



Pregnancy and neonates: planned caesarean after 39 weeks

NICE indicator

Published: 1 August 2014

Last updated: 13 August 2021

www.nice.org.uk/indicators/ind24

Indicator

The proportion of pregnant women having a planned caesarean section who have the procedure carried out at or after 39 weeks 0 days.

Indicator type

Network / system level indicator.

The indicator would be appropriate to understand and report on the performance of networks or systems of providers.

This document does not represent formal NICE guidance. For a full list of NICE indicators, see our [menu of indicators](#).

To find out how to use indicators and how we develop them, see our [NICE indicator process guide](#).

Rationale

Babies born by planned caesarean section at term but before the due date are at risk of respiratory conditions. The level of risk decreases with gestational age, particularly from 39 weeks onwards. There is evidence to suggest that avoiding a caesarean section before 39 weeks, and timely decisions if a caesarean section is needed, improves outcomes.

Source guidance

[Caesarean birth. NICE guideline NG192 \(2021\), recommendation 1.4.1](#)

Specification

Numerator: The number of women in the denominator who had a caesarean section at or after 39 weeks 0 days.

Denominator: The number of women who had a planned caesarean section without maternal or fetal indication for an early birth.

Calculation: Numerator divided by the denominator, multiplied by 100.

Exclusions: Pre-term births, multiple births or where record implies an emergency caesarean section.

Data source: [NHS England Maternity Services Data Set](#).

Minimum population: The indicator would be appropriate to assess the performance of networks or systems of providers.

ISBN: 978-1-4731-5534-3