Planning mode of birth in routine antenatal care - development of a decision aid (Plan-A)

Participant information sheet

Why are we doing this study?

We are keen to understand your experiences of making childbirth plans. There is very little research exploring women and partners' experiences of making childbirth plans, especially experiences of making a choice between planning vaginal or caesarean birth. We need to find out what matters during this decision-making process so that support can be provided in a way that offers genuine informed involvement and choices to both those who are pregnant and their partners. The term 'women' as used here is not intended to exclude those who do not identify as women. Please see the Plan-A website (Plan A | Aberdeen Centre for Women's Health Research | The University of Aberdeen (abdn.ac.uk)) for our statement on use of language in the Plan-A study.

Who can take part/why have I been chosen?

We are interviewing anyone who is currently pregnant, and their partners, and parents of children up to ten years of age. We want to find out about what information is important to consider when planning how to give birth, individuals' experiences of planning how to give birth, and how care could be improved to ensure that an informed decision can be made.

What will happen to me if I decide to take part?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be invited to take part in an interview with a researcher from the University of Aberdeen to talk about your views and experiences. The interview will last approximately 60 minutes. You can choose whether you wish to take part, and you can do this with your partner, or separately. This would take place at a convenient time for you, either by telephone, using online video calling, or face-to-face. The discussion will be audio-recorded and transcribed by an accredited company external to the universities.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is your decision about whether or not you wish to take part. If you do agree to take part and then change your mind, you can withdraw at any time without giving a reason and this will not make any difference to your NHS care. In addition, your decision not to participate in the study will not impact on your routine care.

What are the risks and benefits of taking part?
For some individuals, discussing birth plans and potential risks of birth can be distressing. If you feel upset at any time during the interview, we can pause or stop altogether, depending on your preference. If taking part raises issues or concerns, you may wish to contact your midwife, GP, health visitor or your local patient advice and liaison service at the NHS hospital where you receive/received care. By taking part, you will be helping with the development of decision support material and guidance to improve care for others, which may include your own care in any future pregnancies.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?
All information which is collected about you during the research will be kept confidential. Information will be stored in paper and electronic files accessible only to the research team members. After we have checked the accuracy of interview transcripts, we will remove identifiers (names, initials), and label them with a code instead. We will destroy the recordings after transcripts have been checked. We may use quotes from the discussion in a report on our findings. Any quotes used would not use names or information that could identify you and you will not be identified as a participant in any report or publication.

Will I be reimbursed for my time?
As a thank you for taking part we will send you a £25 shopping voucher. We can also provide payment to cover travel expenses.

What happens next?
If you would like to take part, please contact us by e-mail (plana@abdn.ac.uk) or phone (01224 438425 during hours of 9am and 5pm Mon-Fri) to arrange a convenient time to discuss the study further, check your eligibility and set up the interview. Interviews can be by telephone, face-to-face, or video call and will be at a location of your choice. Please note that we will record your verbal consent via telephone/video call and you will be provided with a copy of this consent to keep.

What will happen to the results?
The findings from the interviews will be used by the research team to help design a decision aid (information and guidance) to support people to make a choice about their planned birth. The findings will also help the team to write a user guide for the decision aid so that NHS staff and the families they support can more easily make use of the decision aid. The first version of the decision aid will be tested in workshops then in real-life settings before a final version is ready. The results and recommendations from the study will be shared in

talks, publications, reports and online, to help improve care, including on the study website (Plan A | Aberdeen Centre for Women's Health Research | The University of Aberdeen (abdn.ac.uk)).

Who is organising and funding the research?
This project is led from and sponsored by the University of Aberdeen. The research is funded by the National Institute of Health and Care Research. This interview study is part of the Plan-A study (Plan A | Aberdeen Centre for Women's Health Research | The University of Aberdeen (abdn.ac.uk)) which is working across four universities and includes eight public panel members from across the UK.

Who has approved the research?
This is a national study approved by NHS Research Ethics Committee (East of Scotland Research Ethics Service).

What will happen to my data?
The University of Aberdeen is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. We will be using information that you share with us in order to undertake this study and will use the minimum personally-identifiable information possible. Transcription of the interview recording will be done by a specialist transcription company based in the UK in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. The recording of the interview will only be held until transcription is complete. Responsible members of the University of Aberdeen may be given access to data for monitoring and/or audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. We will keep identifiable information about you at the University of Aberdeen for five years after the end of the study, in line with University policy.

How will we use information about you?
We will need to use information from you for this research project. This information will include your name / contact details. People will use this information to do the research or to check your records to make sure that the research is being done properly. People who do not need to know who you are will not be able to see your name or contact details. Your data will have a code number instead. We will keep all information about you safe and secure. Once we have finished the study, we will keep some of the data so we can check the results. We will write our reports in a way that no-one can work out that you took part in the study.

What are your choices about how your information is used?

- You can stop being part of the study at any time, without giving a reason, but we will keep information about you that we already have. We need to manage your records in specific ways for the research to be reliable. This means that we won't be able to let you see or change the data we hold about you.

Where can you find out more about how your information is used?
You can find out more about how we use your information

- at www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/
- by asking one of the research team
- by sending an email to dpa@abdn.ac.uk, or
- by ringing us on 01224 272596.

Safeguarding
If we identify any safeguarding issues, we will signpost you or your partner to appropriate sources of support including GP, health visitor or the midwife. If the researcher is informed that someone's life is in danger of harm or there has been a malpractice or misconduct, the researcher will take the necessary steps according to local protocols. Additionally, if you or your partner's life is considered to be in immediate danger, the researcher will alert emergency services.

What if there is a problem?
If you wish to complain about any aspect of your involvement in this study, please contact The Chief Investigator, Dr Mairead Black (mairead.black@abdn.ac.uk) who will try to answer your questions. If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, you can do this by contacting the University of Aberdeen Research Governance Office (researchgovernance@abdn.ac.uk).

Thank you for reading this information and considering taking part in this study.

Dr Mairead Black and the Plan-A Team

For further information:
plana@abdn.ac.uk