February 18, 2011

The Secretary of the 18th Expert Committee on the Selection and Use of Essential Medicines
Medicine Access and Rational Use (MAR)
Department of Essential Medicines and Pharmaceutical Policies (EMP)
World Health Organization
20 Avenue Appia
CH-1211 Geneva 27
Switzerland
emlsecretariat@who.int.

Dear Expert Committee for the Selection and Use of Essential Medicines:

The OBGYN Association of Guatemala (AGOG) is writing to express support for a revision to the specifications for oxytocin formulation in the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines. The current listing specifies oxytocin injection as “10 IU in 1-ml ampoule.” It is our hope that the Expert Committee will consider deletion of “in 1-ml ampoule” from the specification as requested by WHO’s Department of Child and Adolescent Health and Development and Department of Making Pregnancy Safer. The current specification may cause countries to believe that the 1-ml ampoule is the only allowable presentation for oxytocin and could thereby limit their ability to consider innovative presentations in compact, prefilled, autodisposable devices such as the Uniject® device.

Guatemala completed a successful pilot introduction of oxytocin in the Uniject device in 2009. We are now making plans to make this innovative tool widely available in our country as means to deliver the lifesaving benefits of oxytocin in an effort to reduce postpartum hemorrhage.

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2 Uniject is a registered trademark of BD.
We strongly urge the Expert Committee to prioritize women’s lives and support increased access to innovative presentations of oxytocin by revising the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines to delete “in 1-ml ampoule” from the oxytocin specification. Thank you for your thorough consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Marco Adolfo Peláez
Head Secretary
12 calle 12-04 Zona 9 Edificio Plaza del Sol of. 3-S
Guatemala C.A.
Ph: (502) 2331-2629; (502) 2361-8992
Fax: (502) 2360-4858