

Leading Article

Rights of The Newborn

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It is becoming acceptable to claim that newborn babies have rights based on our current understanding of their basic needs. During the second half of the twentieth century, a great diversity of emerging scientific disciplines (e.g. ethology, behavioral effects of hormones, immunology, bacteriology, initiation of lactation) have been identified these needs.

The newborn represents a very special case an account of his vulnerability and total dependence. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948) declares "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". The child by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care (International Convention on the Rights of the Child UN, 1989) The document having the title "Declaration of the rights of the newborn" having several priorities should be provided by all concern who are involved in the promotion and protection of the newborn's health.

- Every newborn has the right to life and the best levels of health. This right must be respected by all peoples and governments without any racial, sexual, geographical, social status, religion, cultural or any other kind of discrimination.
- Every new born has the right to be born in a most suitable place. He or she is entitled to appropriate assistance during delivery - this should be guaranteed with equality, without any form of discrimination.
- Every newborn be healthy or ill, is entitled to be the best care, social protection and safety available, medical, social and psychological care of the unborn baby and the mother, during pregnancy and delivery.
- Newborn should enjoy the highest degree of health and to have access to medical rehabilitation

and preventive services. The states must take all necessary measure to execute those.

- The newborn must be guaranteed vicinity to his parents like rooming in. Newborn having health problem must be ensured by special care unit and must be managed in compliance with the principles of family centered care to minimize stress and pain of parents. Severely ill newborn e.g. extreme pre-maturity, malformations or life threatening abnormalities appropriate treatment must be guaranteed.
- No medical act should be carried out without the informed consent of the parents, given the lack of autonomy of the newborn and only emergency situations are excluded from this at which the physician is forced to act in defense of the child's best interests and there is no possibility of any intervention by the parents or guardian. There must be equity of attention and absolute rejection of all forms of discrimination, irrespective of economic or social class.
- New born should not be attempted to keep alive whose immaturity is greater than the lowest limit of viability. Parents should be informed before the birth whenever possible.
- To guarantee the best psychological and physical development, breast feeding must be facilitated and encouraged.
- Every newborn has the right to correct nutrition, which should guarantee his / her growth.
- Every newborn should be registered after birth by giving a name and to acquire a nationality. The newborn is a person, as such he / she is entitled to the full respect of his dignity.

Deaths in the first month of life account for an increasing share of all child deaths, specially in developing countries. Over the past decade, Bangladesh has witnessed major shifts in health policy and programming aimed at improving newborn survival. Though Bangladesh has already attained Millennium

Development Goal (MDG-4), but the neonatal mortality rate has improved more slowly from about 52 deaths per 1000 to 28 per 1000 live birth from 1990s to 2010s (BDS 2011).

Mortality and Morbidity of Newborn is an important indicator of newborn health. To improve this UN declaration on newborn rights should be met. This needs multifactorial and multiparticipatory approach. Implementation of the findings of situation analysis, intervention, monitoring should be emphasized.

Further reading:

1. Declaration of the newborn's right. Adapted from declaration of Barcelona SNS 2010.
2. Universal declaration of human rights (UN 1948).
3. Obnet, Michel - The rights of the human newborn baby. *Journal of pre-natal psychology and health*. 2012; 27: 25.
4. The PARMA CHARTER of The rights of the newborn.