

Box 1: case study on delay

Mother aged 28 years, 5th pregnancy with 3 children who was admitted to hospital at 38 weeks' gestation from a county health clinic. She had been in labour for 7 days and given oxytocin to strengthen contractions of the uterus during this time. On admission, the head of her unborn baby was stuck in the birth canal due to a brow malpresentation. She was very anaemic and shocked. Immediate ABC resuscitation by a team led by the obstetric clinician was undertaken and she was taken immediately (around 30 minutes following admission) to the operating theatre where a doctor and obstetric clinician undertook emergency caesarean section.

A live male infant was delivered weighing 3.5 Kg needing a period of resuscitation. The uterus was full of blood (more than 1 litre) and there was a posterior rupture of the uterus which was surgically repaired. The mother began to bleed from multiple sites (including vomiting of fresh blood) and despite 6 units of a fresh live-donor blood transfusion. This post-partum haemorrhage could not be stopped, and the mother died 2-3 hours after admission.

End Box