

Background and Introduction

Risk assessment = identifying factors which could place a pregnant woman and/or her child at increased risk of adverse outcomes

- Affects decisions about patient care and should be done at every encounter, therefore accurate and up-to-date documentation of risk assessment is vital¹
- Highlighted as essential and sometimes inadequate in recent MBRRACE-UK² and Ockenden reports³
- This study used qualitative and quantitative methods to assess staff perceptions of risk assessment and their documentation on an electronic health records system (Epic) within a tertiary centre maternity care setting.

Methodology

Staff Survey

- Questionnaires distributed to all staff involved in maternity care
- 10 core questions: 7 free text (qualitative data) and 3 Likert-scale (quantitative data)
- Thematic analysis of qualitative data using the Braun and Clarke method⁴
- Aimed to assess staff perceptions of risk assessment and use of Epic; problem list and ‘pink sticky notes’ (virtual pop-up notifications of key patient information)

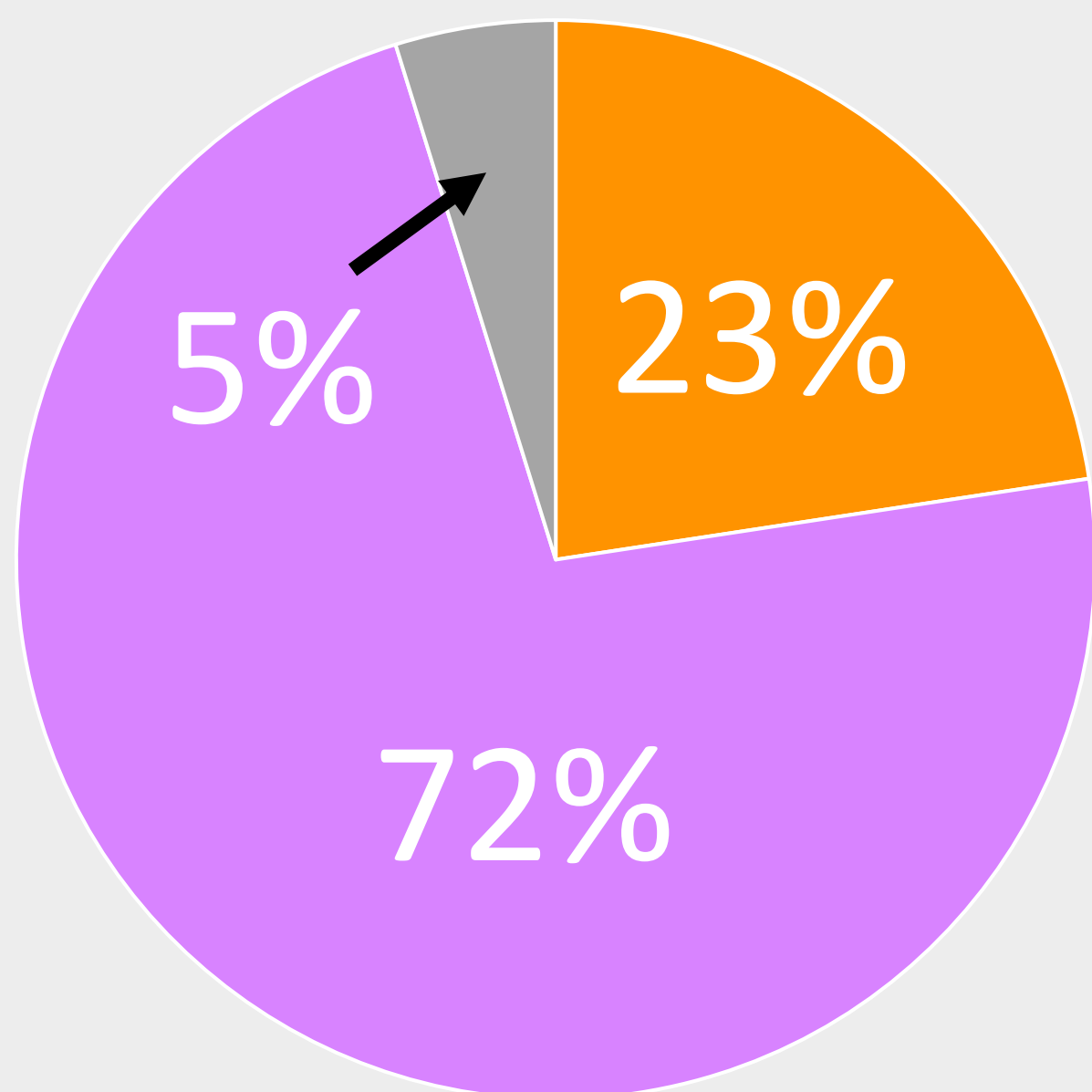
Review of Risk Assessment Documentation in Patient Notes

- Important information such as interpreter needs, safeguarding and allergies were noted
- Problem list analysis: number of problems, whether obstetric or non-obstetric and the most common obstetric problems documented
- Congruence between patient information and problem list was assessed

Qualitative Survey Results

84
Responses

Midwives
Obstetricians
Maternity Support
Workers (MSW)



Key Risk Assessment Themes

- Risk is dynamic
- Joint discussion with patients and MDT communication is important
- Assessing mental health and domestic violence risk is important
- Lack confidence in assessing risk
- Risk assessment processes should be improved

Key Epic Themes

- More consistent documentation methods required
- Mixed opinions on usefulness and ease of use of Epic
- Limited access to Epic was a problem for some staff
- Wanted further training

Key Pink Sticky Notes + Problem List Themes

- Pink sticky notes useful for highlighting information, especially in emergencies
- Pink sticky notes are not consistently used and hence important information can be missed
- Problem lists can become out of date and inaccurate



KEY POINTS

Risk is dynamic and its assessment is vital to patient care and safety; staff felt that documentation mechanisms could be improved

Quantitative Survey Results

Confidence on where in
Epic to document risk
(1 (low)-10 (high))

Median			
Overall = 6	Midwives = 7	Obstetricians = 7	MSWs = 4

Usefulness of Pink Sticky Notes for risk assessment (1-10)

Median
Overall = 8
Midwives = 8
Obstetricians = 8
MSWs = 5.5

Usefulness of Problem List for risk assessment (1-10)

Median
Overall = 8
Midwives = 8
Obstetricians = 8.5
MSWs = 4

Key Point

Junior staff and MSWs had lower confidence with documentation processes and found systems less useful

Review of Risk Assessment Documentation

150 Patient notes reviewed

- Inconsistent documentation of safeguarding, allergies and interpreter needs
- Presence of non-problems in problem list; e.g. “normal pregnancy” or “gestation 16 weeks”
- Incongruent documentation; eg. “normal pregnancy” alongside “reduced fetal movements”
- Duplication of problems; e.g. “anxiety” and “anxiety disorder”
- Five patients had not had their smoking status assessed in the last year

Conclusions

- 1) Risk assessment is crucial for patient care and safety, as evidenced by recent reports on maternity care in the UK
- 2) This study highlighted the need for improved documentation processes and understanding of risk assessment by staff
- 3) A local maternity risk assessment working group has been convened to address these issues, in addition to ongoing Epic optimisation processes

References

1) National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Antenatal care NICE guideline [NG201]. Published 19th August 2021. 2) Knight M, Bunch K, Tuffnell D, Patel R, Shakespeare J, Kotnis R, Kenyon S, Kurinczuk J. (Eds.) on behalf of MBRRACE-UK. Saving Lives, Improving Mothers’ Care – Lessons learned to inform maternity care from the UK and Ireland Confidential Enquiries into Maternal Deaths and Morbidity 2017-19. Oxford: National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit, University of Oxford 2021. 3) Ockenden report – Final. Findings, conclusions and essential actions from the independent review of maternity services at The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust. Published 30th March 2022. 4) Braun, V. and Clarke, V. Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology. 2006;3(2):77-101.