



### **FIGO reaffirms support: World Prematurity Day (17 November 2013)**

FIGO reaffirms its support for the highlighting of *World Prematurity Day* on 17 November 2013.

Prematurity has become the leading cause of newborn deaths worldwide, resulting in more than 1 million deaths each year. Most newborn deaths among this group are caused by lack of simple, essential care such as warmth and feeding support.

FIGO promotes the provision of high impact cost-effective interventions to care effectively for the 15.1 million premature babies born each year. It encourages its member societies in 125 countries/territories to increase the uptake of proven interventions including the administration of corticosteroids and kangaroo mother care as part of implementing a continuum of care approach to preventing and managing pre-term births.

FIGO's joint project with the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) and the International Pediatric Association (IPA) - 'Improving the Quality of Maternal and Newborn Healthcare Services Through Accelerated Implementation of the Essential Interventions by the Healthcare Professionals' Associations' - translates this evidence into action by placing special focus on monitoring Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) and Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) services in selected health facilities in Uganda and Indonesia.

Professor Sir Sabaratnam Arulkumaran, FIGO President, said: 'FIGO is particularly keen to highlight the value of collaborative action between obstetricians, midwives and paediatricians in managing pre-term birth. We continue to mobilise resources for institutionalising the "care bundle" approach to preventing and managing pre-term births and to caring for the premature baby, and remain committed to implementing practical monitoring tools to ensure ongoing quality improvement and performance.'



- *Every year, about 15 million babies are affected by premature birth, with boys being 14% more likely to be born preterm.*
- *Quality care in the 24 hours preceding and following childbirth ensures that these infants grow up healthy.*
- *Low cost interventions that are very effective include antenatal corticosteroids, clean delivery environment, kangaroo mother care, antibiotics when indicated, continuous positive airway pressure where facilities exist and breast-feeding or tube or spoon feeding of expressed breast milk.*

#### **RESOURCES:**

- *Beyond Newborn Survival, Paediatric Research, November 2013*
- *Every Newborn Toolkit - [www.everynewborn.org/every-newborn-toolkit/](http://www.everynewborn.org/every-newborn-toolkit/)*
- *Born Too Soon: The Global Action Report on Preterm Birth [www.who.int/pmnch/media/news/2012/preterm\\_birth\\_report/en/](http://www.who.int/pmnch/media/news/2012/preterm_birth_report/en/)*