**HARM REDUCTION**

The harm reduction model is based on the bioethical principles of autonomy, justice, maximization of welfare of each individual and do not harm. The strategy seeks to empower people who can get pregnant, while also strengthening the commitment of health professionals to address the reality of persons facing unplanned and/or unwanted pregnancies. Recognizing that persons facing unwanted pregnancies in restrictive contexts could resort to any of the options available to a pregnancy (including highly risky practices such as the use of toxic chemicals or the insertion of sharp objects into the uterus), the harm reduction model encourages health professionals to acknowledge and inform about the risks and complications resulting from unsafe abortion methods and the safer abortion methods potentially available. The model also reinforces the responsibility of health institutions to address this potentially serious clinical situation within the health system.

1. **YOU SAY THAT THE MODEL IS IN FAVOR OF LIFE BUT ULTIMATELY DON’T THE CONSULTATIONS HELP PREGNANT PERSONS END THE LIFE OF AN EMBRYO OR FETUS?**

* Health professionals have an obligation to adequately inform persons facing an unwanted pregnancy of their options and the associated risks, regardless of the decision. Professionals do not make or influence the decision. They merely comply with their ethical and moral obligation to prevent harm to pregnant person’s health and respect person’s responsible decisions.
* There are many views as to when life begins and all of the different views should be respected.
* All persons who face an unwanted pregnancy are citizens and subjects of rights and, as a result, have the right to receive comprehensive health care services. A person who faces an unwanted pregnancy is in an extremely vulnerable situation and the State, health professionals and health teams should do everything they can to safeguard her health and life.

1. **DURING THE CONSULTATION, CAN THE PROFESSIONALS PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT WHERE TO OBTAIN AN ABORTION? OR INFORMATION ABOUT HOW TO PERFORM AN ABORTION?**

* The model is grounded in ensuring that health professionals comply with their medical duty to provide information that safeguards person’s health and lives. During the consultation, professionals do not provide information about where to obtain a surgical or medical abortion. Health professionals provide information about the range of options available to persons who are considering ending their pregnancy and the associated risks.

1. **HOW DO YOU FEEL, AS A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL, ABOUT PROVIDING COUNSELING REGARDING A PRACTICE THAT IS ILLEGAL IN THIS COUNTRY?**

* For physicians and health professionals, abortion is a public health issue before it is a legal issue. Facing an unwanted pregnancy and seeking access to information are not crimes.
* Ideally, these services would reduce person’s need for abortions, as they have the potential to increase access to contraceptives, help avoid unsafe abortions and provide persons with information about all their options. The model protects person’s right to health, information, and autonomous decision-making.
* What is a crime? Undoubtedly, it is not a crime to eliminate unsafe abortion as one of the most serious causes of maternal death. The obligation to respect person’s rights, by preventing maternal deaths due to unsafe abortions that result from lack of access to information that could save lives, is more important than the obligation to report these persons.

1. **WHAT IS YOUR POSITION REGARDING EFFORTS TO DECRIMINALIZE OR LIBERALIZE CURRENT LAWS ABOUT ABORTION?**

* We support all initiatives that promote pregnant person’s rights, including the right to decide. The harm reduction component of our work, however, which is grounded in the right to health and the right to information, can be applied within any legal framework including the current legal framework in (insert name of country), where abortion is permitted only to save the life of a woman.

1. **WHAT INFORMATION DO YOU GIVE PREGNANT PERSONS ABOUT MISOPROSTOL?**

* Access to information about scientific advances is a fundamental human right and the model effectively protects this right. Professionals have an ethical duty to make this information available to everyone, not only pregnant persons who have resources. Under the model, we inform pregnant persons about existing safe and unsafe options to end pregnancy, according to guidelines of the World Health Organization.