

## Policy Makers Position on the Implementation of Social Support for Women during Childbirth

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**Background:** Promoting respectful care at childbirth is key to improve quality of care and promote utilization of maternal and child health services. Women generally gave birth surrounded by family members and with the support of other women, but with the movement of birth to the hospitals, this valued tradition was lost and women became subject to and dependent on medical technology and hospital routines trample on natural birthing process and has contributed to low utilization of maternal health care services in the public health facilities among other factors in Nigeria .

**Aims:** The study examine the hospital policy maker's perceptions and attitudes to Continuous Labour Support (CLS) of women choices in public health facilities in the South-West region of Nigeria

**Method:** This qualitative, exploratory and descriptive study involved Nurse/Midwives (n = 45) and 14 hospital policy leaders selected in seven public health facilities in Ondo state, Nigeria. Focus group discussions and individual interviews were conducted until data saturation occurred. Data was analyzed through Tesch's method of thematic analysis yielding 3 major themes and 6 subthemes.

**Results:** The study findings reveal only occasional/discretionary practice of CLS in the public health facilities, lack of policy and guideline for its implementation was also reported. The study participants expressed a positive disposition to CLS introduction and use women preferred person or persons from their social networks based on beneficial effect to all stakeholders. However, CLS implementation in public health facilities in Nigeria will depend largely on the formulation of policy statement regarding CLS and complete overhauling existing infrastructure with adequate measures to address other challenges identified in the study.

### Biography

Dr. Olabisi Fatimo Ibitoye is currently a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of South Africa, Pretoria. She has worked as an educator lecturer and a former vice principal at the school of midwifery, Ministry of Health, Ondo State Nigeria. She also served in the capacity of the state facilitator for the Mandatory Continuous Professional Development Programme (MCPDP) for Nurses in Ondo from 2016-2018. She bagged her PhD in Nursing from the University of Western Cape, South Africa in 2017. Her research focus and interest is in Maternal, Child and Adolescent health.

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