WHO recommendation on active management of labour

16 February 2018

Recommendation

A package of care for active management of labour for prevention of delay in labour is not recommended.

(Not recommended)

Publication history

First published: February 2018

Updated: No update planned

Assessed as up-to-date: February 2018

Remarks

- This recommendation has been integrated from the WHO recommendations for augmentation of labour, in which the GDG for that guideline determined it to be a conditional recommendation based on low-quality evidence.
- The GDG agreed that this package of interventions has potential benefits in terms of reducing the duration of labour and possible caesarean section rate. However, the group did not support its recommendation as it considered the approach to be highly prescriptive and interventional and one that could undermine women’s rights, choices and autonomy as recipients of care. In addition, the intervention is considered to be a complex package that exerts considerable demands on health resources, which may not be feasible in many settings. The GDG chose not to recommend the package because the reported clinical benefits do not clearly outweigh these other considerations.
- The GDG also noted that continuous one-to-one care is the only component of the package that has been shown to be beneficial, and is probably the component responsible for the benefits attributed to the package. Continuous support during labour as a separate intervention is recommended in the WHO recommendations for augmentation of labour.
- Evidence supporting this recommendation can be found in the source guideline document, available at:

WHO recommendation on the use of a package of care for active management of labour for prevention of delay in labour
Related links

WHO recommendations on intrapartum care for a positive childbirth experience
(2018) - full document and evidence tables

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