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A service evaluation into the differences in testing and management of Gestational Diabetes Mellitus in England



L Bird, S Iqbal, R Spencer

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Objective

To explore whether and in what way local Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) guidelines in England differed between themselves and from NICE guidance

Methods

Design: Qualitative observational comparison of local hospital GDM guidelines. Local guidelines were requested via email from 62 English hospital Trusts with follow-up emails to non-responders. Guidelines were compared on key aspects of diagnosis, antenatal and intrapartum management and long-term diabetes testing.

Conclusion

Further research would be needed to see what effect variation in local guidelines has on the diagnosis and treatment of GDM in local populations

Results

Guidelines were reviewed from 13 Trusts across ten counties. All included the NICE recommendations for GDM testing and management.

Antenatal care: 4/13 did not specify further support unless there was poor glycaemic control; 1/13 offered contact details for a specialist nurse; 7/13 organised appointments with either a specialist nurse or an MDT. Only one hospital specified counselling with a specialist at 36 weeks pregnancy to discuss a birth plan.

Deivery: recommendations varied for maximum gestation before induction (37+0 - 40+6 weeks), maternal blood sugar testing in labour, and treatment plans during and after birth.

Postnatal: some hospitals arranged annual HbA1c while others simply recommend it

Hospital name	OGTT gestation (weeks)		OGTT Indications in addition to NICE indications			Later Screening for OGTT				Specific guidance for bariatric surgery
	Standard	Previous GDM	PCOS	Previous unexplained stillbirth	Other	AC	Poly	Glycosuria	EFW	
Airedale	24-28	16-18	Yes	No	Focus on late onset GDM in South Asian women		Yes	Yes		HbA1c not OGTT - no specialist plan
Bristol & Weston	28	Dating scan	Considered	Considered	Considered if multiple pregnancy	>95th	Yes	Yes	>95th	
Derby & Burton	24-28	Dating scan	Yes	Yes	On glucocorticoids / anti-psychotic medication	>97th	Yes	Yes	>90th	
Dartford & Gravesham	28	16	No	No				Yes		
East Sussex	28		Yes	No	SMBG offered if exceptional circumstances		Yes	Yes		
Harrogate	24-28	Dating scan	Yes	No	Previous IUD, on antipsychotic medication	>95th	Yes	Yes		
Leeds	24-28	Dating scan	Yes	Yes		>95th	Yes	Yes	>90th	No OGTT - specialist plan
Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells	28	16	No	Yes	On antipsychotic medication		Yes	Yes	>90th	
North WestAnglia	28	16	Yes	No	PCOS using metformin		Yes	Yes		No OGTT - specialist screening plan
Plymouth	24-28	12	Yes	No	Conceived with Clomiphene	>95th	Yes	Yes		
Sheffield	24-28	Dating scan	Yes	Yes	Previous shoulder dystocia, age 40 or above	>90th	Yes	Yes	>90th	
Somerset	26	Dating scan	No	Yes	On anti-psychotic medication	>97th	Yes	Yes		
Southport & Omskirk	24-28	16-18	Yes	Yes	On anti-psychotic medication, any previous IUD	>95th	Yes	Yes		No OGTT - no specialist plan

Table: Comparison of indications for GDM testing. AC=abdominal circumference, EFW=estimated fetal weight, OGTT=oral glucose tolerance test, PCOS=polycystic ovarian syndrome, poly=polyhydramnios on ultrasound.