

**Project title:** Assessing the association between satisfaction with care and planned induction of labour at 39 weeks' gestational age – an observational study

### **Background and rationale**

Induction of labour is a process where a woman's labour is brought on using medical methods. These methods include vaginal medication (prostaglandins), insertion of a balloon catheter into the cervix, rupturing the obstetric membranes (breaking the 'waters') and/or an intravenous infusion of oxytocin.

Planning to induce labour near term (before 40 weeks' gestational age) has been shown to reduce the risk of caesarean section compared with planning not to induce the labour and has been shown to improve outcomes for babies <sup>1-7</sup>.

However, routinely offering induction of labour to pregnant women close to their due date remains controversial despite evidence of clinical benefits for mothers and babies. Importantly, there are minimal data regarding the impact of induction of labour on women's satisfaction with their birth experience.

### **Project aims or objectives**

The basic aim of this project is to assess the association of the decision to induce labour at 39 weeks' gestational age with women's satisfaction with care. While it is known that induction of labour may improve 'hard' clinical outcomes such as caesarean section rates and adverse perinatal outcomes, this must be balanced against women's perceptions of their care and maternal outcomes which are more difficult to measure such as post-traumatic stress disorder.

The aim of the project is to assess the association between satisfaction with care and planned induction of labour at 39 weeks' gestational age.

It is expected that satisfaction with care will be measured using a validated questionnaire which women who have recently given birth will be asked to complete.

### **Research design and proposed methodology**

*Population:* Pregnant women with a single baby planning a vaginal birth at 39 weeks or later

*Intervention:* Induction of labour at 39 weeks' gestational age

*Comparator:* Planning not to induce labour at 39 weeks' gestational age (induction can occur later due to medical indications or other reasons)

*Outcomes:* Satisfaction with labour; Satisfaction with the care received in labour

### **Timeline and proposed workload**

18UOC over 3 terms. This is a large project, and is expected to take a minimum of 2 days per week over 6-12 months.

### **Description of skills student is required to have**

Role of the student(s):

1. Writing, submission and obtaining approval for the study from the ethics review committee;
2. conducting the study;
3. writing a draft of the paper;
4. and submitting the paper for publication.

It is anticipated that the student will be the first author of the publication and substantial support will be provided during the entire process. However, it is recognised that the process can be challenging, and it is possible that the student may not be the first author if others make a larger contribution. The order of contributing authors will be at the discretion of the primary supervisor. The supervisors undertake to support the student in writing a final research report for their research project.

This project is multi-staged and is a considerable piece of work that may be best to occur over a full student year, with up to 2 students. Completed PHCM9498 Epidemiology and Statistics for Public Health