

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL SUPPORTS IN ORDER TO REDUCING MATERNAL AND INFANT MORTALITY IN SURABAYA

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ABSTRACT

Maternal and infant mortality is one of the health problems that continues to be an issue in Indonesia. Surabaya is one of the city in Indonesia with high maternal mortality (38 cases on 2015) and infant mortality case (282 cases on 2015). One of the indirect efforts to reducing maternal and infant mortality is increasing social supports towards pregnant woman. Social supports can achieves from closest family, relatives, neighbors, or another people around mother and baby.

GELIAT UNAIR (GErakan peduLi Ibu dan Anak sehaT Universitas Airlangga) utilize this method to accelerate reducing maternal and infant mortality in Surabaya. By empowering students of Airlangga University in assisting the pregnant women until giving birth, can help increase social supports for mothers since their pregnancy until after they gives birth. Social supports given by the students expected can help reduce maternal anxiety, facilitate access of mothers to obtain information related to pregnancy and infant health, and may provide an encouragement to the mothers to maintain the mothers and their babies health.

This program carried out since 2015 towards the mothers in 6 Public Health Centers in Surabaya. Until 2016, the volunteers of GELIAT UNAIR already assist 165 pregnant women and 132 of them already giving birth safely. Good and appropriate social supports effective to decrease the maternal and infant mortality. Hopefully this program can continue to be conducted and duplicated thoroughly in Surabaya, as well as in other areas throughout Indonesia.

Keywords: Geliat Unair, Maternal and Infant Mortality, Social Supports

INTRODUCTION

Maternal and infant mortality is one of the health problems that continue to be an issue. Reducing maternal and infant mortality is one of the international community's priorities and also the target of MDGs and SDGs. Indonesia is one of the countries with high maternal and infant mortality. Based on the Indonesia Health Demography Survey in 2012, Indonesia maternal mortality rate was

359/100.000 living birth and for the infant mortality rate was 23/1000 living birth.

East Java is one of the provinces in Indonesia that has high maternal and infant mortality rate, and Surabaya is the city with the highest maternal and infant mortality case in East Java. Infant mortality case in Surabaya keep increasing since 2013, meanwhile the maternal mortality case keeps decreasing. However, Surabaya is one of the cities in East Java with high maternal mortality (38 cases on

2015) and infant mortality case (282 cases on 2015).

Table 1. Infant and Maternal Mortality Cases in Surabaya on 2013 - 2016

| Year | Infant mortality case | Maternal Mortality Case |
|------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 2013 | 254 | 49 |
| 2014 | 243 | 39 |
| 2015 | 282 | 38 |

Source: Health Departement of Surabaya City, 2016

Maternal and infant mortality caused by many factors, direct and indirect factors, so that the effort to reducing maternal and infant mortality should be approaching both sides. The direct factors are related to the medical purpose and the indirect factors are related to the social or cultural factors. One of the indirect causes that can affect mothers' and babies' health are maternal stress and anxiety. One of the efforts to solve those problems is increasing social supports towards pregnant woman.

Social supports can achieve from closest family, relatives, neighbors, or another people around mother and baby. The effort to reducing maternal and infant mortality can come from various people or institution around mothers. The one can help in reducing maternal and infant mortality not only from health organization or health professional, but also from the family, community leader, society around mothers, education institution, and else.

Airlangga University as one of the education institution in Surabaya joined with UNICEF, Surabaya District Health Office, East Java Provincial Health Office, Airlangga University Hospital, Dr. Soetomo General Hospital, and several health professional organization conducted a voluntary program *GELIAT UNAIR (GERakan peduLi Ibu dan Anak sehaT Universitas Airlangga)* to help reducing maternal and infant mortality especially in Surabaya. This program

involving all the members of Airlangga University such as lecturers, students of undergraduate program, master program, doctoral program, and also academic staffs from various faculties. The objective of this program was to contribute in acceleration of reducing maternal and infant mortality in Surabaya.

MATERIAL & METHOD

GELIAT UNAIR is a voluntary community service program that involving the academic community of Airlangga University. The method of this program was by doing the community services by build social supports to empower pregnant woman and their family. One of the activities in the program is assisting mothers and babies by students of Airlangga University. By empowering students of Airlangga University in assisting the pregnant women until giving birth can help increase social supports for mothers since their pregnancy until after they gives birth. The students were from various degrees, faculties and programs in Airlangga University. These students applied voluntarily to join this community service program.

Social supports given by the students expected can help reduce maternal anxiety, facilitate access of mothers to obtain information related to pregnancy and infant health, and may provide an encouragement to the mothers to maintain theirs' and their baby health. This program carried out since 2015 towards 165 mothers in 6 Public Health Center in Surabaya.

The supports given could be in any way according to the mothers' needs. To be able provide these supports, the volunteer must join a capacity building program to learn the general knowledge related to mother's and baby's' health. Besides, there also supervisors for the volunteers that have more knowledge and experience related to mother's and baby's

health such as midwives, doctors, obstetrician and gynecologist specialists, and many more.

RESULT

Since middle of 2015 until 2016 the volunteers of GELIAT UNAIR already assist 165 pregnant women with low risk or higher risk of pregnancy, and 132 of them already giving birth safely. The rest of them couldn't detect because they went back to their hometown and lost contact with the volunteers. The volunteers didn't just stop when the mothers already giving birth. But they also make sure that the mothers give breastfeeding to the babies and remind and give information related to the vaccination for their babies.

One of the activities in the program is assisting mothers and babies by students of Airlangga University. By empowering students of Airlangga University in assisting the pregnant women until giving birth can help increase social supports for mothers since their pregnancy until they give birth. Social supports given by the students expected can help reduce maternal anxiety and help mothers to overcome their stress related to their pregnancy and their life as a mother.

DISCUSSION

Social supports refer to the availability of interpersonal to provide belonging, self-esteem, appraisal and tangible aid. There are three basic classes of relationship functions related to social supports, help or assistance, companionship and intimacy, and the social regulation of individual behavior. Some research indicated that social supports is compulsory to be given to the mothers since their pregnancy phase.

Mothers' perceived stress and social supports were found to be significant predictors of maternal attitudes and the

quality of interaction with their infants. The quality of infants' interactive behavior was also affected by maternal stress and supports (Crnic et al., 1984).

Based on the research, found that prenatal social supports are associated with infant birth weight through process involving fetal growth. Behavioral and biological factors may contribute to the association between supports and fetal growth. Several studies also suggest that particular members of a woman's social network may be important in providing social supports during pregnancy. Social supports in pregnancy also suggest generally positive effects of supports on the primary indicators of newborn health, such as infant birth weight and gestational age (Feldman et al., 2000).

Based on those researches, social supports showed positive influences towards pregnancy and infant's health. Social supports not only can be given by the closest family member of the pregnant mothers, but it also can be given from everyone else in the community. By increasing the social supports, it can help the mothers to stay healthy and also giving birth safely.

CONCLUSION

Good and appropriate social supports effective to decrease the maternal and infant mortality. This study suggested that multiple forms of supports from closest family member, health worker, friends or everyone around pregnant mothers are needed. Hopefully this program can continue to be conducted and duplicated thoroughly in Surabaya, as well as in other areas throughout Indonesia.

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