WARM/COLD COMPRESS APPLICATION DURING SECOND STAGE OF LABOUR GUIDELINE

1. OPTIMAL OUTCOMES
   • Reduction of perineal discomfort during active in second stage

2. PATIENT
   • Pregnant woman actively pushing in second stage of labour.

3. STAFF
   • Registered Midwives
   • Student Midwives
   • Medical staff
   • Medical Students

4. EQUIPMENT
   • Sterile abdominal sponges
   • Kidney dish
   • Warm/cold tap water
   • Personal protective equipment (PPE)

5. CLINICAL PRACTICE
   • Obtain informed consent from woman for use of compresses and document in integrated notes
   • Discuss with labouring woman her preference for using warm or cool compresses
   • Include sponge used as compress as part of accountable items
   • Obtain warm or cool water from tap, testing warm water with inside of wrist to ascertain appropriate temperature
   • Soak sponges in water in kidney dish, ensure woman has perineal sensation, then apply to perineum
   • Vary or discontinue practice as directed by the woman

6. HAZARDOUS / SUB-OPTIMAL OUTCOMES
   • Warm water temperature too hot causing discomfort or burn to perineum
   • Persistent discomfort as a result of compress application
   • Failure to obtain informed consent
   • Sponge count not attended

7. DOCUMENTATION
   • Integrated clinical notes
   • Partogram

8. EDUCATIONAL NOTES
   • The use of warm or cool compresses has been found to improve maternal comfort.
   • Some studies have found the application of warm compresses during active second stage to be protective of the perineum, whereas other studies have found no difference in perineal trauma yet no adverse outcomes.
   • Length of time compresses were used and when to commence application was not documented in these studies.
9. RELATED POLICIES / PROCEDURES / CLINICAL GUIDELINES

- Normal Vaginal Birth
- Care in 2\textsuperscript{nd} stage of labour
- Epidural

10. REFERENCES