

Obstetric services in the UK during the Covid-19 pandemic: a national survey of standards of care

James O'Carroll, Liana Zucco, Eleanor Warwick, Nan Guo, Brendan Carvalho, Pervez Sultan

ObsQoR

Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists (UK)

- guidelines for care during Covid-19 pandemic
- recommended changes to routine care
- adoption & adherence to published guidance in practice was unknown

Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection and Pregnancy.; 2021.
<https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/guidelines/coronavirus-pregnancy/>

Quality of Recovery in Obstetric Anaesthesia (ObsQoR)

- Multi-center study, 107 hospitals across the UK.
- Aimed to assess the quality of inpatient and outpatient recovery following childbirth
- Institutional survey was a part of the study, examined aspects of organizational structure, service provision and standards of care.
- Specific Covid-19 questions raised to assess changes to care implemented in response to the pandemic.

Survey results - change in practice

ObsQoR

Responses received from 105 ObsQoR study centers (response rate of 98%)
→ representing 54% of the 194 obstetric units in the UK

Sites reported having guidelines for:

- how to manage parturients with Covid-19 infection: 99/103 (94.3%)
- venous thromboembolism prophylaxis: 61/105 (58.1%)



Isolation precautions: COVID positive parturients are kept in an isolated room throughout their entire admission

101/105
(96%)

PPE: parturients are instructed to wear PPE during their labour and delivery, even if they are COVID-19 negative?

42/104
(40%)

Vaccination pathways:

- Covid-19 vaccination referral pathway present in 63/103 centres (61.2%), encouraging full vaccination for all pregnant women.

Survey results - restrictions

ObsQoR

Sites reported restrictions or changes to routine practice:

→ Restrictions routinely imposed on parturients' birthing plans if a positive diagnosis of Covid-19 was made: 37/104 (35.6%) of centres (e.g., birthing location or changes to labor and delivery preferences)



Birthing partners: yes, the birthing partner is allowed to be present, if the parturient is COVID-19 **negative**

103/105
(98%)

Birthing partners: yes, the birthing partner is allowed to be present, if the parturient is COVID-19 **positive**

79/104
(76%)

Birthing partners: if a parturient's partner is COVID-19 positive, they allowed to be present if asymptomatic

29/105
(28%)

Conclusions: The majority of maternity units in the UK adhere to the guidelines produced by the RCOG, recommending alterations in care throughout the pandemic. However, there remains variation in the provision of care, with scope to improve access and pathways to immunisations, birth plans and VTE prophylaxis.