

# AdSEARCH BITES

Monthly Newsletter

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## Seminar on the future of Artificial Intelligence in Obstetrics care

22 January 2024

A scientific seminar on *'The Role of Artificial Intelligence on the High-Risk Pregnancy Identification and Management: Opportunities, challenges and Implications in the Context of Bangladesh'* was jointly organised by AdSEARCH by icddr,b and the Maternal Fetal Medicine Society of Bangladesh (MFMSB) at icddr,b Sasakawa Auditorium.

**Dr Mohammed Nizam Uddin**, Line Director for Maternal, Neonatal, Child, and Adolescent Health (MNC&AH), Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), graced this seminar as the Chief Guest. The event commenced with a welcome address



by **Prof. Firoza Begum**, MFMSB. In his keynote speech on the future of Artificial Intelligence in Obstetrics care, **Associate Prof. Mahesh Choolani**, Head and Senior Consultant at the National University Hospital in Singapore stated, "AI core will assist junior doctors and other healthcare professionals in providing better care for pregnant women and their fetuses, thereby enhancing the human potential of future generations". **Dr Ahmed Ehsanur Rahman**, scientist from the Maternal and Child Health Division (MCHD) moderated a Sensitisation Session on developing a high-risk pregnancy register and registry system in

Bangladesh. High Government officials including representatives from DGFP, DGHS, MFMSB, BSMMU, OGSB, and BCPS participated in the seminar.

Currently AdSEARCH by icddr,b is working on conducting 4 studies in relation to AI: *AdMonitor*, *AdPreDiCction*, *AdRegister*, *AdManage*. Dr Ahmed Ehsanur Rahman serves as the principal investigator for the ongoing studies. Through the *AdMonitor* study, early identification of high-risk pregnant women will be made by monitoring real-time vital signs data. *AdPreDiCction* study is

conducting a prospective cohort on around 1000 pregnant women throughout their pregnancy period till 42 days postnatal period. *AdRegister* study is for designing, developing and demonstrating a digital data register system for strengthening documentation of high-risk pregnancy, infertility & obstetric fistula. *AdManage* study is for strengthening maternal and neonatal health services based on national guidelines and global standards.

This activity is under:

***Design, development and demonstration of a digital data register for advancing the register system and management of infertility, high-risk pregnancy and obstetric fistula (AdRegister)***

***Work Package 2: Facility-based Studies***

# Dissemination Seminar on **Breaking the Silence: Unveiling Infertility in Bangladesh**

23 January 2024



“Historically society solely blamed women for infertility, neglecting the role of men but times have changed, and there is now a more inclusive approach to infertility treatment”, renowned gynecologist and obstetrician **Dr T A Chowdhury** shared the transformative perspective as a panelist in a dissemination seminar titled **‘Breaking the Silence: Unveiling Infertility in Bangladesh: Prevalence, Experience, and Care-seeking in Selected Rural Areas’** at the icddr,b Sasakawa Auditorium.

**Dr Shams El Arifeen**, Project Director of AdSEARCH by icddr,b, welcomed attendees. **Farah Naz Rahman, Shanaj Sultana Sathi**, and **M Moinuddin**

**Haider** shared the preliminary findings on the prevalence of infertility and health-seeking behaviour of infertile couples, social implications of infertility and care-seeking experiences with availability and challenges in service provision from a comprehensive study.

Following the presentation, a distinguished panel engaged in a thought-provoking discussion. The panelists included **Prof. Farhana Dewan**, President of the Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society of Bangladesh (OGSB), **Prof. Firoza Begum**, President of the Maternal Fetal Medicine Society of Bangladesh (MFMSB). **Prof. Parveen Fatima** Former chairman of the

Department of Reproductive Endocrinology & Infertility, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), and **Dr Rashida Begum**, Secretary General of Fertility and Sterility Society of Bangladesh. They emphasised the overlooked human rights aspects of infertility in global and national SRHR policies and discussed the limited information available on the experiences of infertile couples in Bangladesh. The panelists also explored both opportunities and challenges in infertility treatment within the country. **Dr Quamrun Nahar**, Deputy Project Director, AdSEARCH and PI of the study moderated the panel discussion. **Dr Ahmed Ehsanur Rahman** presented a

comprehensive plan for the way forward in addressing these issues.

Around 49 million couples experience infertility globally. To understand the local landscape, AdSEARCH by icddr,b undertook a cross-sectional study at the Matlab and Baliakandi upazilas from October to December 2022

involving a household survey among 2,948 currently married women aged 20-49 years. Despite having key human rights aspects, Infertility is being neglected in the global and national SRHR policies and agenda. Infertility is an emerging public health problem and is strongly linked to several Sustainable Development Goals.

This activity is under:  
**Enabling Adolescent-Friendly Health Services in a Rural Area in Bangladesh: An Implementation Research**

**Work Package 1:  
Population-based Studies**

# Inauguration of Adolescent Friendly Health Service (AFHS) centre

30 January 2024

In collaboration with the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), AdSEARCH by icddr,b organised the **'Inauguration ceremony of the Adolescent Friendly Health Service (AFHS)'** center at Rajbari district. The implementation study focuses on enabling an environment for adolescents for SRHR-related service utilisation.

The inauguration programme commenced with a speech by **Dr Quamrun Nahar**, Deputy Project Director, AdSEARCH and PI of the study. She highlighted the current status of Adolescent health in rural areas and the purpose of the research study. This programme was graced by **Dr Shamsul Hoque**, Programme Manager (Adolescent Health & School Health Programme), DGHS. Dr Hoque discussed the current methods and proposed structure of adolescent-friendly health service provision for strengthening the adolescent health system. **Dr Muktadeer**



**Arefin**, Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer, Rajbari coordinated the programme.

In parallel, a two-day-long training session was conducted, focusing on adolescent-friendly health services from 31 January to 1 February 2024. The training

comprised 15 sessions organised under four thematic areas: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), Gender-Based Violence (GBV), adolescent nutrition, and psychosocial health.

Government stakeholders from the district level in Rajbari, including the Civil Surgeon, MO-CS, Senior and Junior Health Education Officers, District Education Officer, Superintendent, and Resident Medical Officer from District Hospital, as well as the Deputy Director of Islamic Foundation, actively participated in this training. Stakeholders from the Upazila level in Baliakandi, such as the Upazila Health and Family Planning





Officer and the Upazila Secondary Education Officer, were also engaged. Additionally, service providers at the AFHS center at Upazila Health Complex in Baliakandi, including the Medical Officer, Senior Staff Nurses, and SACMO, took part in the training.

The training sessions were facilitated

by **Dr Shamsul Hoque; Dr Shamima Akther Chowdhury**, Deputy Project Coordinator at icddr,b; **Dr Afroza Akhter**, a psychiatrist from the National Institute of Mental Health & Hospital; and **Suhan Ahmed Omi**, Research Officer at icddr,b. Dr Quamrun Nahar, led and supervised the training sessions.

This activity is under:  
*Estimating the Prevalence of Infertility and Understanding the Experiences and Service utilization Pattern of Infertile Couples in Rural Bangladesh*

*Work Package 1:  
Population-based Studies*

# GAC visits Essential Gynaecological Skills (EGS) and Wellbeing Corner study sites

29 January 2024



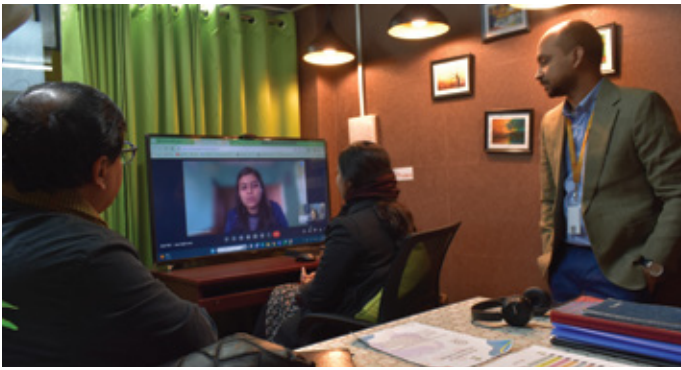
Introductory meeting among Civil Surgeon, Deputy Civil Surgeon of Dinajpur with GAC, AdSEARCH Co-ordination Team, EGS and wellbeing Corner study team



Workshop on 'Advancing SRHR activity through the EGS implementation package and the Wellbeing Corner' at 250 bed General Hospital Dinajpur



GAC representatives are examining the first gynaecological register developed by Maternal Health Programme of DGHS with the technical support from icddr,b



GAC representative is assessing the technological aspects at the Wellbeing Corner

30 January 2024



Introductory meeting Fulbari Upazila Health Complex, Dinajpur



GAC representative is discussing gynaecological outdoor activities and EGS initiatives at Fulbari Upazila Health Complex



GAC representatives are engaging with Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer and other officials on the Wellbeing Corner study at Chirirbandar



icddr,b team presenting an overview of EGS study

# Quick Picks



## Stories of Impact: Marking 3 years of the global movement to eliminate cervical cancer

Few diseases reflect global inequities as much as cancer of the cervix. Nearly 90% of the deaths in 2018 occurred in low- and middle-income countries. This is where the burden of cervical cancer is greatest because access to public health services is limited and screening and treatment for the disease have not been widely implemented.

Read more in the latest WHO newsletter:

<https://www.who.int/initiatives/cervical-cancer-elimination-initiative>

## AdSEARCH Bites Previous Issues:



<http://adsearch.icddrb.org/Study/AllPublications>



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