

Freedom of Information Request: Our Reference CTMUHB_223_21

Thank you for your request for information received on the 28 May 2021, regarding maternal request caesarean sections. Please find the response from Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board set out below:

You asked:

- 1. How many maternal request caesareans were carried out in your Health Board between April 2019 and April 2020 with no other significant medical, obstetric or psychological indication?**

The total number of Caesarean Sections (CS) for an indication of 'Maternal Request' in Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTMUHB) between April 2019 and April 2020 (13 months) = 75

- 2. What were the total number of caesarean sections carried out in your Health Board between April 2019 and April 2020?**

The total number of CS in CTMUHB between April 2019 and April 2020 (13 months) = 1522

- 3. Please confirm how your Health Board complies with the revised NICE guideline [NG192] in relation to Maternal Request for Caesarean Birth points 1.2.25 – 1.2.31 – published March 31 2021**

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Our health board developed a guideline for Caesarean Section based on National recommendations, which includes maternal request CS; this is in line with the NICE guideline. The guideline is available through WISDOM which is our web based Guideline platform and was developed in March 2020.

Please can you provide information relating to the following questions:

- 4. Do you have an explicitly stated policy not to offer Maternal Request Caesarean Sections (MRCS) in your Health Board?**

We offer in the health board Maternal Request Caesarean Sections (MRCS). In the health board, we understand and support the women's right to make informed choice regarding the most appropriate mode of delivery in relation to her needs and requests. According to our guidance, the women has the right to choose the mode of delivery as long as she understands the risks and benefits, i.e. can make an informed choice that is evidence based following discussion with her named professional.

- 5. Do you have a written guideline for Maternal Request Caesarean Sections (MRCS) in your Health Board? If yes, please provide a copy of the written guideline**

We have a Caesarean Guideline which includes, caesarean section by maternal request, section 3 of the document.

“Maternal request for Caesarean Section”

- ☐ Explore, discuss and record the specific reasons for the request.
- ☐ Discuss the overall risks and benefits of CS compared with vaginal birth and record that this discussion has taken place.
- ☐ If necessary, include discussion with other members of the obstetric team (including the obstetrician, midwife and anaesthetist) to explore reasons for the request, and ensure provision of accurate information.
- ☐ If reason for a CS is anxiety about childbirth, offer referral to a healthcare professional with expertise in providing perinatal mental health support to help address anxiety in a supportive manner.
- ☐ If after discussion and offer of support (including perinatal mental health support for women with anxiety about childbirth), a vaginal birth is still not an acceptable option, offer a planned CS.
- ☐ An obstetrician unwilling to perform a CS should refer the woman to an obstetrician who will carry out the CS.”

6. Do you require a compulsory mental health appointment in order for a Caesarean Section to be offered?

No, referral is indicated if the reason for CS is maternal anxiety and this referral will be after the woman has had a birth discussion and assessment by consultant midwife and or consultant obstetrician

7. Do you have a policy which states the number of weeks into pregnancy the decision for a Caesarean Section would be made? If yes please state number of weeks

Mode of delivery and birth discussion take place around 36 weeks of pregnancy. Decision and plan for Caesarean Section birth does not occur before 39 weeks as the risk of neonatal respiratory morbidity markedly decreased at and after 39 weeks of pregnancy.

8. Are there any other conditions which must be met in order to be offered a Maternal Request Caesarean Section in your Health Board If yes, please provide a copy of the conditions

These are the discussions points and conditions which must be met before offering MRCS

- Explore, discuss and record the specific reasons for the request.
- Discuss the overall risks and benefits of CS compared with vaginal birth and record that this discussion has taken place.
- If necessary, include discussion with other members of the obstetric team (including the obstetrician, midwife and anaesthetist) to explore reasons for the request, and ensure provision of accurate information.
- If reason for a CS is anxiety about childbirth, offer referral to a healthcare professional with expertise in providing perinatal mental health support to help address anxiety in a supportive manner.