Implementing surgical mentorship in Ethiopia: experiences of mentees, mentors, and leaders

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Disclosures

- Safe Surgery 2020 is funded by the GE Foundation
KEY MESSAGES

- Mentorship is promising for building the capacity of surgical providers in LMICs
- Participants perceived: safer care, increased surgical volume, mentor-mentee bonds, and a culture of learning
- Two-thirds of mentees reported increased confidence & job satisfaction
- The holistic approach, effective mentee-mentor relationships & receptive climate contributed to the intervention’s success
A qualified workforce is critical to effective functioning of health systems
- However, skill gaps present a challenge in low-resource settings
- Evidence suggests that mentorship can build the capacity of health providers, improving quality, access, and systems
- Little is known about mentorship in surgery
- We studied a novel surgical mentorship intervention as part of Safe Surgery 2020 in five rural Ethiopian facilities to understand factors affecting implementation of surgical mentorship in LMICs
Safe Surgery 2020 Mentorship Intervention

Changing culture
• Leadership Training

Capacity Building
• Safety protocols and data quality training
• Facility Accelerator Fund

Facilitating sustainability
• Mentorship

Aim
• Improve technical and non-technical skills & surgical ecosystem
Onsite mentoring one day per month by a multidisciplinary mentorship team from Ayder Regional Hospital.
Methods

- **Study Design**
  - Convergent mixed-methods

- **Setting**
  - 5 rural hospitals in Tigray, Ethiopia

- **Participants (N=26)**
  - Mentees (IESOs, anesthetists, nurses), mentors, hospital leaders and stakeholders

- **Data collection (2018)**
  - Survey & interviews in English & Tigrinya
Data Collection

**Intervention Characteristics**
Mentorship areas, relationships & characteristics

**Organizational Context**
Facilitators & barriers to implementation

**Perceived Impact**
Satisfaction, changes made & areas of impact
Major Emergent Themes

THEME I
FAVILITATORS

THEME II
BARRIERS

THEME III
PERCEIVED IMPACT
FACILITATORS

- Intervention characteristics
  - Systems focus of the mentorship intervention
  - Multidisciplinary mentorship team
  - Mentee – mentor relationships and mentor characteristics
- Organizational context
  - Receptive implementation climate
Mentee-Mentor Relationships

Friendly & non-hierarchical

Nonjudgmental feedback

Psychological safety
Mentor Characteristics

- Accessibility
- Understanding of local context
- Generosity
- Interpersonal skills
BARRIERS

- Intervention characteristics
  - Lack of understanding of mentorship intervention
  - Insufficient clinical training
  - Inadequate mentor support
- Organizational context
  - Challenging context
Challenging Implementation Context

- Insufficient workforce
- Lack of equipment, supplies and utilities
- Surgical culture
- Isolated, high patient ratios, limited continuing education
Areas of Mentoring

Clinical
- Clinical skills and knowledge
- Surgical Safety Checklist implementation
- Data collection and reporting
- Data use
- Quality improvement plan assistance
- Prioritization of surgical problems
- Staff
- Equipment and supplies

Percent of Respondents

Greatly important to mentees
Mentors provided to a great extent
PERCEIVED IMPACT

- Overall mentee experience, satisfaction, & support
- Reported changes
- Reported impact of intervention
Overall Mentee Experience, Satisfaction, & Support

A. Overall Experience
- Positive: 100%

B. Overall Satisfaction
- Satisfied: 79%
- Neutral or dissatisfied: 21%

C. Support for Continuation
- Supported continuation: 87%
- Opposed continuation: 13%
Reported Changes

- Changes in how surgical teams practice care: 84%
- Changes in facility: 76%
# Reported Impact of Intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased confidence</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation of SSC</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased job satisfaction</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort in asking for case consultations</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved relationships with colleagues</td>
<td>68%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved quality of data collection</td>
<td>67%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved teamwork and communication</td>
<td>63%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved team spirit</td>
<td>58%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helped to achieve QI action plan</td>
<td>58%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved knowledge</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced career choices</td>
<td>52%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased surgical volume and reduced referrals out</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culture of mentorship established</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved clinical skills</td>
<td>39%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobilized resources - supplies &amp; equipment</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved RHB engagement</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobilized resources - staff</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of participants who reported "a great extent" of each outcome at their site
EMERGENT THEMES

- Safer and more frequent provision of surgical care
- Establishment of collegial bonds
- Improved teamwork and organizational culture
- Inculcation of a culture of continuous learning
Lessons Learned: Intervention Characteristics

- Holistic intervention
- Multidisciplinary mentorship
- Psychological safe mentee-mentor relationship
- Clinical training prior to mentorship
- Innovations that increase dose
Lessons Learned: Organizational Context

- Receptive climate
- Leadership engagement
- Participation by regional authorities
- Adequate resources for surgical teams
- Mentors require resources
- Building a culture of mentorship