

Additional File 3: Interview Guide

BEGIN RECORDING IN ZOOM

Introduction:

Opening line – [Introduce self]. Thank you for taking the time to do this interview with me and for agreeing to take part in my study.

Study purpose

- This study is exploring the impact of COVID-19 on maternity services here in [region] and how this has affected respectful maternity care.
- We want to improve understanding of how respectful maternity care is affected in unusual pressures such as COVID-19, and what we can do to protect standards of care in the future.

Interview

- I will be asking you about your experience of working in maternity services during the COVID-19 pandemic and how you think the situation has affected women and the care they receive.

Duration

- This interview will last for approximately 45 minutes. If you need to take a break or would like to stop the interview for any other reason, please let me know as it is not a problem.

Recording

- I will record **the video and the sound** from this videocall. It will be kept securely on the University of Birmingham network and will not be shared anywhere else. I may write down some brief notes on a piece of paper to help remind myself of questions I would like to ask you.

Confidentiality

- I will keep everything you say in this interview confidential; I will only tell somebody else if I think that you or another person are in danger of harm.
- I do not work for your healthcare facility and so I will not be telling anyone there what you have said in this interview.
- I will anonymise the answers you give. What you say may be quoted in the results of this study, but nobody will know that it was you who said it.

Do you have any questions at all at this point?

Consent:

Have you signed the consent form? Please could you confirm verbally now that you understand the purpose of this study and you are happy to be interviewed and take part in the study?

Are you aware that you may withdraw from this study without any consequence to yourself, up until five days from now? Once your results are anonymised in five days from now your data will still be analysed.

Are you ready to begin the interview?

General Opening Questions:

1. Demographics form

This project is helping us to understand midwives' and maternity support workers' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. We are interested in learning about both positive and negative experiences. We are particularly interested in your experience of giving respectful maternity care and or women's experiences.

2. **What does the phrase “respectful maternity care” mean to you?**
3. **In an ideal world, what would this respectful maternity care look like in the maternity service you work in?**
4. **Have you noticed any changes in how RMC is provided since the COVID-19 pandemic?**
5. **What went well? Why was this? How could these improvements be maintained?**
6. **What didn't go so well? Why was this? What could be done to make this work better?**
7. **If things didn't change - Why do you think that is? Do you think this will remain the same after the pandemic? Do you expect there may be changes in the future because of COVID-19?**
8. **How well received were these changes by other staff? Why is this? How was your experience different to theirs – why do you think that is?**
9. **How would you have handled the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure respectful maternity care, if you were in charge? Of your maternity service? In charge of the trust? Government decisions?**

COVID-19 changes:

1. **Before COVID-19, how was your maternity service set up to ensure women had respectful maternity care? What might stop women from presenting? What choices did they have during their stay?**
2. **Overall, how do you feel women are treated? (if enough rapport, probe here about mistreatment or abandonment examples. Else, leave for later in interview)**
3. **How do you think that COVID-19 changed your maternity service? How did these changes impact respectful care? How did you maintain the previous standard of care?**
4. **Did the pandemic affect your work? Did your role change or workload increase? How did this impact patients? How did you mitigate this? What changes made were helpful? What changes were unhelpful?**
5. **And how has the pandemic affected you? Prompts not to go too deep due to ethics, but just empathy.**

Impacts on women:

1. **How have the women found maternity services in COVID-19? Can you tell me about someone who has coped well? Why was this? What about somebody who coped less well? Why was this?**
2. **Has care access for women changed during the pandemic? Did women have any additional barriers due to COVID-19? How did you reassure women?**
3. **Has communication with the women changed? Telephone consultations, translation services, women with language/communication difficulties. Can you tell me about an incident where a woman's care may have been suboptimal in your own experience or that of a colleague?**

4. **We've seen in the press that women from BAME backgrounds have been particularly affected by COVID-19. Has this been something you've experienced? If no - What do you think about the reports? Do you think your colleagues have had any experience of this?**
5. **Have women's choices been affected by their care during the pandemic? How? If not – why? Could you give me any examples? How did this affect women?**
6. **Tell me about the social distancing measures that were in place? Has this affected privacy? How did these impact the experiences of women in your care? What support could women have? What was the effect on women and their care if they could not have these things?**
7. **Outside of the healthcare service. How did COVID-19 affect women throughout pregnancy, birth and the post-natal period? Social isolation, finances**

In the future:

1. **Do you think any changes will continue after the pandemic? Why/why not? What would the benefit/harm be of keeping this practice? What will help you keep this change? What will make it difficult?**
2. **Are there changes that you would prefer to stop after the pandemic? Why/why not? What would the benefit/harm be of keeping this practice?**
3. **If we were to go into another pandemic, what would you do differently? How could this be achieved? How would it ensure respectful maternity care?**

Is there anything else you think it is important for me to know about COVID-19 and respectful maternity care in [the region]?

Thank the participant:

That is the end of our interview. Thank you very much for giving me your time today. The information we have discussed will be important in my study. If you have any questions about the study, please contact me or my supervisor via the details given on the information sheet. Thank you.

Turn off recording, end meeting.

Write some brief notes on the main impressions I gained from the interview. Make particular notes of:

- New information or ideas that were presented
- Problems with the questions I asked
- Problems communicating with each other
- (later in the data collection period, note if feel that we are reaching data saturation)