

## **Determinants of Antenatal Care Booking among Pregnant Women in Selected Hospitals in Embu County, Kenya**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Antenatal care (ANC) is one of the four pillars for safe motherhood. The main objectives of focused antenatal care include: promotion of health, prevention of diseases, early detection of diseases and their management and complication readiness and birth preparedness. Focused antenatal care has been recommended by the WHO, to help pregnant mothers get screened early for conditions that may affect the outcome of pregnancy. In Embu County, pregnant mothers begin attending antenatal care (ANC) clinics late in third trimester. According to World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines, pregnant mothers should start their ANC in the first trimester before sixteen weeks of gestation. The study sought to determine factors associated with late booking of the visits. The specific objective was to find out how past pregnancy experience, accessibility of health facilities and awareness on ANC bookings influence ANC booking among pregnant women attending Maternal Child Health (MCH) clinic in Embu County. The results of the study were aimed at promoting ANC initiation within the first trimester of pregnancy. The recommended ANC model helps minimize complications that occur during pregnancy, during labor and during postpartum period through early screening, diagnosis and treatment of infections. A descriptive cross-sectional study design was used to collect data. Most of the clients were aware of the booking time and despite this none turned up for ANC clinic within the right gestational age. Accessibility of health facilities and past pregnancy experience was significantly associated with initiation of ANC booking.

**Keywords:** Antenatal care clinics, Maternal child health, Pregnant mothers, Antenatal care (ANC)

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