



Preventing postpartum hemorrhage in Nepal

Training promotes life-saving intervention to save lives

Thanks to the efforts of two professional health organizations, health providers now have the skills to perform a simple intervention known to save lives—active management of the third stage of labor (AMTSL).

At 539/100,000 births, Nepal has one of highest maternal mortality rates in the world. A leading cause of death for these women is postpartum hemorrhage (PPH). A 1998 maternal mortality study, conducted by the Ministry of Health (MOH) showed that almost 46 percent of maternal mortality in Nepal is due PPH, meaning that one woman dies every two hours from PPH. Many of these deaths occur at home without skilled birth attendants.

The Nepal Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (NESOG) and the Nursing Association of Nepal (NAN) joined forces to tackle this issue. This partnership focused on enhancing AMTSL skills of health providers and advocating for changes in national standards on management of the third stage of labor. Although AMTSL is an evidence-based intervention proven to reduce PPH, many providers around the world do not practice it.

With a grant from the Prevention of Postpartum Hemorrhage Initiative (POPPHI), NESOG and NAN:

- Developed consensus and support for POPPHI activities among key representatives and stakeholders.
- Updated and strengthen health providers' skills in AMTSL through a training of trainers workshop.
- Increased and utilization of AMTSL throughout the country by providing regional training sessions.

NESOG and NAN hosted a national advocacy meeting to increase support for the expansion of AMTSL among policymakers and stakeholders. Participants represented professional health organizations, the MOH, and multinational and nongovernmental organizations working in Nepal. All stakeholders expressed their appreciation and support for this joint initiative.

The Nepal team also trained trainers who later conducted AMTSL workshops for nearly 100 health care providers in four regions in the country. Regional training participants received up-to-date information on AMTSL and oxytocic drug use, opportunities for practicing AMTSL in the clinical setting, and time for creating workplans specific to their organizations. Trainees included providers from hospitals, health centers, health posts, and district health offices as well as tutors and teachers from nursing campuses responsible for pre-service training of nurses and service providers at clinical sites. Participants in the trainings identified plans for increasing the use of AMTSL as well issues and concerns for further study.

Organizations are also now working to ensure a continuous supply of uterotonic drugs and proper storage of these drugs. A survey of participants conducted in the eight months following the training found that 92 percent of them report performing all three components of AMTSL. Participants also note that the rate of PPH has decreased due to the implementation of AMTSL.

According to NAN and NESOG, the greatest lesson learned from this joint activity was the benefit of nurses and doctors working together as a team, which led to increased knowledge and skills related to AMTSL for all.

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, POPPHI works to reduce postpartum hemorrhage (excessive bleeding after delivery)—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 (use of a uterotonic drug, assisting with the delivery of the placenta, and massaging the uterus after delivery) and other evidence-based interventions that reduce PPH.



Grantee organizations have engaged in a number of activities: organizing national meetings and workshops on preventing PPH and improving provider skills in AMTSL and use and availability 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.