



Preventing postpartum hemorrhage in the Dominican Republic

Promoting the use of a life-saving intervention—active management of the third stage of labor

In 2006, the Sociedad Dominicana de Obstetricia Ginecología and the Departamento de Enfermería Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo joined forces to decrease the rate of maternal mortality and morbidity from postpartum hemorrhage (PPH) in hospitals throughout the Dominican Republic.

With grant funds awarded by the Prevention of Postpartum Hemorrhage Initiative (POPPHI), the team worked to:

- Update and strengthen health providers' skills in the active management of the third stage of labor (AMTSL).
- Secure a significant donation and subsequent discount for oxytocin—the drug of choice for use in AMTSL.
- Create and distribute educational and training materials for use in national health centers.

In 2006, with minimal funding, the Dominican Republic team conducted AMTSL **trainings** for nearly 200 health care providers in nine hospitals throughout the country. Although AMTSL is an evidence-based intervention proven to reduce postpartum hemorrhage, many providers around the world do not utilize the practice.

The country team coordinated with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOHSW) and the Directorate of MCH and Adolescent Health to select training facilities. With hospital managers also participating in trainings, the group capitalized on the opportunity to also present guidelines on the proper management and storage of oxytocin.

For use in trainings and to encourage AMTSL use, the team designed **outreach materials and training tools** to support their efforts. Specially designed posters are now on display in targeted health centers around the country. The team also created an AMTSL training manual using evidence-based research, including resources from the World Health Organization (WHO) and other organizations.

Through a unique and innovative **public-private collaboration with a drug supplier**, each of nine health centers received 200 ampoules of oxytocin to ensure providers could practice the drug delivery skills honed during training. These ampoules were a combination of donated and discounted oxytocin offered by the drug supplier. This collaboration allowed the team to share oxytocin maintenance and storage information with the supplier, including research findings and WHO recommendations.

One participant noted, “I’m convinced AMTSL should be incorporated into the hospital norms, and it would not be difficult because oxytocin is routinely used and available. Because of this training, I’m more confident about administering oxytocin after the baby is born [rather than the common practice of after the delivery of the placenta].” Health workers from three centers perceived a significant reduction of postpartum bleeding after applying AMTSL and one stated, “The times we have had to resort to transfusion are when the woman has had chronic anemia before giving birth.”

The activities had a catalytic effect on the MOHSW and the Directorate, who made a commitment to support the use of AMTSL nationwide.

About POPPHI

The POPPHI project is led by PATH and includes four partners: RTI International, EngenderHealth, the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics, and the International Confederation of Midwives. With funding from the US Agency for International Development, the POPPHI project works to reduce postpartum hemorrhage—the single most important cause of maternal deaths worldwide. Among its activities, POPPHI awards small grants to midwifery and obstetric/gynecologic associations to support activities that expand the use of AMTSL and other evidence-based interventions that reduce postpartum hemorrhage.



Grantee organizations have engaged in a number of activities: organizing national meetings and workshops to promote policy and programming for preventing PPH and increasing provider skills in AMTSL, as well as improving the distribution of uterotonic drugs.

POPPHI has awarded 15 grants to associations within Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. To learn more visit www.pphprevention.org.