after 28 pregnancy weeks and further) and 56 days after child birth are insured by Compulsory Health Insurance from the state budget. The same health insurance has one of the parents raising a child under 8 years of age, as well as one of the parents raising two or more children under 18 years.

**Maternal mortality in Lithuania 2000-2010**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maternal mortality (causes connected with pregnancy and delivery), absolute number</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maternal mortality</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal mortality</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 **</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Maternal mortality per 100 000 live births

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>8.79</th>
<th>12.68</th>
<th>19.99</th>
<th>3.27</th>
<th>16.44</th>
<th>13.10</th>
<th>0.00</th>
<th>6.18</th>
<th>8.56</th>
<th>0.00</th>
<th>5.56</th>
<th>8.35**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

* - preliminary data
** - including 1 death occurred from influenza (ICD-10 code J09)

Maternal mortality rate in Lithuania declined significantly after implementation of the Perinatology Programme (1992–1996): in 1992 maternal mortality per 100 000 live births was 44 in 1996 – 17.9 and only single cases of maternal deaths in Lithuania were registered in the last 14 years.

The Programme created new perinatal and neonatal health care system in Lithuania. Taking into consideration a degree of risk for a fetus, pregnant women were sent for examination and childbirth to hospitals of different level. The Programme also included procurement of modern medical equipment and staff training activities in the hospitals providing perinatal and neonatal health care services.

Other maternal health care related programmes implemented in Lithuania:
The National Family Health Programme (2008-2010).

The National Mother and Child Programme continued strengthening of the mother’s and child health care system, modernization of medical equipment in respective departments and enhancement of professional skills of medical staff.

The big part of the National Family Health Programme is also intended to improve quality and accessibility of mother’s and child health care, including elaboration of legal documents on mother’s and child health care, development of diagnostics and correction of inherited diseases and congenital abnormalities, implementation of Baby Friendly Hospital initiative.