

Supporting Anaesthetic Residents in Obstetrics: A Survey on Training Experiences, Personal Challenges and Wellbeing

Background

- 25% of women in the UK experience miscarriage
- 1 in 7 couples experience difficulty conceiving
- These realities can present a significant psychological and emotional burden for anaesthetic residents when facing the complexities of labour suite at a time in their lives when many are also trying to start a family

Methods

- Residents in the East Midlands School of Anaesthesia (EMSA) were sent a survey by email
- Anonymous responses collected for one month between November and December 2024 and results analysed for themes

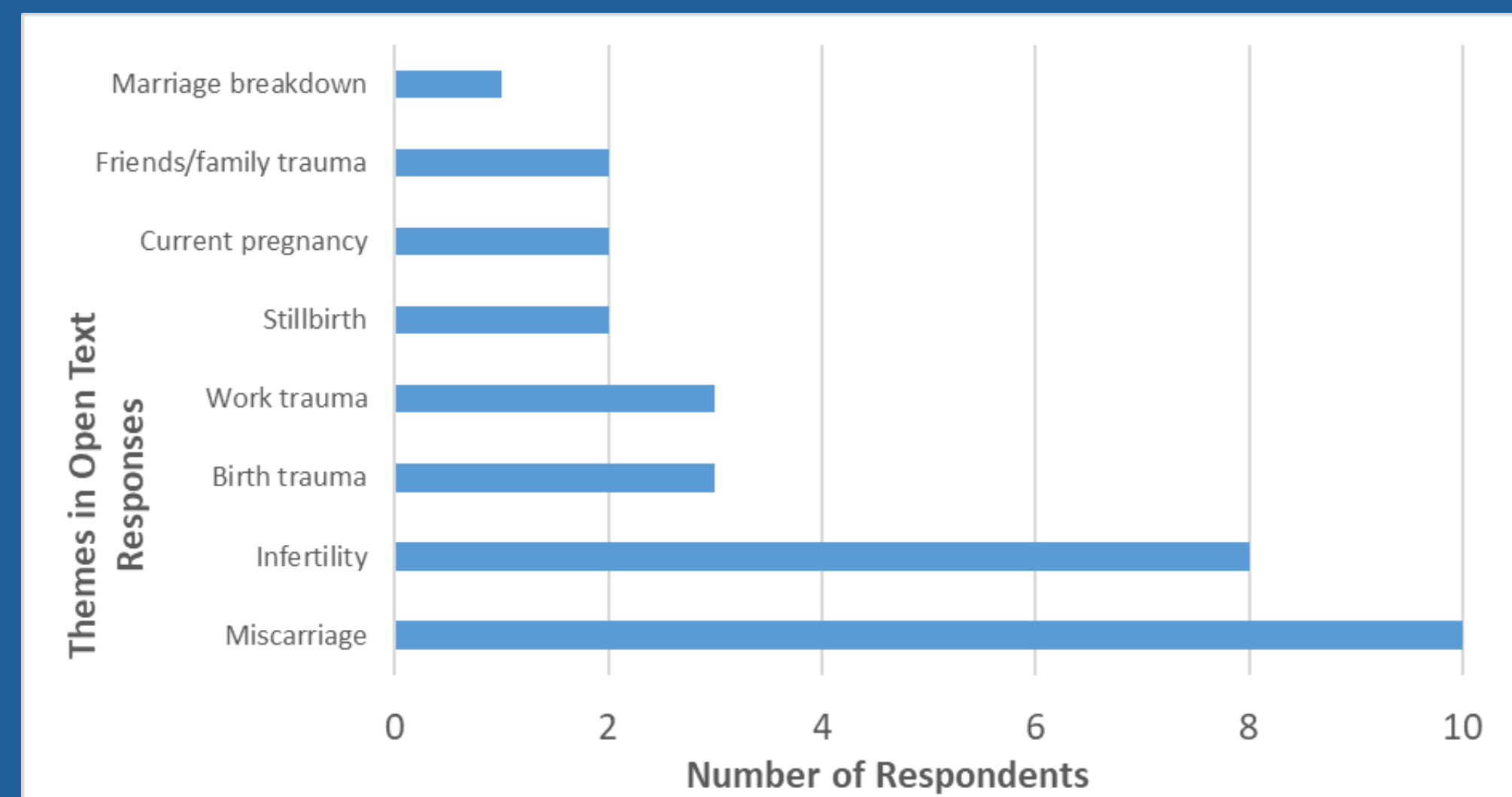


Figure 1: Frequency of themes in personal experiences amongst respondents



More than **1 in 3** EMSA anaesthetic residents report **personal experience** of pregnancy loss, infertility or other personal issues which affected their work in obstetrics.

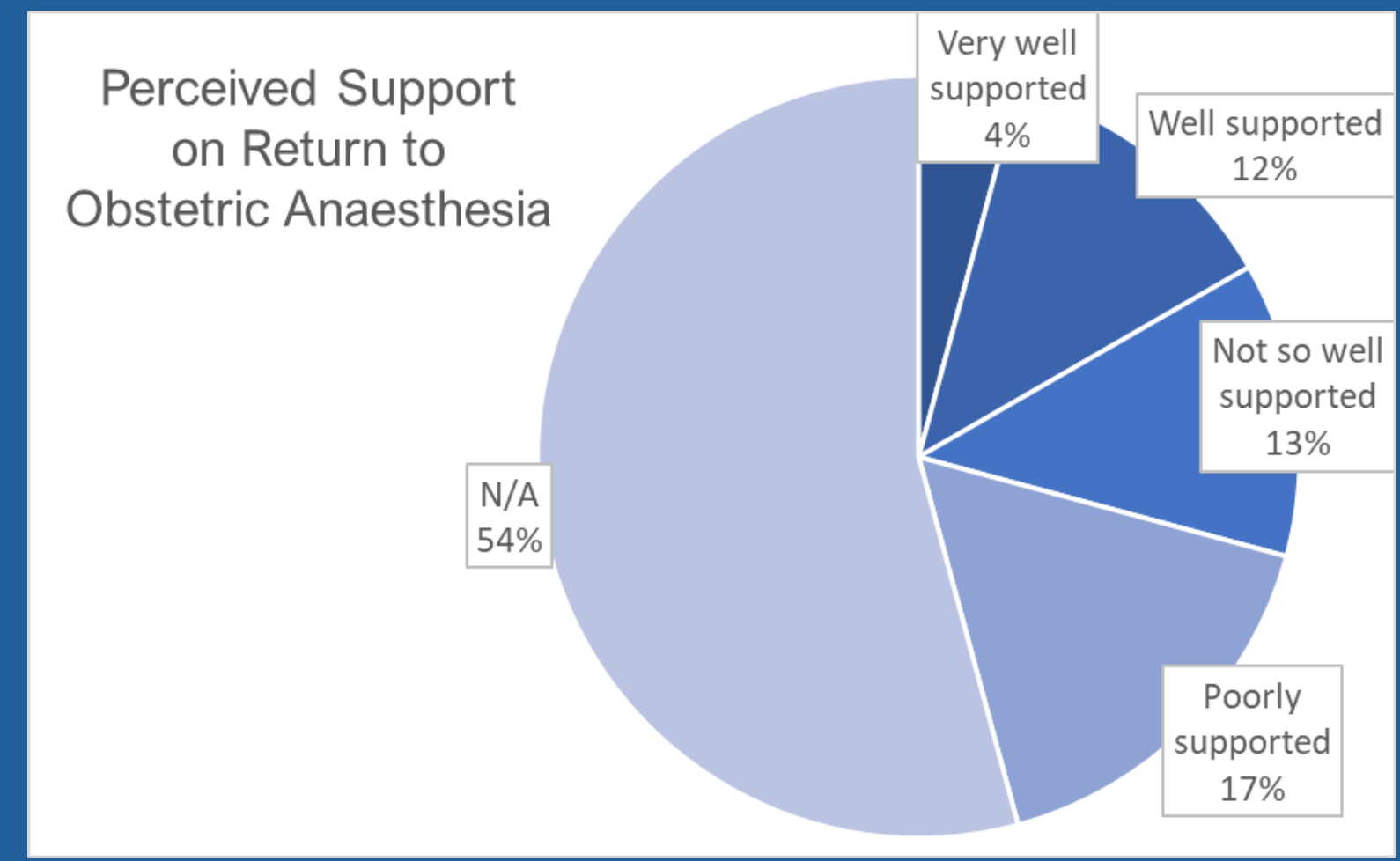
Most **did not** feel well supported.

Dr Nat Edwards - ST7 Anaesthetics, East Midlands School of Anaesthesia
Dr Ieva Dowling - Consultant Anaesthetist, Nottingham City Hospital
Dr Amelia Banks - Consultant Anaesthetist, Nottingham City Hospital



Results

- 69 responses (62% female/38% male)
- More than 1 in 3 reported experiencing baby loss, infertility or other issues affecting their work in an obstetric environment
- Of note, both genders affected by these issues; 32% of female and 38% of male respondents
- Diverse experiences described (see Fig1) with miscarriage and infertility most common
- Of those with personal experience of difficulties, only 16.7% felt *‘well’* or *‘very well’* supported on returning to obstetric anaesthesia vs 30% *‘not so well’* or *‘poorly’* supported



- 53% responded *‘N/A’* possibly indicating support was not sought

Discussion

- These issues are common and can have a profound impact
- Improving support for anaesthetists in training will improve not only their well-being but also the quality of patient care provided in these sensitive and high-stakes situations
- Recommendations:
 - Single point of contact
 - Proactive opening channels of communication
 - Individualised support and flexibility