

# **Attitudes Towards Maternal Request Caesarean Section: A Survey Amongst Consultant Obstetricians**

Dr Angharad Jones (ST5)

Welsh Obs & Gynae Society Autumn Meeting 2017

# Background

- Welsh Government report 2015
  - C-section rate fluctuated between 26% – 28% over 10years
- NICE
  - ‘healthcare providers have the responsibility to ensure the **safest, most cost-effective** method of delivery for women and babies accepting that very occasionally women will request an elective C-section in the absence of conventional obstetric indications’.

# Safety

- WHO statement on caesarean section rates, 2015
  - "there is no evidence showing the benefits of caesarean delivery for women or infants who did not require the procedure."
- NICE March 2013
  - no evidence from RCTs, upon which to base any practice recommendations regarding planned caesarean section for non-medical reasons at term.
- American College Of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists 2013
  - "Potential risks of cesarean delivery on maternal request include a longer maternal hospital stay, increased risk of respiratory problems for the infant, and greater complications in subsequent pregnancies and the need for hysterectomy. Potential short-term benefits of planned cesarean delivery compared with a planned vaginal delivery include a decreased risk of hemorrhage and transfusion, fewer surgical complications, and a decrease in urinary incontinence during the first year after delivery"

# Cost

- NICE estimates
  - Vaginal delivery £1,512
  - Planned Caesareans £2,369
  - Emergency Caesareans £3,042.

# NICE guidance

## 1.2.9 Maternal request for CS

- 1.2.9.1 When a woman requests a CS explore, discuss and record the specific reasons for the request. **[new 2011]**
- 1.2.9.2 If a woman requests a CS when there is no other indication, discuss the overall risks and benefits of CS compared with vaginal birth and record that this discussion has taken place (see box A). Include a discussion with other members of the obstetric team (including the obstetrician, midwife and anaesthetist) if necessary to explore the reasons for the request, and ensure the woman has accurate information. **[new 2011]**
- 1.2.9.3 When a woman requests a CS because she has anxiety about childbirth, offer referral to a healthcare professional with expertise in providing perinatal mental health support to help her address her anxiety in a supportive manner. **[new 2011]**
- 1.2.9.4 Ensure the healthcare professional providing perinatal mental health support has access to the planned place of birth during the antenatal period in order to provide care. **[new 2011]**
- 1.2.9.5 For women requesting a CS, if after discussion and offer of support (including perinatal mental health support for women with anxiety about childbirth), a vaginal birth is still not an acceptable option, offer a planned CS. **[new 2011]**
- 1.2.9.6 An obstetrician unwilling to perform a CS should refer the woman to an obstetrician who will carry out the CS. **[new 2011]**





**birthrights**

Protecting human rights in childbirth

HOME

ABOUT

EVENTS

RESOURCES

TRAINING

NEWS

SUPPORT US

Topics » Childbirth

Start new thread in this topic

Add a message

This is page 1 of 3 (This thread has 3 posts)



Anxious about giving birth  
final furlong of pregnancy

Help - How to get elected  
(72 Posts)

Posted on 21 July 2017 by Maria Booker

## Do I have a right to a c-section? Update on Oxford

COSMOPOLITAN

STYLE

BEAUTY

LOVE

VIDEO

HOW TO RUN FOR OFFICE

# Why I Fought So Hard to Have a C-Section

No, I was not "too posh to push."



# Objective

- Assess attitudes towards maternal request caesarean section amongst consultants working at University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff (**UHW**) & Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend (**POW**).

# Design & Setting

- A cross-sectional survey
- All consultants currently practicing obstetrics at UHW or POW.
- Anonymous
- Asked to rate personal attitude and general attitude of the department
- Indicate usual practice

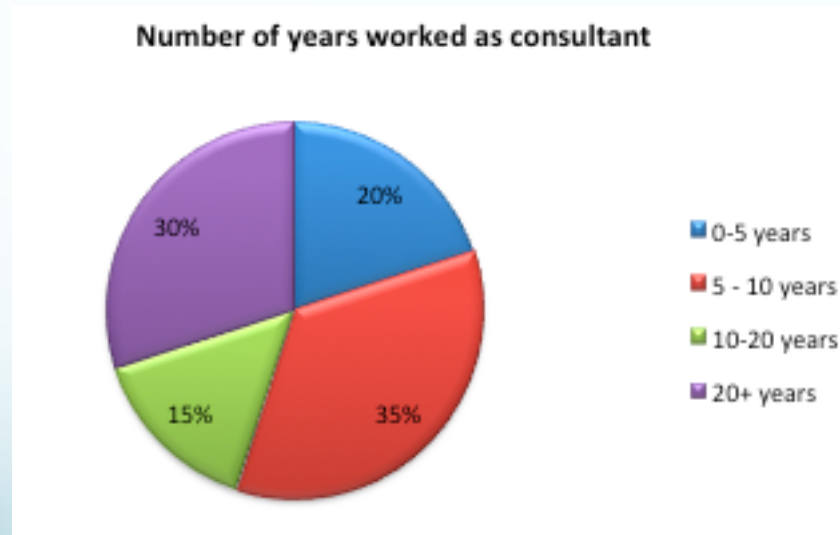


# Case Scenarios

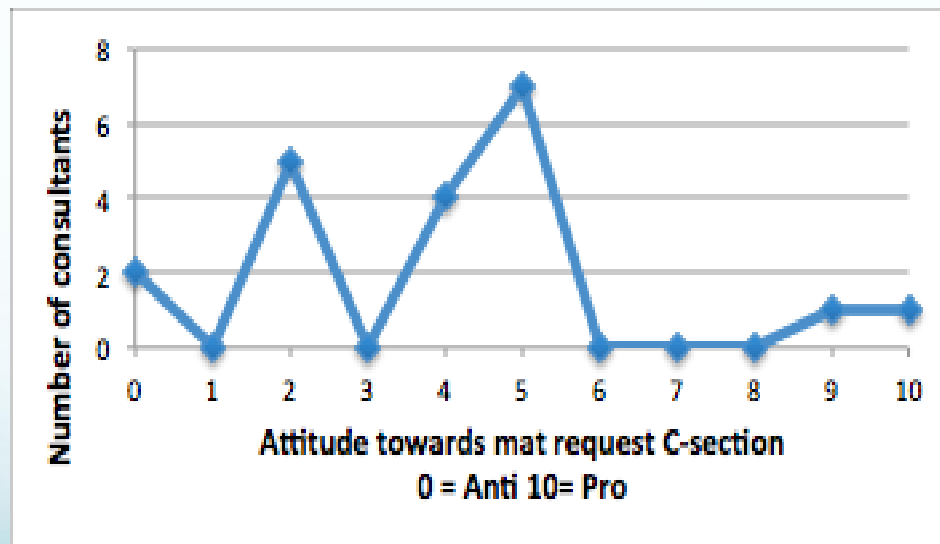
- A. 15 year old rape victim presents as a late booker petrified of vaginal examination
- B. Primigravida with a husband in the armed forces who is being deployed on EDD, declining IOL
- C. Para 1: previous SVD, episiotomy breakdown and refashioning of perineum
- D. Para 1: previous traumatic forceps delivery
- E. Primigravida wanting to keep vagina “honeymoon fresh”

# Results

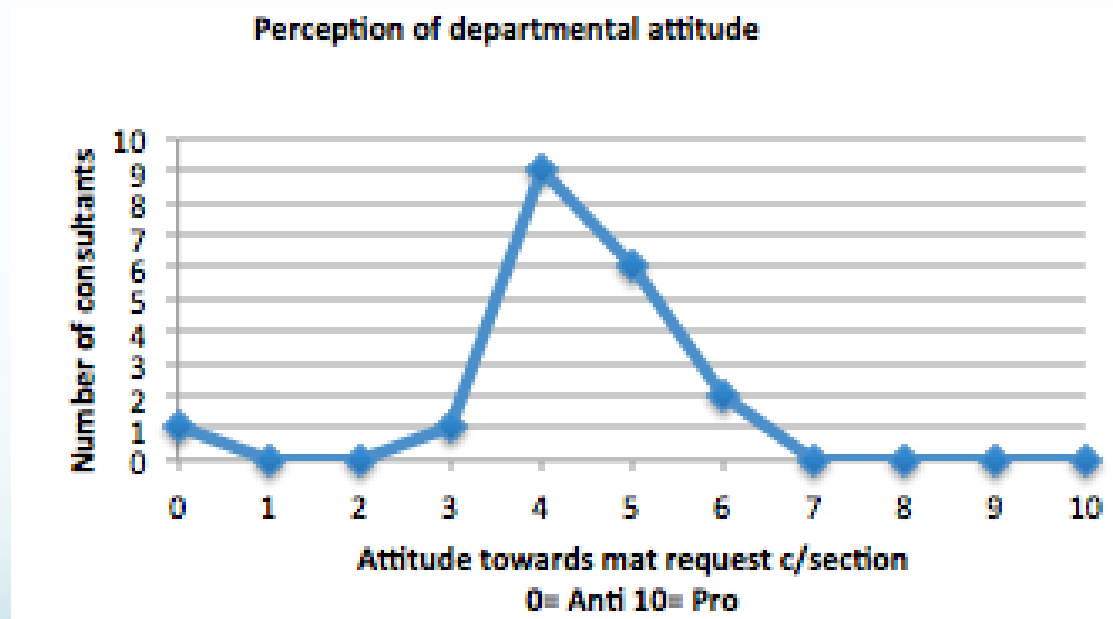
- **Response rate:**
  - **92%** (UHW)
  - **89%** (POW)
  - total of **91%** (**20** participants).



- **Trend in attitudes**
  - Neither pro or anti **55%**
  - Anti **35%**
  - Pro **10%**



- **70%** were not aware of any departmental guideline
- **85%** felt their unit were neutral in their attitude towards maternal request C-section



- Offer maternal request C-section
  - History of sexual abuse **(65%)**
  - Previous perineal breakdown **(58%)**
  - Previous traumatic delivery **(42%)**
- Unlikely to offer maternal request C-section
  - Convenience **(74%)**
  - Cosmesis **(63%)**

- **85%** would refer for a second opinion in the absence of medical indication.
- Depending on the history
  - **16 – 68%** would offer an information leaflet
  - **32 – 58%** would refer to “birth choices” clinic
  - **5 – 53%** would refer to a psychologist

# Conclusions

- Most are flexible in their approach
- Most are adaptable to individual case scenarios
- Each woman should be assessed individually to explore ideas, concerns and expectations
- Women should be presented with risks and benefits of each mode of delivery
- MDT support
- Clinicians not obliged to perform procedure but should refer to an obstetrician who would

# References

- <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg132/chapter/guidance>
- World Health Organisation. [WHO statement on caesarean section rates with supporting FAQs. 2015](#)
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. ACOG committee opinion no. 559: [Cesarean delivery on maternal request. Obstet Gynecol. 2013 Apr;121\(4\):904-7.](#)
- <https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/guidelines/caesarean-section-on-maternal-request---query-bank/>
- <https://www.mumsnet.com/Talk/childbirth/2265715-Help-How-to-get-elective-c-section-caesarean-which-NHS-Trusts-allow-this>
- <http://www.cosmopolitan.com/health-fitness/a62338/maternal-request-c-section/>
- <http://www.birthrights.org.uk/2017/07/do-i-have-a-right-to-a-c-section-update-on-oxford-university-hospitals/>