



International Confederation of Midwives

PRESS RELEASE

November 8, 2006

Midwives and obstetricians/gynaecologists advance their campaign to reduce maternal deaths

The International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) and the International Federation of Gynaecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) publish a new joint statement on prevention and treatment of post-partum haemorrhage (PPH) in low resource settings

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, November 8, 2006: Today at the FIGO XVIII World Congress, a new joint statement from ICM and FIGO was launched as the next step in a powerful campaign to combat one of the most frequent causes of maternal death worldwide.

Of the 529,000 maternal deaths that occur each year, an estimated 166,000 are from post-partum haemorrhage (blood loss during childbirth). Women who are sick, malnourished or lacking access to skilled care during pregnancy and childbirth are the most likely to die from post-partum haemorrhage. Midwives and obstetricians are working together to ensure that women receive skilled care during pregnancy and childbirth as a means of reducing this tragedy. A strong partnership between the two groups of health care professionals most involved with the care for women and newborns is one of the most important elements in the essential package of care needed for 'safer' motherhood.

The new statement *Prevention and Treatment of Post-partum Haemorrhage: New Advances for Low Resource Settings* is a follow up to the previous statement launched by ICM and FIGO in 2003. It summarises the current 'state of art and evidence' concerning post-partum haemorrhage.

Agreement on the statement was reached after extensive discussion and examination of up-to-date evidence by an expert group including representatives from ICM, FIGO, researchers and donor agencies.

A supplement to the ICM journal 'International Midwifery' developed collaboratively with FIGO and dedicated to the subject of post-partum haemorrhage has been made available at the FIGO World Congress. In the welcome words to this journal, Dame Karlene Davis, President of ICM, said: 'This publication demonstrates that where midwives and doctors work together, success is significantly enhanced. We have explored the evidence, drafted and agreed two joint statements for worldwide dissemination and collaborated on the organisation of publicity campaigns and training workshops, while continuing to drive forward the action to ensure that this life-saving strategy reaches every woman who needs it.'

FIGO President Dr Arnaldo Acosta added: 'In the spirit of our commitment to this issue, we have again collaborated with our ICM colleagues, and are very pleased to be launching, at the XVIII FIGO World Congress in 2006, a follow –up joint statement'.

Through the work of ICM and FIGO, midwives and obstetricians collaborate in various ways towards fulfilment of the fifth Millennium Development Goal which aims to reduce the maternal mortality ratio by 75% by 2015. Achieving widespread prevention and/or timely and appropriate treatment of post-partum haemorrhage by those who provide care for mothers and newborns will contribute substantially towards this goal. ICM and FIGO have pledged to continue to work together at the international and national levels towards making pregnancy and childbirth 'safer' for women throughout the world.

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