

Session Outline: Supporting Birth in Alternative Positions

Time: 2 hours

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

1. Explain the rationale for supporting birth (and labor) in alternative positions as a key component of respectful maternity care
2. Practice supporting birth in an alternative position(s)

Content	Time	Methodology	Materials
Introductions (if needed)	3 minutes		
Warm-up/motivation	2 minutes	Q: Has anyone here supported a birth in an alternative position? If YES, can they briefly describe the birth? How they felt? Did the woman request it? What are the women's preferred birth positions in your community?	Note: Emphasize this is BIRTH, not labor
Review of session objectives	1 minute		Flip charts Copies of objectives
Rationale	2 minutes	Ask group to write one benefit of delivering in an alternative position; select 3 at random and discuss.	"Post-its" on flip chart
Overview of evidence	20–30 minutes	Interactive presentation	PowerPoint: Supporting Birth in Alternative Positions
Best practices in care – possible positions: Standing On hands and knees/leaning forward Squatting Sitting Lying on side	60 minutes	Skill demonstration and skill practice: Working in pairs Choice of 2 in each session to include hands/knees or kneeling in each	Laminated picture "all fours position" Job aids – pictorials 2 or 3 MamaMatalies and all materials for assisting normal birth
Role play (optional)	15 minutes	The teacher will select three learners to perform the role play with remaining participants observing and all being involved in discussion.	Role Play I and Answer key

Content	Time	Methodology	Materials
Reflections and next steps	15 minutes	<p>Ask group to share their reflections: what went well during practice, any challenges.</p> <p>Discuss how they may introduce this choice into their workplace; advocacy for choice; and the importance of positive experiences of care.</p> <p>Specifically, how can they overcome barriers in their facilities? Do they need any resources?</p>	Refer to Textbox 1 for short success story from South Sudan.
Summary and share materials	2 minutes		PowerPoint handout References Pictures/illustrations
Evaluation	As leaving		Mood faces on flip chart

Textbox 1: Empowering women in South Sudan by respecting beliefs, traditions, and culture

South Sudan has high rates of home birth and only 11.5% facility-based deliveries, and with the highest maternal mortality in the world, special efforts are needed to encourage more deliveries in health care facilities. To protect the woman's right to assume the position of her choice during labor and birth in line with local customs, midwives at Yambio Primary Health Care Centre in South Sudan were trained to support a range of birth positions to create more client-centered maternity services. Post-training follow-up was provided by on-the-job training using simulations on birth models, mentorship, and coaching to give the midwives hands-on skills to support and practice alternative birth positions. As well as increasing the number of facility births, between 18% and 45% were able to choose their labor and birthing positions as a key component of Respectful Maternity Care.

World Vision South Sudan with support of USAID through Jhpiego.

References

- Gizzo S, Di Gangi S, Noventa M, Bacile V, Zambon A, Nardelli GB. 2014. Women's choice of positions during labour: return to the past or a modern way to give birth? A cohort study in Italy. *Biomed Res Int*. 638093. doi: 10.1155/2014/638093. Epub 2014 May 15. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24955365>.
- Gupta JK, Hofmeyr GJ, Shehmar M. 2012. Position in the second stage of labour for women without epidural anaesthesia. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev*. May 16;5:CD002006.
- Nasir K, Korejo R, Noorani KJ. 2007. Child birth in squatting position. *J Pak Med Assoc*. 57(1):19–22. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17319414>.
- Further reading: Sutton J, Scott P. 1996. *Understanding and Teaching Optimal Foetal Positioning*, 2nd rev ed. Tauranga, New Zealand: Birth Concepts.

Other Useful Resources

Some good sites:

<http://www.cochrane.org/>

<http://evidencebasedbirth.com/what-is-the-evidence-for-pushing-positions/>

<http://www.rcmnormalbirth.org.uk/birthing-positions-in-practice/visual-aids-for-birthing-positions/>

<http://www.rcmnormalbirth.org.uk/practice/ten-top-tips>

Video:

Global Health Media Project – Giving Good Care during Labour.

<http://globalhealthmedia.org/portfolio-items/giving-good-care-during-labor/?portfolioID=5623>