

Midwives are key to local and global maternal & newborn health

FIGO - the only global organisation representing gynecologists and obstetricians, with member associations in 125 countries/territories - strongly believes that there are excellent reasons for obstetricians and gynecologists to collaborate closely with midwives to help strengthen midwifery.

The new subtheme for 2014 is: 'Midwives changing the world one family at a time', which builds on the overarching longstanding theme, 'The world needs midwives now more than ever'.

FIGO President, Professor Sir Sabaratnam Arulkumaran, said: 'This new subtheme perfectly encapsulates the essence of the reach of midwifery. As multi-faceted healthcare professionals, working locally as well as globally, midwives provide a critical continuum of care not only to women and their newborns, but also to their extended families and communities. The care they provide - playing an active role in saving the lives of women and children - improves communities on a local level, and then extends outwards, helping to work towards a global realisation of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 4 and 5, "Reduce Child Mortality" and "Improve Maternal Health" respectively.'

FIGO considers midwives to be essential collaborative partners. For example, one of FIGO's current projects - 'Improving the Quality of Maternal and Newborn Healthcare Services Through Accelerated Implementation of the Essential Interventions by the Healthcare Professionals' Associations', funded by the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, involves FIGO, the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) and the International Pediatric Association (IPA) leading a multi-stakeholder plan of action in two countries, Uganda and Indonesia. The selected Essential Interventions focus on the birth and postnatal period, covering a critical period for mothers and newborns and brings a special opportunity for obstetricians, midwives and paediatricians to work collaboratively.

Professor Arulkumaran added: 'FIGO actively encourages its member associations to collaborate with midwifery associations - partnerships between health professional organisations (HPOs) and midwives can produce effective professional results through complementary professional strengths, effective networking, and through encouraging sustainability.'

Resources:

- 1 <http://www.internationalmidwives.org/>
- 2 <http://www.internationalmidwives.org/events/idotm/>
- 3 <http://who.int/topics/midwifery/en/>
- 4 <http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/mothers/pid/4384>

About FIGO

FIGO is a professional organisation that brings together obstetrical and gynecological associations from all over the world.

FIGO's vision is that women of the world achieve the highest possible standards of physical, mental, reproductive and sexual health and wellbeing throughout their lives. We lead on global programme activities, with a particular focus on sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia.

FIGO advocates on a global stage, especially in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) pertaining to reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and non-communicable diseases (SDG3). We also work to raise the status of women and enable their active participation to achieve their reproductive and sexual rights, including addressing FGM and gender based violence (SDG5).

We also provide education and training for our Member Societies and build capacities of those from low-resource countries through strengthening leadership, good practice and promotion of policy dialogues.

FIGO is in official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO) and a consultative status with the United Nations (UN).