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978-1-107-42658-0 - Proactive Support of Labor: The Challenge of Normal Childbirth:

Paul Reuwer, Hein Bruinse and Arie Franx

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Proactive Support of Labor

The Challenge of Normal Childbirth

Second edition

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Proactive Support of Labor

The Challenge of Normal Childbirth

Second edition

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This book is dedicated to Kieran O’Driscoll, great obstetrician and distinguished teacher, pioneer in the development and evaluation of conceptual birth care. His fundamental insight and inspiring work provided the starting point of this treatise.

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Foreword to the first edition

Improvements in the care of the pregnant woman and fetal patient during the birthing process have been a success story for modern obstetrics. Less than a century ago, maternal mortality during labor was commonplace in most developed countries, and fetal mortality and morbidity were even more common. The keystone of modern obstetrics was the introduction of hospital and safe cesarean deliveries in the early twentieth century. However, too much of a good thing can sometimes lead to other problems.

In their book *Proactive Support of Labor*, Drs Reuwer, Bruinse, and Franx make an important contribution to modern obstetrics by providing a critical counterbalance to technologic interference in labor and delivery. The authors introduce the concept of “proactive support of labor” as an acceptable alternative to traditional labor and delivery management in order to shorten labor and ultimately ensure a safer delivery. They propose that results of improved labor and delivery management should be evaluated

not only in physical terms (e.g., reduced morbidity and mortality) but also in terms of emotion and patient satisfaction. This concept is designed to improve not only the overall outcome but also patient satisfaction.

We agree that the perspective provided in this book should be carefully considered by all providers of healthcare to women in labor. The call for humanistic and evidence-based obstetric care in labor and delivery by including the emotional needs of women in labor should be embraced throughout the world.

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Preface

The central message remains unchanged in the updated Second Edition of this book and continues to emphasize the need for fundamental reforms in the world of obstetrics and midwifery. The policy proposals – aimed at enhancement of women’s satisfaction with the childbirth experience and a safe reduction of the cesarean birth rate – stay the same.

New is the deeply researched treatise on the worrying misapplication of evidence-based medicine, leading to false evidence claiming a tempering effect of labor inductions on cesarean rates. Many other prevalent misinterpretations of the literature are exhibited, and several new examples of disturbing misguidance from official guidelines are exposed.

The chapters on audit and quality control have been rewritten. The clinical procedures and outcomes are now analyzed according to the Robson

ten-group classification system, providing the best evidence of the effectiveness and safety of the combined policies and the overall strategy of *proactive support of labor*.

The authors wish to express their special gratitude to the nurses and midwives in the integrated birth center Livive, in recognition of their unfailing cooperation at all times. We highly appreciated the criticism, advice, and support we received from esteemed and befriended colleagues, in particular Marc Keirse and Michael Nicholl from Australia and Michael Robson from Ireland. The authors owe many thanks to Simone Valk, Dutch midwife to her bone marrow, for her comments on manuscript drafts and her promotional activities. She developed the interactive par-togram-app and the website on keeping birth normal, both based on this book.

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Readers are encouraged to share their opinions and comments in the interactive web-forum: www.proactivesupportoflabor.com

A book-related partogram app can be downloaded at www.apparentapps.com. This interactive app is available to both professionals and clients/patients,

and gives advices for the timely correction of abnormal labor, based on the policies explained in this book.

Clear information and guidance for pregnant women and partners to meet the challenge of normal birth can be found in plain lay-language at www.keepingbirthnormal.com.