

Cesarean Deliveries under Unplanned General Anesthesia: A Qualitative Thematic Analysis of Patient Perspectives

Mariah Johnson B.S., Michael Wong M.D.

Background

- Unplanned cesarean deliveries under GA are rare but significant events
- Unplanned cesarean delivery under neuraxial anesthesia is associated with impressions of poor communication, fear, distrust, loss of control (1, 2)
- Patient experiences with unplanned GA are underexplored
- Aim to inform care & mitigate impact through patient-centered insights

Hypothesis

- GA patients may also describe their experiences in negative terms with lasting distress

1. Birth 2016;43:346

2. Am J Perinatol 2024;41:106

Study Design & Methods



Eligibility

Above 19 years,
unplanned CD
under GA in NB,
Canada; 2024



Recruitment

Mailed, opt
out process



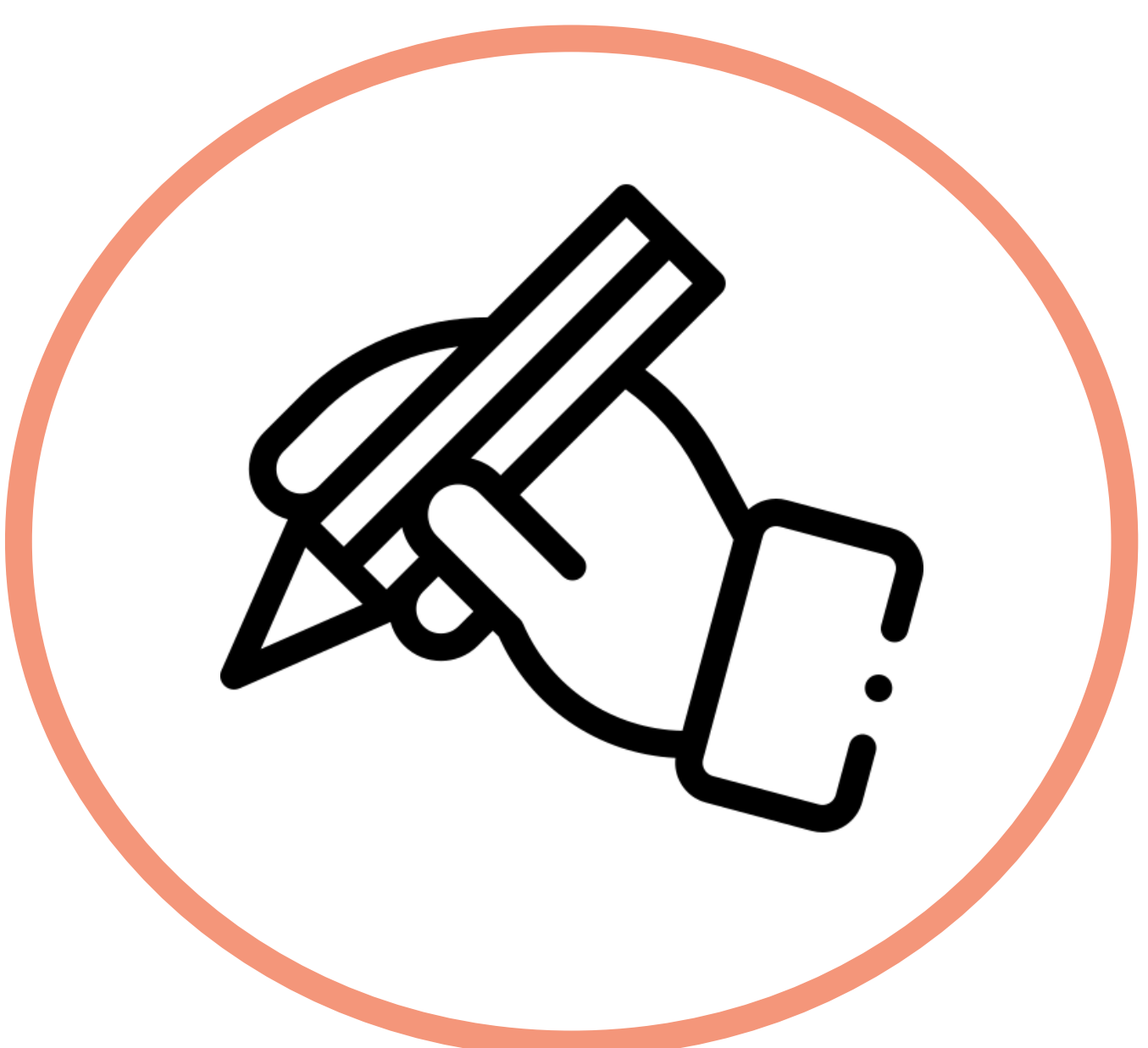
Interview

Virtual,
semi-structured,
recorded



Transcription & Coding

Transcribe,
initial coding of
data



Thematic Analysis

Themes
identified,
member checking

Results

KEY THEMES IDENTIFIED



Communication gaps, mistrust, loss of agency



Self-blame, unmet expectations



Support person exclusion



Impaired bonding, postpartum challenges

Age
32
(24,39)

Gravidity:Parity
G2:P2
(1,6) : (1:5)

Previous
Cesarean
21%

Conclusion & Discussion

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Unplanned cesarean delivery under GA
→ lasting emotional impact
- Support gaps & negative patient experiences can be mitigated
- Patient-centered care reduces trauma
- Care delivery is vital in shaping birth narratives & long term recovery

Protective factors

- perioperative counselling
- clear anesthetic communication
- provider reassurance
- patients feel heard and involved

