



Background

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- Abortion Referendum: Repeal of the Eighth Amendment (25th May 2018)
- The Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018 (21st December 2018, signed into law)
- Termination of pregnancy (TOP) service provision started in Ireland (1st January 2019)

Legislation

- Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018: TOP permitted if;
 - Risk to life/health of pregnant person (Section 9)
 - Immediate risk to life/health of pregnant person (Section 10)
 - Life limiting fetal abnormality (Section 11)
 - **Pregnancy not exceeded 12 weeks’ gestation (Section 12)**
- Majority of TOPs are under section 12 (98.6% in 2021)

Medical TOP (MTOP)

- Mifepristone, followed by misoprostol (24-48h later)
- 90% occur in a primary care setting

Method

Ethical Approval

- Clinical Research Ethics Committee of the relevant Teaching Hospital

Data Collection

- Cases identified from local registry in a tertiary maternity unit
- Retrospective chart review of electronic healthcare records

Inclusion Criteria

- Inpatient medical termination of pregnancy under Section 12
- Between 1st January 2019 – 31st December 2021

Aim

To provide an overview of *Section 12* TOP services within a single tertiary-based hospital unit in Ireland across the first three years of service provision

Results

Main Findings

- Final cohort = 110 women (Fig. 1)
- Mean age of 28 years, 46.4% were parous, of whom 37.3% had a prior CS (Table 1)
- Most TOPs occurred between 9-11 wks gestation, with gestational age the primary indication for hospital TOP (Table 1)
- Misoprostol commenced within 24-48h of Mifepristone in 72% of women, as per guidance (Table 1)
- Misoprostol loading dose appropriately given in 94.5% cases (Table 1)
- The provision of contraception improved each year (Table 1)
- Five consultants were responsible for >90% of TOP consultations (Fig. 2)
- Complications were rare, only 10 women required surgery for failed or incomplete MTOP (Table 2)

Table 1: Demographics and Medical TOP Methods				
	Total N=110	2019 N=42	2020 N=34	2021 N=34
Age				
Mean ± SD	28.3 ± 7.4	28.2 ± 5.9	29.5 ± 8.1	27.3 ± 8.2
≤24	38.2% (n=42)	31.0%	35.2%	50.0%
25-34	37.3% (n=41)	52.3%	32.4%	26.5%
≥35	24.5% (n=27)	16.7%	32.4%	23.5%
Parous				
Yes	46.4% (n=51)	50%	44.1%	44.1%
Gestational Age				
< 9 weeks	10.0% (n=11)	4.8%	11.8%	14.7%
9 – 11 weeks	50.9% (n=56)	61.9%	47.1%	41.2%
≥ 11 weeks	39.1% (n=43)	33.3%	41.2%	44.1%
Indication				
Gestational age	82.7% (N=91)	90.5%	76.5%	79.4%
Electronic care plan				
Yes	72.7% (n=80)	64.3%	82.4%	73.5%
Time Mife to Miso				
24-48 h	72% (n=77)	74.4%	61.8%	79.4%
< 24h	11.2% (n=12)	5.1%	20.6%	8.8%
> 48h	16.8% (n=18)	20.5%	17.6%	11.8%
Miso 800mcg loading				
Yes	94.5% (n=104)	95.2%	94.1%	94.1%
Miso every 3 h				
Yes	89.1% (n=82)	88.2%	86.2%	93.1%
Contraception				
Discussed	71.8% (n=79)	85.7%	47.1%	79.4%
Provided	12.7% (n=10)	0.0%	6.3%	33.3%

Figure 1: Eligibility Selection

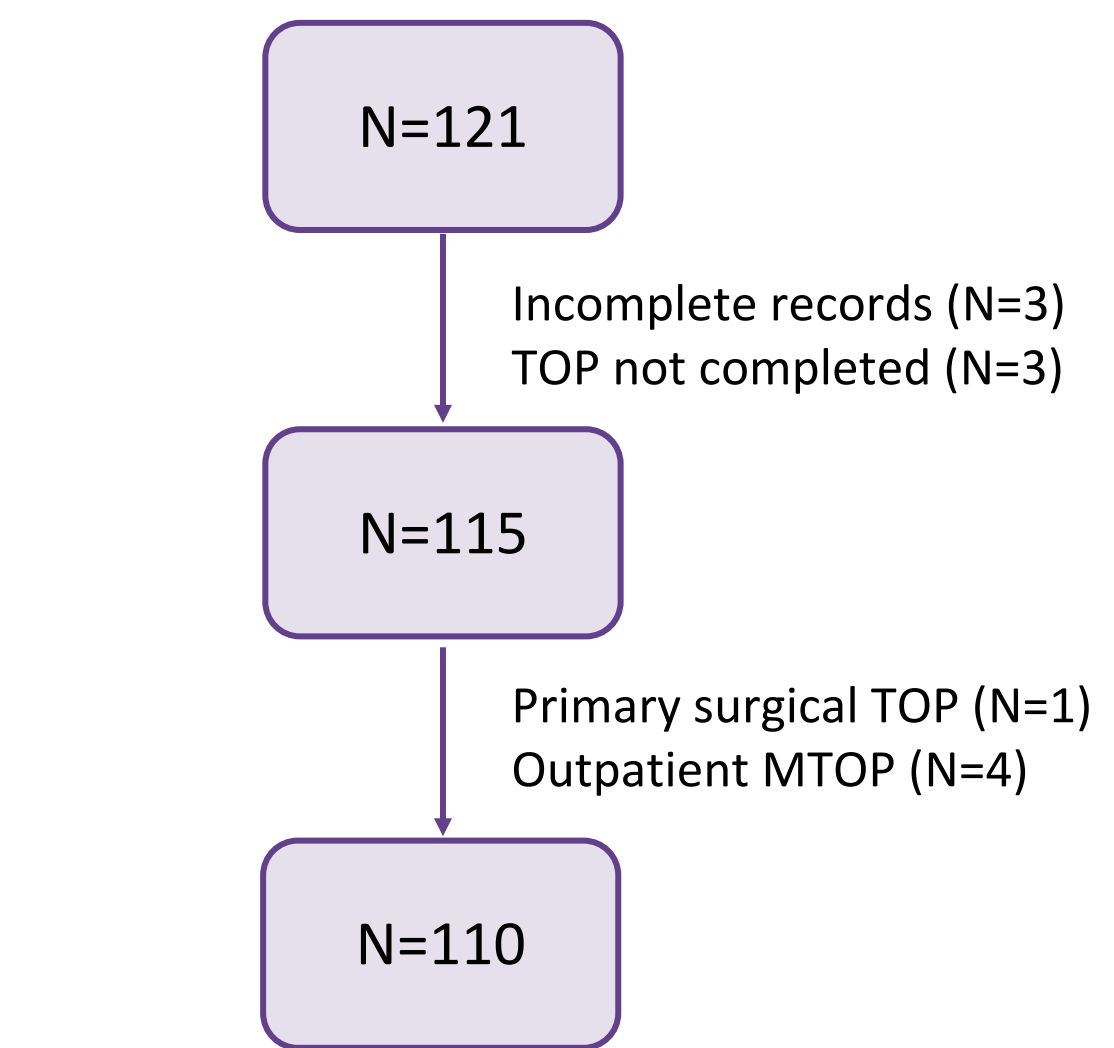


Figure 2: Consultant Involvement

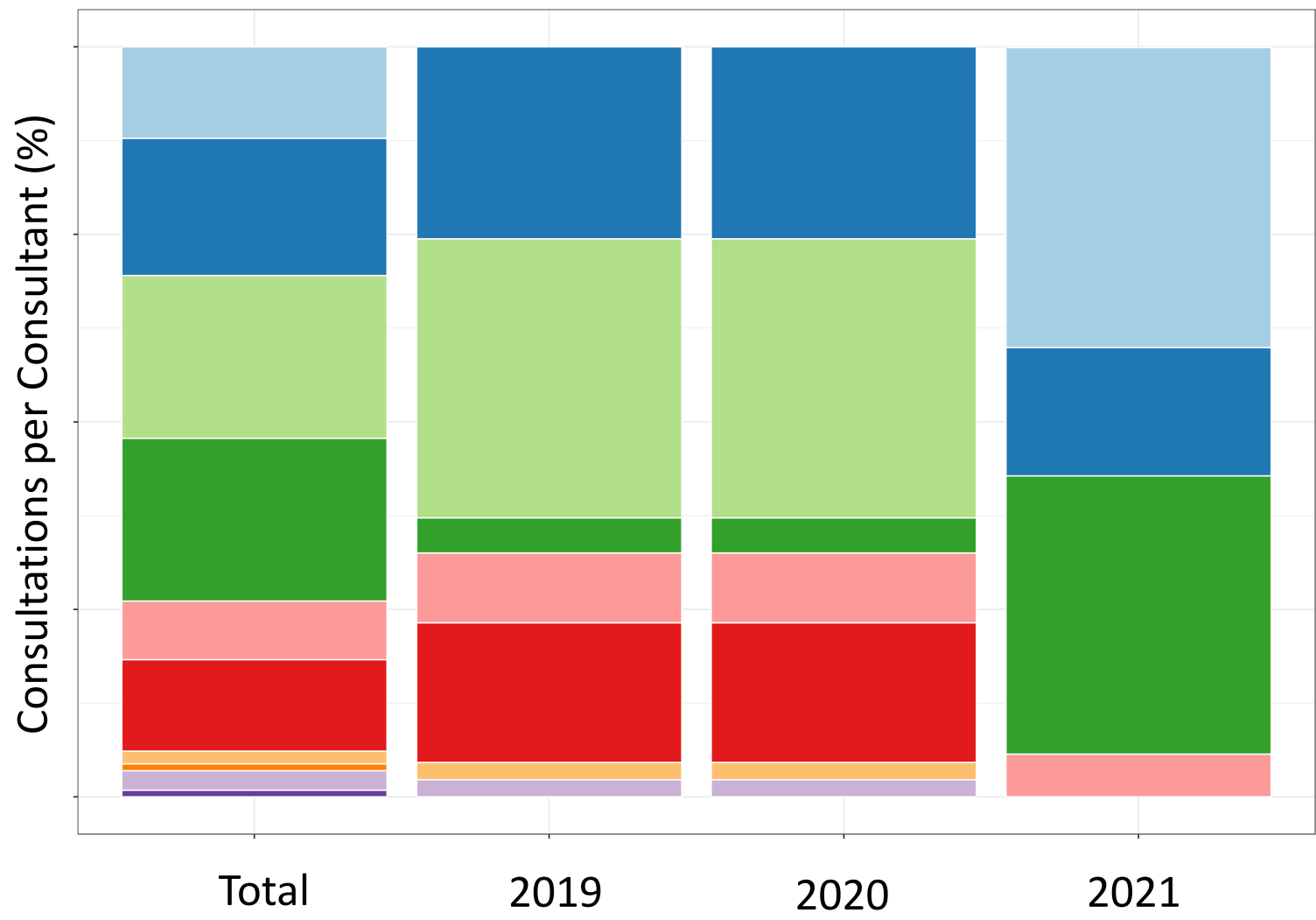


Figure 2: Bar graph shows percentage of consultations per consultant each year. Each color represents a consultant.

Table 2: Complications				
	Total N=110	2019 N=42	2020 N=34	2021 N=34
Surgery				
Failed MTOP	3.6% (n=4)	2.4%	2.9%	5.9%
Incomplete MTOP	5.5% (n=6)	0.0%	11.8%	5.9%
HDU care				
Yes	0.9% (n=1)	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%

Conclusion

- There is an ongoing need for TOP service provision in Ireland. This work identified gaps in current service, particular in terms of the provision of **contraception and timing of medication administration**.
- **The limited number of doctors** involved in TOP services remains a resource challenge.
- This work can inform TOP care in Ireland and ultimately assist in improved quality of care, updated clinical guidance and expansion of services.

Resources

- Interim Clinical Guidance Termination of Pregnancy under 12 weeks (2018). The Institute of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. Royal College of Physicians in Ireland.
- National Clinical Practice Guideline Investigation and Management of Complications of Early Termination of Pregnancy (2023). The Institute of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. Royal College of Physicians in Ireland

