



NATIONAL OBSTETRIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (NOIS)

MALTA

First Quarterly Report: January to March 2005

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NATIONAL OBSTETRIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (NOIS)

A national obstetric information system was launched in the beginning of 1999 and now covers practically all deliveries taking place on the islands of Malta and Gozo.

Data collection and Sources of Information

Systematic data collection for NOIS commences once the mother delivers her baby. Information regarding the course and outcome of each pregnancy is recorded by the relevant staff at each centre on a standard NOIS sheet. Once the data are recorded, the sheets are forwarded to the DHI on a weekly basis. At the DHI the relevant sheets are processed and entered into the NOIS database.

The maternity centres actively participating in this information system are: St. Lukes Hospital, Gozo General Hospital, St James Hospital Sliema and Zabbar and St. Philip's Hospital.

Report analysis

This report analyses the national maternities/deliveries and infant births that occurred in the first quarter of 2005 and compares it to the figures reported for the same period of last year. The data in this report describes the birth statistics for all maternities (Maltese and non-Maltese) and infant births registered into the system.

Data is sent to the Registry from all hospitals on the Maltese Islands. Accuracy and completeness of data sent on the NOIS reporting sheets is the responsibility of the Hospital providing data.

ANALYSIS

There were a total of 936 maternities/deliveries registered in the Maltese islands for the first quarter of 2005, which resulted in a total of 955 infant births.

Comparing these figures with those reported for the same period last year one can see that the number of infant births decreased by 12 births (*967 births reported in 1st quarter 2004*).

MATERNITIES / DELIVERIES

MATERNAL AGE, MARITAL STATUS, NATIONALITY AND PARITY

Maternal Age:

The maternities have been grouped according to the standard age groupings and the frequency distribution of deliveries according to maternal age at delivery has been analysed. In the first quarter of 2005, the greatest number of deliveries (38%), occurred in the age group 25 to 29 years while there were no deliveries in the age group <15 years. There was 1 delivery in the 45+ age group. The minimum age of the mothers was 15 years while the maximum age was 45 years. The most frequent age at delivery was 29 years.

The frequency distribution of deliveries according to maternal age group is given in the following table.

Deliveries according to maternal age groups:

<i>Age group (years)</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2005</i>		<i>1st Quarter 2004</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
<15	0	0	2	<1
15-19	57	6	48	5
20-24	163	17	183	19
25-29	358	38	348	37
30-34	274	29	251	26
35-39	67	7	96	10
40-44	16	2	19	2
45+	1	<1	2	<1
Unspecified	0	0	2	<1

Marital Status:

For the first quarter of this year, 21% (192) of all deliveries occurred to mothers who were never married (single); while 79% (743) of all deliveries occurred to mothers who were married once (married, widowed, separated). Only one delivery had no marital status specified.

In the first quarter of 2005, all the mothers registered as having never been married were registered as having 'Support at home to raise the infant'.

Nationality:

93% (873) of all deliveries this quarter, occurred to women of Maltese nationality while 5% (45) were Non-Maltese. In the remaining 2% (18) nationality was not specified.

Parity:

There were 51% (475) of mothers who were primiparas while 49% (461) were multiparas in the first quarter of this year.

MATERNAL LIFESTYLES

There were 6% (56) of mothers who were reported to smoke one or more cigarettes during pregnancy in the first quarter of this year. None were reported to drink alcohol and 3 (<1%) were reported as being drug abusers.

The following table gives the smoking, alcohol and drug habits of mothers for the first quarters of 2005 and 2004.

<i>Maternal Lifestyles</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2005</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2004</i>
	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>
<i>Cigarette smoking during pregnancy:</i>		
1 to 3/day	10	12
>than 3/day	46	48
Do not smoke	879	887
Unspecified	0	4
<i>Alcohol consumption during pregnancy:</i>		
Up to 1unit/day	0	0
>than 1unit/day	0	0
None	935	947
Unspecified	1	4
<i>Drug Abuse during pregnancy</i>		
Yes	3	0
No	932	947
Unspecified	1	4

PATHOLOGY DURING PREGNANCY

The table below gives the number of mothers recorded with a specific obstetric pathology during pregnancy.

The most frequently recorded pathology during pregnancy was gestational hypertension, there were in fact 7% of mothers who were registered as having gestational hypertension in the first quarter of 2005.

<i>Pathology recorded during pregnancy</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2005</i>			<i>1st Quarter 2004</i>		
	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Unspecified</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Unspecified</i>
Antepartum Haemorrhage	923	13	0	947	4	0
Gestational hypertension	873	62	1	892	59	0
Pre-eclampsia	932	4	0	947	4	0
Placenta praevia	934	2	0	947	4	0
Abruption of placenta	935	1	0	945	6	0
Assisted fertilisation (ART)	915	21	0	942	9	0
Cardiovascular disease	936	0	0	951	0	0

DIABETES IN PREGNANCY

In the first quarter of this year, there were 4 mothers who were reported as being Insulin Dependent Diabetic before this pregnancy while there was 1 mother reported with Non-Insulin Dependent diabetes prior to pregnancy. In addition, there were a total of 10 mothers registered with gestational diabetes who were controlled without the use of insulin, and 1 mother registered as having gestational diabetes treated with insulin.

ULTRASONOGRAPHY

375 (40%) of the mothers were reported to have had one or two ultrasounds carried out during pregnancy while 49 (5%) had five or more scans. For 364 (39%) of mothers, the number of ultrasounds taken was unspecified or unknown. The table below gives the number and rate of ultrasound scans carried out during pregnancy.

<i>No. of Scans</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2005</i>		<i>1st Quarter 2004</i>	
	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
0	0	0	4	<1
1	204	22	220	23
2	171	18	259	27
3	95	10	213	23
4	53	6	106	11
5 or more	49	5	69	7
Unspecified / unknown	364	39	80	8

CATEGORY OF MATERNITY ACCORDING TO DELIVERY

For the first quarter of this year, there were a total of 917 (98%) singleton and 19 (2%) twin deliveries, there were no triplet and quadruplet deliveries.

<i>Category</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2005</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2004</i>
Singleton	917	937
Twin	19	12
Triplet	0	2
Quadruplet	0	0

INFANT BIRTHS

INFANTS AND METHOD OF BIRTH

In the first quarter of this year, there was a total of 955 infant births. Of these 621 (65%) were delivered as a vertex delivery, 294 (31%) by emergency or elective Caesarean Section and 40 (4%) by assisted vaginal delivery (includes forceps, ventouse and breech).

<i>Method of Birth*</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2005</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2004</i>
Infants delivered by vertex delivery	621	676
Infants delivered by emergency/elective Caesarean Section	294	256
Infants delivered by forceps	1	2
Infants delivered by ventouse	38	33
Breech deliveries	1	0

**Data analysed according to total infant births*

This quarter there were 294 babies delivered by caesarian section but 278 caesarian operations performed, this due to the fact that a number of caesarians are done in multiple birth deliveries. The Caesarean section operation rate is 29.7% of the total maternal deliveries (936) this quarter.

BIRTH WEIGHTS AND GENDER OF BIRTHS

In the first quarter of 2005, there were 882 (92%) of the total births that occurred in the birth weight range of 2500g to 4999g. 64 (7%) of the total births were in the low birth weight range of 1500g to 2499g, 8 (1%) of births were of very low birth weight 500g to 1499g. In one case the birth weight was unspecified. No babies were reported with birth weight of 5000g or more.

<i>Birth weights</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2005</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2004</i>
<500g	0	0
500-999g	4	1
1000-1499g	4	10
1500-1999g	13	16
2000-2499g	51	63
2500-2999g	194	220
3000-3499g	422	371
3500-3999g	219	224
4000-4499g	43	59
4500+	4	3
Unspecified	1	0
Average Birth weight (g)	3218	3204

The male and female distribution of births in the 1st quarter of 2005 was 495 and 460 respectively.

OUTCOME OF BIRTH

The number of live births for the first quarter of this year was 954 which accounted for 99.9% of the total births at a national level. The remaining 1 birth was a stillbirth. There were 5 cases of early neonatal deaths and 3 cases of late neonatal deaths (see table below).

<i>Outcome of Birth</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2005</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2004</i>
Babies born alive	954	966
Stillbirths	1	1
Early Neonatal deaths	5	4
Late Neonatal deaths	3	0

INFANT FEEDING METHODS AT DISCHARGE

Infant feeding habits are recorded by hospital staff at the time of discharge, little can be said on the actual infant feeding habits as these may change soon after discharge from the birthing facilities.

<i>Infant feeding methods at time of discharge</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2005</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2004</i>
Breast only	559	528
Bottle only	275	304
Mixed (Breast & Bottle)	111	122
Other*	10	6
Unspecified	0	7

* 'Other' - include babies who are still at hospital after 28 days and those who die before discharge

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St. Luke's / Karin Grech Hospital, Pieta

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St. James Hospital, Zabbar

St. Philip's Hospital, Sta Venera.