

## Diabetes in women admitted for labour care to a midwifery unit: a national cohort study using UKMidSS

### Background

Around 5% of pregnant women in England and Wales are affected by pre-existing or gestational diabetes and this figure is increasing.<sup>1</sup> Diabetes in pregnancy is associated with a range of complications and adverse birth outcomes including macrosomia, large for gestational age, pre-eclampsia, induction, shoulder dystocia, caesarean section, and perinatal mortality.<sup>2,3</sup> Women with diabetes are advised to plan birth in an obstetric unit, in a hospital where “advanced neonatal resuscitation skills are available 24 hours a day”.<sup>1,4</sup> Around 25% of local midwifery unit admission guidelines indicate that women with gestational diabetes are explicitly eligible for midwifery unit birth or would be considered for admission.<sup>5</sup> One of the top ten research priorities identified by women and healthcare professionals in the Diabetes and Pregnancy Priority Setting Partnership, was about the labour and birth experiences of women with diabetes and how to enhance choice for these women.<sup>6</sup> The ‘long-list’ of questions included “When is it safe for women with diabetes to give birth in a midwifery unit compared with a hospital birth?” It is not clear how many women with diabetes (gestational or pre-existing) are admitted to midwifery units for labour care, what the characteristics and outcomes of these women (and their babies) are, or whether some women with diabetes might safely plan birth in a midwifery unit, particularly an alongside midwifery unit where there is ready access to neonatal care.

### Objective

To use UKMidSS to carry out a national cohort study to estimate the proportion of women with diabetes (gestational and pre-existing) admitted to midwifery units for labour care in the UK, and describe and compare labour care, management and maternal and neonatal outcomes with other women admitted to midwifery units.

### Research questions

- What is the prevalence of diabetes (both gestational and pre-existing) in women admitted to UK midwifery units for labour care?
- What are the characteristics of women with diabetes admitted to midwifery units for labour care?
- How is the labour care of women with diabetes managed in midwifery units?
- What are the outcomes for women with diabetes admitted to midwifery units for labour care, and their babies, compared with other women admitted to midwifery units?

### Study period

1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022

### Case definition

Any woman with a diagnosis of diabetes during pregnancy (gestational or pre-existing) and admitted for labour care to a midwifery unit.

### Funding

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### References

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