

What Women Want (To Know)

Exploring women's information needs prior to elective caesarean section

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Background

Prior to a planned caesarean section, patients in our trust attend a clinic to assess and consent them for their anaesthetic.

We aimed to explore the consultation from the patient perspective to better understand what they sought to gain from the appointment and whether these needs were being met with our current anaesthetic assessment service [1].

Our current service consists of

- A face to face consultation with an anaesthetist
- Physical copies of patient information leaflets and QR codes

Method

Following audit department approval, we conducted patient surveys exploring:

- **What** patients wanted to find out or discuss in the anaesthetic clinic
- **How** (i.e. written vs video, physical vs digital) and
- **When** they wished to receive information about their anaesthetic

We surveyed

- Patients attending the anaesthetic clinic preoperatively (n=25)
- Patients post elective caesarean section who had previously attended clinic (n=26).

Discussion

- Patients were generally satisfied with information received in clinic
- Overwhelmingly in favour of **face to face consultation** (91.7%)
-*More reassuring, better communication, easier to ask questions*
-Confirms the value of face to face consultations [2]
- The importance of discussing sensations that may be experienced during spinal and surgery
-Sensations more likely to be interpreted as distressing when not expected [3]
- Specific anaesthetic concerns
-Related to existing medical co-morbidities or previous surgeries and how this would impact the anaesthetic
-Discussion of spinal anaesthetic and explanation of anaesthetic technique
- Can we address these concerns with additional information?
 - Developing a video showing elective c-section journey, explanation and demonstration of spinal anaesthetic
 - This would also allow us to cover the other outcomes found in the survey and better educate patients and birth partners

Results

- 92.6% felt prepared or very prepared by the information given in clinic

What

- Reassurance and discussion of anaesthetic technique (29% had a specific anaesthetic concern which they wanted to discuss)
- Most popular topics were:
 - Specific anaesthetic concerns related to medical or surgical history
 - Post op pain relief options
 - Fasting instructions
 - Effect on breastfeeding
- Post op patients also raised that they wished to have known about possibility of neuropathic pain during spinal insertion (n=2) or sensations during surgery (n=1)

How

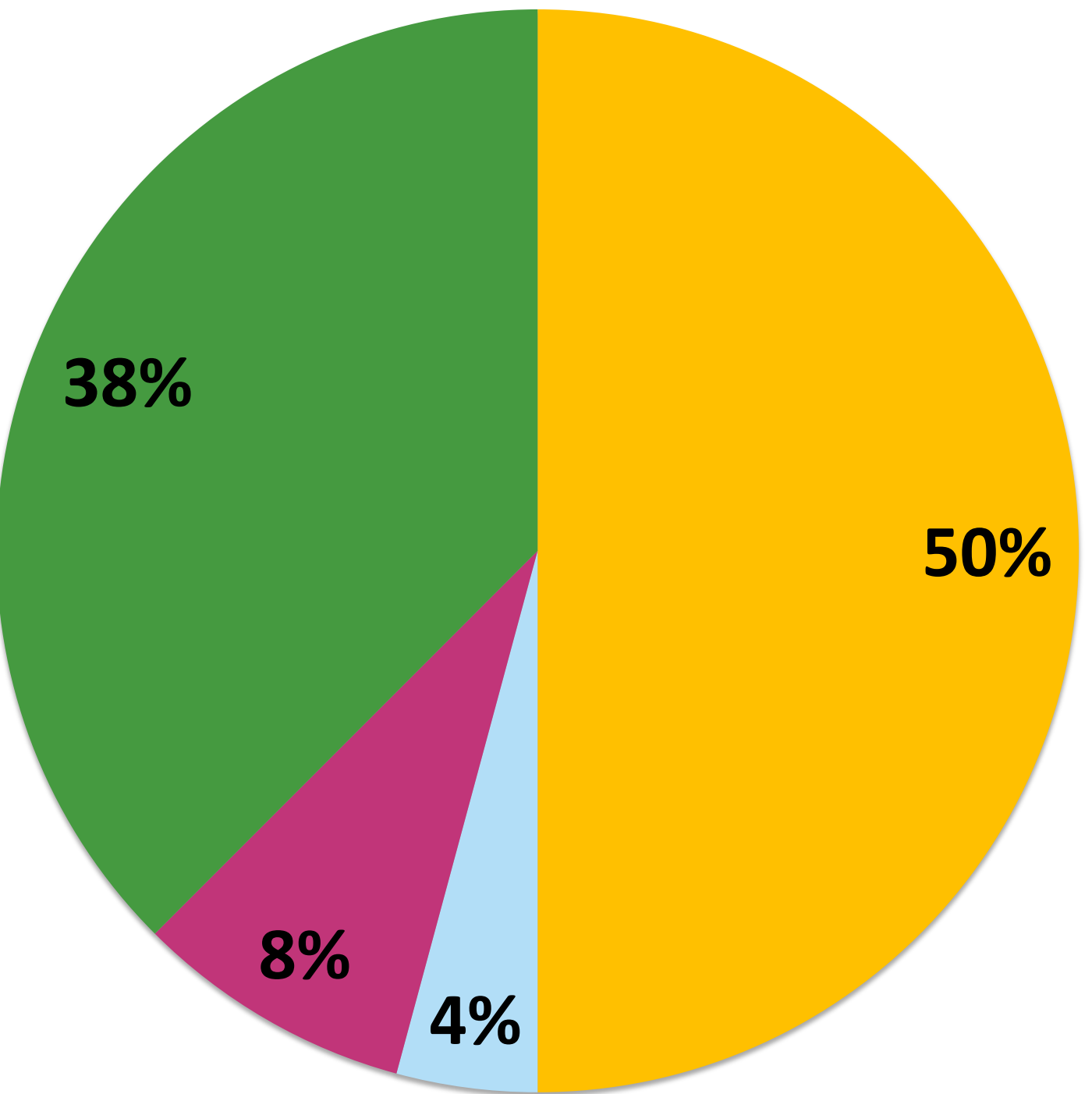
- Physical leaflets (chart) over digital written information
- 92.6% of postop women felt an additional video would have been helpful

When

- Before clinic visit rather than at the clinic (56.5% vs 43.5%)

Other outcomes

- Partners would like more information on what to expect
- How list order is decided and how long they may be waiting
- How many people are present theatre (more than patients anticipated)



■ Physical Leaflets ■ Digital Written ■ Video ■ Combination

References

- [1] Barry C, Bradley C, Britten N, Stevenson F, Barber N. Patients' unvoiced agendas in general practice consultations: qualitative study. *British Medical Journal*. 2000; 320: 1246-50.
- [2] Quinn L, Oluwafumbi O, Green M, Sayed H, Ansar H. Patient and Professional Experiences With Virtual Antenatal Clinics During the COVID-19 Pandemic in a UK Tertiary Obstetric Hospital: Questionnaire Study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*. 2021; 23(8):e25549
- [3] Hobson J A, Slade P, Wrench I J, Power L. Preoperative anxiety and postoperative satisfaction in women undergoing elective caesarean section. *International Journal of Obstetric Anaesthesia*. 2024; 16: 18-23.