Implementation of Technical Assistance in the Application of Medical Records in Midwifery Independent Practice (TPMB) in Simalungun and its Impact on Service Quality

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Abstract

The Independent Midwife Practice (TPMB) in Simalungun Regency plays a leading role in maternal and child health services, but still faces various obstacles in the implementation of medical records, both in terms of completeness, accuracy, and readability. This research aims to describe the context of TPMB and the challenges of implementing medical records, describe the design of technical assistance, and analyze its impact on the quality of midwifery services within the framework of the latest regulations, namely Law No. 17 of 2023 concerning Health, Permenkes No. 24 of 2022 concerning Medical Records, Permenkes No. 28 of 2017 concerning Permits and Implementation of Midwife Practices, Permenkes No. 18 of 2022 concerning the Implementation of One Data in the Health Sector through the System Health Information, and Kepmenkes HK.01.07/MENKES/1423/2022 concerning Guidelines for Variables and Meta Data in the Implementation of Electronic Medical Records. The research used a qualitative approach of case studies on several TPMBs with midwife informants, health center/agency officers, and medical record document review. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document studies, then analyzed thematically. The results show that limited facilities, variations in documentation competencies, high workload, and lack of supervision cause medical record practices to not comply with standards and regulations. Technical assistance which includes initial assessment, focused training, supervision-mentoring, SOP drafting, and feedback audits has been proven to improve the completeness and neatness of medical records, improve the care process, strengthen the continuity of care, and support accountability and readiness for integration into health information systems. It was concluded that technical assistance is an effective strategy and in line with national regulations to improve the quality of medical records and the quality of midwifery services in TPMB, and has the potential to be replicated in other regions.

Keywords: Medical Records, Independent Practice Of Midwives, Technical Assistance, Quality of Service, Simalungun

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Introduction

The Independent Practice of Midwives (TPMB) plays a strategic role in the maternal and child health service system in Indonesia, especially in rural and semi-urban areas such as Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra. Midwives are often the first and main contact for pregnant women, childbirth, postpartum patients, and newborns, so the quality of care provided greatly determines the health status of the mother and baby. At the national level, the burden of maternal and infant health problems is still a serious concern: data from the Ministry of Health's maternal death recording system (MPDN) shows that the number of maternal deaths in 2022 reached around 4,005 cases and increased to 4,129 cases in 2023, while infant mortality is also still high. This condition indicates that efforts to improve the quality of services, including at the primary service and TPMB levels, remain an urgent agenda to achieve maternal and child health targets and the commitment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In this context, medical records are not just an administrative obligation, but are clinical, legal, and managerial instruments that function to document the care process, ensure continuity of service, and provide a basis for legal proof. Complete, accurate, and timely medical records are also one of the important prerequisites in the quality of care framework emphasized by the World Health Organization (WHO), which emphasizes that the quality of maternal and infant care is highly dependent on data integration, evidence-based clinical governance, and reliable monitoring mechanisms. The importance of medical records is further emphasized in the framework of national regulations through the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 17 of 2023 concerning Health as the legal umbrella of the health sector, Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number 28 of 2017 concerning the Licensing and Implementation of Midwife Practices which regulates the implementation of TPMB, and Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number 24 of 2022 concerning Medical Records which mandates the implementation of medical records, including electronic medical records, in an orderly, secure, confidential, and accountable manner throughout health care facilities.

However, in the field, the implementation of medical records in TPMB still faces various problems. The completeness and accuracy of filling out medical records in many TPMBs is still low, with a number of important items often missed, while the format and standards used do not fully refer to the latest national regulations and guidelines. Limitations in documentation competence are also still found, as the main focus of midwives is generally on direct clinical actions, so recording is often perceived as an additional burden. On the other hand, supervision and structured feedback from referral facilities or health offices are still not optimal, so there is no systematic mechanism to correct and improve the quality of medical record recording. This condition has the potential to hinder the implementation of good clinical governance, reduce the system's ability to conduct maternal-perinatal audits, and disrupt the integration of health data as directed in the health information system transformation policy and the implementation of One Health Data through the Health Information System regulated in the Minister of Health Regulation Number 18 of 2022.

Technical assistance has emerged as one of the relevant approaches to bridge the gap between normative standards, as stipulated in the latest laws and regulations related to medical records and midwifery practices, and actual practice in the field. Technical assistance that is designed in a sustainable, contextual, and problem-solving-oriented manner has the potential to strengthen the capacity of midwives in filling and managing medical records, both in terms of

knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes. In addition to being guided by the Minister of Health Regulation Number 24 of 2022 concerning Medical Records, technical assistance at the TPMB level also needs to pay attention to the Decree of the Minister of Health Number HK.01.07/MENKES/1423/2022 concerning Guidelines for Variables and Meta Data in the Implementation of Electronic Medical Records, which regulates data element standards and interoperability of electronic medical records as part of the national health information system. Thus, the practice of medical record documentation at TPMB is expected to increase significantly and sustainably, while supporting the agenda of improving service quality and health data integration.

In line with that, this article aims to describe the context and challenges of the implementation of medical records in TPMB Simalungun Regency, describe the concept and form of technical assistance in the application of medical records, analyze the relationship between technical assistance and the quality of midwifery services in TPMB, and offer a framework for the implementation of technical assistance that is in line with national regulations and can be applied or replicated in other regions with similar characteristics.

Research Objectives

1) Describe the conditions of the implementation of medical records and the challenges faced by TPMB midwives in Simalungun Regency.
2) Explain the form and process of technical assistance in the application of medical records at TPMB.
3) Analyze changes or the impact of technical assistance on the quality of medical records and the quality of midwifery services at TPMB.

Literature Review 2.1 Medical Records in Midwifery Services

Medical records are official documents that contain complete records of the patient's identity, anamnesis, examination findings, diagnosis, actions, medications, follow-up care, and follow-up plans. In midwifery services, medical records are the basis for rational clinical decision-making, coordination between service providers (midwives-doctors-referral facilities), legal proof in the event of medical disputes, and the main instrument for monitoring and evaluating service quality. The quality of medical records is generally assessed from the dimensions of completeness, accuracy, timeliness, readability, and consistency. Juridically, the importance of the implementation of medical records is affirmed in Law Number 17 of 2023 concerning Health which mandates quality, safe, and accountable health services, and is strengthened by the Regulation of the Minister of Health Number 24 of 2022 concerning Medical Records which requires every health service facility, including the Independent Practice of Midwives as stipulated in the Minister of Health Regulation Number 28 of 2017 concerning the Licensing and Implementation of Midwife Practices, to organize medical records in an orderly manner, maintain confidentiality, and gradually transition to electronic medical records. Thus, medical records in obstetrics not only have a clinical dimension, but also legal and managerial dimensions based on the latest national regulations.

2.2 Quality of Health Services

The quality of health services can be analyzed through the Donabedian framework which includes three main components, namely structure, process, and outcome. Medical records are in the realm of structure, namely the availability of a standard recording format and system, as

well as in the realm of process, namely how care documentation is carried out consistently and according to procedures. The quality of these structures and processes will ultimately affect service outcomes, such as patient safety, complication rates, and patient satisfaction levels. In the context of TPMB, the quality of service can be seen from the conformity of practices with obstetric service standards, the safety of mothers and babies through the prevention and handling of complications appropriately, the continuity of care including timely and documented referrals, and the satisfaction of patients and families with the care received. Law Number 17 of 2023 concerning Health affirms the right of the public to obtain quality and fair health services, while Permenkes Number 24 of 2022 concerning Medical Records and Permenkes Number 28 of 2017 concerning Permits and Implementation of Midwifery Practices provide a normative framework for the implementation of midwifery services and documentation at TPMB. Quality medical records are thus a key instrument to support clinical audits, high-risk case tracking, service performance evaluation, as well as meeting regulatory demands related to patient accountability and safety.

2.3 Technical Assistance

Technical mentoring is a systematic effort to increase the capacity of individuals and organizations through a series of structured activities, including need-based training, scheduled clinical and administrative supervision, individual and small group mentoring and coaching, and monitoring and evaluation that results in structured feedback. Effective technical assistance has participatory characteristics, namely involving midwives as active partners rather than just objects; contextual, which is adjusted to local conditions such as geographical character, culture, and case load; sustainable, not a momentary activity but a cycle of quality improvement; and data-based, using the initial findings (baseline) of medical records as the basis for planning and adjusting interventions. In the context of the latest regulations, technical assistance at TPMB can be seen as a managerial strategy to help midwives meet legal obligations and standards stipulated in Law Number 17 of 2023 concerning Health, Permenkes Number 24 of 2022 concerning Medical Records, and Permenkes Number 28 of 2017 concerning Licensing and Implementation of Midwife Practices, while supporting the information system transformation agenda and One Health Data. Thus, technical assistance is not only oriented towards improving documentation skills, but also on strengthening compliance with laws and regulations and improving the quality of midwifery services as a whole.

Research Methodology

Research The research method used in this study is qualitative research with a case study approach, which focuses on the implementation of technical assistance in the application of medical records in several Midwives Independent Practices (TPMB) in Simalungun Regency. The main informants consist of midwives who own/implement TPMB, health center officers or health offices who provide coaching, and if necessary patient/client representatives to complement the perspective of service quality. The selection of informants is carried out purposively, namely based on their direct involvement in the application of medical records and technical assistance. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, direct observation of the process of recording medical records and technical assistance, as well as reviewing documents in the form of medical records, formats/forms used, SOPs, and related regulations such as Law No. 17 of 2023 concerning Health, Permenkes No. 24 of 2022 concerning Medical Records,

Permenkes No. 28 of 2017 concerning Permits and Implementation of Midwife Practices, Permenkes No. 18 of 2022, and Kepmenkes HK.01.07/MENKES/1423/2022.

Data was analyzed qualitatively through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing thematic conclusions to describe the implementation of technical assistance, the application of medical records, and its contribution to the quality of service at TPMB. The validity of the data is maintained through triangulation of sources (midwives, program managers, and documents) and triangulation of techniques (interviews, observations, and document studies). The research was conducted by paying attention to ethics, including informant consent, maintaining identity confidentiality, and the use of medical record data in accordance with applicable regulations.

Results 4.1 The Context of TPMB in Simalungun and the Challenges of Medical Records

The results of the study show that the geographical context of Simalungun Regency, with many rural areas and not always easy access to referral facilities, places the Midwife's Independent Practice (TPMB) as the forefront of maternal and child health services. In this situation, the variation in the midwife's educational background, experience, and training clearly seems to affect their ability to document medical records completely and correctly. In addition, most TPMBs still rely on manual recording with limited means and have not been integrated towards electronic medical records, so the high workload makes documentation often delayed or incomplete. This condition is not entirely in line with the demands of Law No. 17 of 2023 concerning Health which emphasizes quality and accountable services, as well as the Minister of Health Regulation No. 24 of 2022 concerning Medical Records which regulates the obligation to maintain orderly, safe, and confidential medical records in every health service facility. On the other hand, Permenkes No. 28 of 2017 concerning Permits and Implementation of Midwife Practices places TPMB midwives as professionals who must provide services according to standards, including adequate documentation. This gap between actual practice and the regulatory framework reinforces the need for structured technical assistance-based interventions.

4.2 Technical Assistance Design in the Application of Medical Records

The discussion of the results of the study shows that the design of technical assistance which includes initial assessment, focused training, supervision, mentoring, preparation of SOPs, as well as monitoring and evaluation, is practically able to answer the challenges found in TPMB. Initial assessment through an audit of medical records helps identify parts that are often empty and not up to standard, so that training materials can be directed to real weaknesses in the field. The training, which contains an explanation of the provisions of Permenkes No. 24 of 2022 concerning Medical Records and midwifery care standards, makes midwives better understand the legal basis and consequences of poor documentation practices. At the same time, the preparation of TPMB's internal formats and SOPs that refer to the principle of variables and data elements as stipulated in the Ministry of Health HK.01.07/MENKES/1423/2022 concerning Guidelines for Variables and Meta Data in the Implementation of Electronic Medical Records helps to rearrange the recording structure so that it is more systematic and ready to be directed to electronic form in the future. Periodic monitoring and evaluation, accompanied by direct feedback, has been shown to encourage midwives to more consistently fill out medical

records and begin to see documentation not as a burden, but as part of a professionally protected practice.

4.3 The Impact of Technical Assistance on Service Quality

Qualitatively, the results of interviews and observations illustrate that there have been significant changes at several levels after the technical assistance has been implemented. At the level of medical records, midwives reported and researchers observed an increase in the completeness of identity data, anamnesis, physical examination, diagnosis, action, and education, as well as a reduction in the absence of important columns. Medical and obstetric terms also appear to be more consistent and recording is done closer to the time of service, so that punctuality is increased. At the service process level, a more structured medical record helps midwives follow a systematic care flow, facilitates early detection of risk factors, and supports more rational clinical decision-making according to midwifery service standards. This is in line with the spirit of Law No. 17 of 2023 which demands to improve the quality and safety of patients, as well as the demands for documentation accountability in the Minister of Health Regulation No. 24 of 2022. At the level of quality and patient safety, midwives are more confident when making referrals because clinical information is well documented, which facilitates coordination with referral facilities and supports continuity of care. At the system level, neater medical records facilitate the preparation of reports to health centers and health offices, as well as strengthen the database for KIA program planning and maternal-perinatal audits, as directed in the Minister of Health Regulation No. 18 of 2022 concerning the Implementation of One Health Data through the Health Information System. Thus, technical assistance is proven to be not just to improve documents, but to be an entrance to improve the quality of TPMB services as a whole and in line with national policies.

4.4 Policy and Practice Implications

The findings of the study indicate that technical assistance in the application of medical records at TPMB Simalungun has important policy implications. First, technical assistance needs to be positioned as an integrated part of the KIA program and the strengthening of primary services, not temporary activities or momentary projects, so that it is in line with the mandate of Law No. 17 of 2023 to ensure sustainable and quality health services. Second, the successful implementation of technical assistance in the field emphasizes the need for multistakeholder collaboration: the health office as policy director, the health center as the supervisor and supervisor of TPMB, and universities as partners in evidence-based training and audit. Third, these results support the agenda of strengthening health information systems and One Data as stipulated in Permenkes No. 18 of 2022, because a more orderly and standardized TPMB medical record is an important foundation for data integration into a wider system, including in the long term towards electronic medical records in accordance with the direction of Permenkes No. 24 of 2022 and Kepmenkes HK.01.07/MENKES/1423/2022. Fourth, Simalungun's experience can be used as a starting model for other districts with local adaptation, especially in rural areas, to strengthen the independent practice of midwives within the latest national legal and policy framework. Thus, the results of this study provide an empirical justification that investment in technical assistance for medical records at TPMB is a relevant, feasible, and in line with regulations, as well as having a real impact on improving the quality of midwifery services at the community level.

Conclusion

This study shows that the Midwife's Independent Practice (TPMB) in Simalungun Regency plays a very strategic role as the forefront of maternal and child health services, but still faces various challenges in the implementation of medical records. Variations in midwives' educational background and experience, limited facilities, high workload, and lack of supervision and feedback cause the quality of medical records in terms of completeness, accuracy, and readability to be not fully in line with the demands of the latest regulations, especially Law No. 17 of 2023 concerning Health, Permenkes No. 24 of 2022 concerning Medical Records, and Permenkes No. 28 of 2017 concerning Licensing and Implementation of Midwife Practices. Technical assistance designed through a series of initial assessments, focused training, field supervision and mentoring, SOP preparation, and monitoring and evaluation has been proven to be qualitatively able to improve the practice of medical record documentation at TPMB. Midwives become more aware of the legal basis and standards of medical records, more skilled at filling out formats systematically, and more aware that documentation is an integral part of professional practice, not just an administrative obligation. The improvement in the level of medical records contributes to improving the quality of the service process through more structured care and more rational clinical decision-making as well as to the quality and safety of patients, especially in terms of smooth referral and continuity of care.

More broadly, the results of this study confirm that technical assistance is a relevant strategy and in line with the direction of national policies, including strengthening the Health Information System and One Data as stipulated in Permenkes No. 18 of 2022 and the preparation of data elements towards electronic medical records in accordance with the Ministry of Health HK.01.07/MENKES/1423/2022. Technical assistance in the implementation of medical records at TPMB not only improves the quality of documents and compliance with regulations, but also becomes an entrance to improve the quality of midwifery services as a whole at the community level. Thus, the development and replication of contextual technical assistance models such as in Simalungun is worthy of consideration as part of the strategy to strengthen midwifery services in other regions in Indonesia.

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