

11.12. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Should MIDWIVES deliver magnesium sulphate to women in preterm labour as a neuroprotection for the foetus?

Problem: Poor access to medical management of preterm birth
Option: Midwives delivering magnesium sulphate for preterm labour
Comparison: Care delivered by other cadres or no care
Setting: Community/primary health care settings in LMICs with poor access to health professionals

Recommendation	<i>We recommend against the option</i>	<i>We suggest considering the option only in the context of rigorous research</i>	<i>We recommend the option</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>We suggest considering the option in the context of rigorous research. We suggest evaluating this intervention where midwives are already an established cadre and where a well-functioning referral system is in place or can be put in place.</p>			
Justification	<p>There is insufficient evidence on the effectiveness of midwives delivering magnesium sulphate to women in preterm labour as a neuroprotective for the foetus. However, midwives have the necessary clinical skills for diagnosis of preterm labour and for the administration of this drug and the intervention may be acceptable and feasible.</p>		
Implementation considerations	<p>Not applicable</p>		
Monitoring and evaluation			
Research priorities	<p>Studies are needed of the effects and the acceptability of midwives delivering magnesium sulphate and / or corticosteroids for women at risk of preterm birth.</p>		

11.12. EVIDENCE BASE:

Should MIDWIVES deliver magnesium sulphate to women in preterm labour as a neuroprotective for the fetus?

Problem: Poor access to medical management of preterm birth
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CRITERIA	JUDGEMENT	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS AND QUERIES										
BENEFITS & HARMS OF THE OPTIONS	<p>Are the anticipated desirable effects large?</p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/> Probably no <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Probably yes <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Varies <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>A systematic review searched for studies that assessed the effects of midlevel providers, including midwives, in improving the delivery of health care services (Lassi 2012). However, the review did not identify any studies that assessed the effects of midwives delivering magnesium sulphate for women in preterm labour. We are therefore unable to draw any conclusions about the desirable or undesirable effects of this intervention.</p> <p>Indirect evidence: The review (Lassi 2012) did identify a number of other studies, all from high income settings, in which midwives delivered antenatal, intrapartum and postpartum care, although it is not clear precisely what services this care included. The review suggests that midwife-led care may improve several health outcomes while it may make no difference to other outcomes. However, the certainty of this evidence varies. Similar findings were seen in another systematic review on the effects of midwife care (Hatem 2008)</p> <p>Annex: page 4 (Lassi 2012)</p>											
	<p>Are the anticipated undesirable effects small?</p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/> Probably no <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Probably yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Varies <input type="checkbox"/></p>												
	<p>What is the certainty of the anticipated effects?</p> <p>Very low <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> No direct evidence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Varies <input type="checkbox"/></p>												
	<p>Are the desirable effects large relative to the undesirable effects?</p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/> Probably no <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Probably yes <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Varies <input type="checkbox"/></p>												
RESOURCE USE	<p>Are the resources required small?</p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/> Probably no <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Probably yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Varies <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Main resource requirements</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Resource</th> <th>Settings in which midwives already provide other care</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Training</td> <td>E.g. less than 1 week of training for midwives to diagnosis pre-term labour, gestational age and, for magnesium sulphate, be given skills to safely administer and monitor treatment</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supervision and monitoring</td> <td>Regular supervision by senior midwife or doctor</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supplies</td> <td>Magnesium sulphate, IV equipment</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Referral</td> <td>Transportation to a centre where comprehensive emergency obstetric care (CeMOC) is available</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Resource	Settings in which midwives already provide other care	Training	E.g. less than 1 week of training for midwives to diagnosis pre-term labour, gestational age and, for magnesium sulphate, be given skills to safely administer and monitor treatment	Supervision and monitoring	Regular supervision by senior midwife or doctor	Supplies	Magnesium sulphate, IV equipment	Referral	Transportation to a centre where comprehensive emergency obstetric care (CeMOC) is available	
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	CRITERIA	JUDGEMENT	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS AND QUERIES
	<p>Is the incremental cost small relative to the benefits?</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> Probably no <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Probably yes <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Varies <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Uncertain as there is no direct evidence on effectiveness.</p>	
ACCEPTABILITY	<p>Is the option acceptable to most stakeholders?</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> Probably no <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Probably yes <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Varies <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>A systematic review of task-shifting in midwifery programmes (Colvin 2012) did not identify any studies that evaluated the acceptability of magnesium sulphate or corticosteroids for preterm birth when delivered by midwives. We are therefore uncertain about the acceptability of these interventions to key stakeholders.</p> <p>Indirect evidence: For other midwife-delivered interventions, the same review suggests the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mothers and midwives are more likely to accept task-shifting initiatives if they increase the midwives' ability to provide more holistic and continuous care (moderate certainty evidence) • Midwives and their supervisors and trainers generally felt midwives had no problem learning new medical information and practicing new clinical techniques (moderate certainty evidence). Midwives may also be motivated by being "upskilled" as it can potentially lead to increased status, promotion opportunities and increased job satisfaction (moderate certainty evidence) • However, midwives may not readily accept tasks where pregnancy is viewed as risky and uncertain (moderate certainty evidence). In addition, midwives may be concerned about the increased liability that may accompany new tasks, and may be wary of new tasks that increase their workload (moderate certainty evidence) • Doctors may be skeptical about the extension of midwifery roles in obstetric care, although doctors who worked closely with midwives tended to have better attitudes towards them (low certainty evidence) • A lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities between midwives and other health worker cadres, as well as status and power differences may also lead to poor working relationships and 'turf battles' (moderate certainty evidence). <p>Annex: page 20 (Colvin 2012)</p>	
FEASIBILITY	<p>Is the option feasible to implement?</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> Probably no <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Probably yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Varies <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>The intervention requires relatively few supplies (magnesium sulphate and to IV equipment). In addition, it is simple to deliver.</p> <p>The intervention requires some training. Regular supervision needs to be in place, and adequate referral to a higher level of care for further management may also be necessary. However, a systematic review (Colvin 2012) suggests that ongoing support, training and supervision was often insufficient in midwife taskshifting programmes (moderate certainty evidence). In some settings, changes to norms or regulations may be needed to allow midwives to prescribe and deliver magnesium sulphate.</p> <p>Annex: page 20 (Colvin 2012)</p>	