Misoprostol for PPH prevention and treatment

I suggest to include misoprostol in EML complementary for the prevention and treatment of postpartum haemorrhage in those places where there are no conditions or personnel trained to use oxytocin or ergonovine.

Active management of third stage of labor contributes to reducing morbidity and mortality from postpartum hemorrhage, which impacts on achieving the Millennium Development Goal No. 5.

Summary of recent evidence (misoprostol to PPH prevention and treatment):

- In Afghanistan, community based education and distribution of misoprostol is safe, acceptable, feasible, and effective. This strategy should be considered for other countries where access to skilled attendance is limited.1

- Further research is needed to more accurately assess the potential beneficial and harmful effects of misoprostol and to determine the smallest dose that is effective and safe. In this review, 400 μg of misoprostol were found to be safer than 600 μg and just as effective.2

- Both interventions were more effective at decreasing mortality and anemia than standard management. The most efficient scale-up plan would focus initially on increasing coverage with the treatment strategy ($6 per DALY).3

- Community-based distribution of misoprostol for PPH prevention can be successfully implemented under government health services in a low-resource, geographically challenging setting, resulting in much increased population-level protection against PPH, with particularly large gains among the disadvantaged.4

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4 Swaraj Rajbhandari, Stephen Hodgins, Harshad Sanghvi, Robert McPherson, Yasho V. Pradhan, Abdullah H. Baqui and Misoprostol Study Group 1. Expanding uterotonic protection following childbirth through
• Misoprostol is clinically equivalent to oxytocin when used to stop excessive post-partum bleeding suspected to be due to uterine atony in women who have received oxytocin prophylactically during the third stage of labour.5

• In settings in which use of oxytocin is not feasible, misoprostol might be a suitable first-line treatment alternative for post-partum haemorrhage.6

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