## **Illustration of Optimal Perinatal Care**

- •Women access information that will help them plan for new motherhood and anticipate baby's needs.
- Care Provider(s) has upto-date information on supports in the system and in the community.
- Care Provider(s) discuss post-birth planning with mother and family, ID supports anticipated. Can provide contact information to women.
- Women able to devise plan of support following birth, and able to initiate contact with community/peer supports.

Antenatal

## Immediate Postnatal/Postpartum

- Women living in vulnerable circumstances are informed of and offered access to appropriate supports/resources.
  Contact initiated.
- Care Provider(s) discuss post-discharge planning for self- and infant care, ID supports anticipated.
- Care providers provide consistent messages, and share contact information for community/peer supports.
- Information re: birth, PN, PP course is sent to community-based care provider, with appointment made for follow-up.

- Women are able to access timely and consistent care, support, follow-up or information for themselves or their baby.
- Care providers have timely and reliable access to patient information, and resources for referral if needed.
- •Community/peer supports have connections to the health care system to ensure they are providing consistent information.
- Appropriate supports/resources are available and accessible for women living in vulnerable circumstances.

Home community

The above depiction suggests optimal organization of care and communication throughout the perinatal continuum. There are several processes involved in creating an integrated continuum of postpartum/postnatal care for mothers, newborns and families. Antenatally, women require access to credible information about post-birth care from clinicians who can help them navigate community resources. Such anticipatory guidance supports mothers and families to create post-birth care plans, understand and create systems of support, and enhances mothers' readiness for newborn care and the transition from hospital to home. In the **immediate postpartum/postnatal period**, mothers, newborns and families, particularly those who are vulnerable, require access to services and supports with consistent messaging between providers and communication of relevant information between all care settings (i.e. in hospital, with PH, with PHC and with community resources). Once **home**, mothers and newborns, particularly those living in challenging situations or with reduced health literacy, require timely access to follow-up care and credible information about resources. Care providers should work collaboratively to create seamless, integrated systems of care supported by good communication.