Pain After Caesarean Section

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Background
• NICE issued new 2011 guidelines for analgesia after caesareans.
• Poor pain control results in reduced patient satisfaction and longer hospital stay¹.
• Pain scores of above 4/10 are unacceptable and need to be treated¹.

Aims
• Assess postoperative pain scores in women having elective or emergency CS.
• Assess whether regular medication is being given as prescribed.
• Assess if pain scores after elective or emergency CS differ.

Methods
• Observational analysis of drug charts and documentation of pain scores on observation charts.
• Patients questioned about pain on postnatal ward after CS and asked to mark average pain score on visual analogue scale.

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Pain Score</th>
<th>Pain Score Documentation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency 7.5</td>
<td>Number of times pain score NOT recorded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective 6.5</td>
<td>Number of times pain score recorded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Discussion
• Pain score unacceptably high in this group of patients.
• NICE recommend morphine PCA for all CS patients, no funding available.
• Discovered no regular drug ward rounds being done on postnatal ward at present.
• Looking at feasibility of self-administered medication² to ensure analgesia is given.

Action Taken for Quality Improvement
• Drug rounds are now being carried out twice a day on postnatal wards.
• Missed analgesia now much less frequent (12% of repeat sample).
• Pain score average now 5.9/10, midwifery education programme now in progress.
• New pain guideline for caesarean section has been written and circulated.

References