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| Topics: **SIDS/SUID** |
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| **SIDS in Latin America: Diversity and Common Features** |
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| **Objectives of the session** The objective of this thematic panel is to learn about the different scenarios of SIDS problems in Latin American countries and agree on a recommendation for safe sleep based on scientific evidence for all children in the region, taking into account the specific aspects of each community  **Content of the session** Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the most common cause of suspected unexpected death in the post-neonatal period in Latin American households. In developing countries with little knowledge about SIDS, the low percentage of autopsies, the incomplete records of births and inadequate preparation of death certificates, there is no reliable record of all cases. Consequently, the true incidence of SIDS in Latin America is unknown. In Europe and North America, the diagnosis of SIDS is considered in those cases where the cause of death remains unknown after a detailed clinical history, death scene investigation, complete post mortem examination using a standardized protocol, and multi-agency review have taken place. However, this approach to investigate sudden and unexpected death in infants is not used in most Latin American countries. A notable exception is Montevideo, Uruguay, where the systematic autopsy notarized by a pediatrician and forensic pathologist has revealed the true cause of death in many infants who died of suspected SIDS.      In industrialized countries, SIDS remains the leading cause of post-neonatal mortality in the first year of life.  Because infant mortality rates from other causes are declining, the number of children, dying to SIDS has proportionally increased and is currently recognized as a significant problem.     In developing countries, SIDS can be considered a minor problem when infant mortality from other causes such as respiratory infections and diarrheal diseases are much more common; but it is still a legitimate public health concern.     SIDS occurs most often in the community, and rarely in hospitals when the infant is admitted for a different disease. They are apparently "healthy" babies who die in their homes in different parts of Latin America  **Method and extent of audience participation** Campaigns to decrease the risk of SIDS should be initiated in every community with emphases on healthy  motherhood and safe parenting. With the support of community leaders, the midwives who attend home births, and school staff as agents of health education for young unmarried  students,  it will be possible to bring the focus on SIDS into a functioning part of the national health system.  **Proposed content area and why it is important to participants** The message of safe sleep should include midwives, nurses, doctors, and community leaders. The reduction of mortality from this and other causes requires a commitment from each member of the public health community including medical professionals, infant care institutions and governmental health authorities. |
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