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**Notes and actions from Stillbirth Clinical Study Group 14th November 2012**

**Present:** Gordon Smith (Chair) (GS), Neil Sebire (NS), Steve Charnock-Jones (SCJ), Catherine Calderwood (CC), Janet Scott (JS),Charlotte Bevan (CB), Tracey Mills (TM)

**Apologies:** Angela Wood, David Cromwell (DC), Basky Thilaganathan (BT), Jim Thornton (JT), Peter Brocklehurst (PB)

**Introduction**: Tracey Mills, co-midwifery lead at the Placenta Clinic, Manchester, lecturer in midwifery at Manchester University and new member of the CSG. Current funding from Tommy’s for IMPS project looking at care in subsequent pregnancy after stillbirth.

**1. Active Research Projects:**

**1.1** NS secured Sands funding for CSG-supported study to standardise perinatal post mortem data. Will be inputting stillbirth data from four centres (1,000 PMs) into standardised database, and subsequently matching data using objective criteria and subsequently analyse usefulness of certain investigations – ie. did this tell us anything about why this baby died? Recruiting to begin in early 2013. Discussion of potential add-odds to study, including: producing local reports for perinatal post mortem centres; multi-centre comparisons on practice; and looking at PM data on stillbirth subgroups.). It was suggested outcomes of study be brought to attention of BRIPPA (British Perinatal and Paediatric Autopsy Society).

**1.2** CC pointed out that Scotland has all its PM data in one place. She will co-ordinate with NS about using this data source.

**1.3** Discussion of letter sent by parent Amy Abrams to the Minister Jeremy Hunt, copied to presidents of RCOG and RCPath (Royal College of Pathologists) highlighting discrepancy in perinatal post mortem analysis – her baby was described as growth restricted at one centre and not at another. RCPath recommendation for a joint study day with RCOG/RCM to look at the determinants of IUGR was supported. GS to write to RCPath President in support of such an initiative and suggest agenda. Discussion of testing subjectivity of perinatal pathologists in their analysis of tissue results by blinding a PM where there are no clinical notes to ‘guide’ conclusions. NS to look into the possibilities of doing this – maybe via EQA (external quality assurance) process.

**1.4** JS to write to PB about the progress of the Birth Cohort Study protocol for enhancement studies due to be finalised in 2014. The Cohort will include 100,000 births and CSG keen to add in a stillbirth element.

**1.6** CC confirmed funding for the fetal movement study in Scotland and Ireland through Chief Scientific Officer in Scotland, Sands and Tommy’s. Testing intervention of an educational programme) for women and health professionals urging women to attend more promptly for decreased fetal movement (DFM). Management programme for those reporting DFM to be designed. Will include 110,000 deliveries over 3 years, with step-wise approach, ie unit by unit. Aiming for 25% reduction in SB. Due to start April 2013.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**1.7** GS reported on JT’s study to look at induction of labour at 39 week versus expected management; does it increase C-section in women over 35 years old in first pregnancy? This is now funded and in process of recruiting first patients. Not powered for SB, but will be useful.

**1.8** GS reported on use of Scottish data set for repeat study (following Lancet paper of 2003), looking at last ten years of data and increased risk of SB in subsequent pregnancy following C-section. Exactly the same results as work done on earlier data from 1992 to 98. Also looked at risk of SB following pregnancy which ended in SB and found a five fold risk. Third study looking at placental birth weight in unexplained SB at term – results awaited.

**1.9** GS now has funding to look at use of routine 3rd trimester scan in detection of SB proxy which is SGA baby. Will start 2013.

**1.10** JS reported on Sands funded study undertaken by Bristol group to look at bereavement care issues and parents’ experiences, to improve training for professionals. Sands has also been approached about support to replicate a New Zealand study on sleep position during pregnancy which suggests an impact on perinatal mortality. Agreed that such a study is significant and should be pursued further.

**2. National work**

**2.1** JS reported on DH-backed working groups from Sands/DH Stillbirth workshop in March 2012. Several ‘Task and Finish’ groups have emerged fully supported by Dan Poulter, new minister in charge of maternity and patient safety.

* ‘Public health messages re. stillbirth’: a meeting is to be held in Jan 2013 with reps from royal colleges, pubic health bodies, DH, Sands, to develop public health messages regarding SB risk. Sands will test these via focus groups[[2]](#footnote-2).
* ‘Key indicators for stillbirth’ – comparing data sources for SB risk and whether all potential risk factors are collected – MBRRACE representation on this group. Members currently circulating risk factors which will be mapped onto existing data sets, including new Maternity Dataset (due to roll out in April 2013). Group meets again Jan 2013. Issue of the importance of data linkage discussed.
* ‘Commissioning for SB’ - DH led and yet to meet.
* ‘Standards for perinatal mortality review’ – Tracey Johnston, honorary secretary of BMFMS chairing, and due to meet Jan 2013.
* ‘Identification of key messages for maternity workforce’ – DH still talking to RCM.
* ‘Stillbirth Research’ – GS reported that DH has requested a meet between him, NPEU and PB, to discuss, in Dec 2012. GS to report back next meet.
* Oversight group: Sands and DH to oversee all work and report to minister

**2.2** JS reported on work in Wales – stillbirth enquiry which several CSG members contributed to is on going. Results due. Discussion re. inviting Welsh rep. from the AWPS (All Wales Perinatal Survey) onto the CSG.

**National audit programme and confidential enquiries**

**3.1** CC updated on national audit programme work. CC is chair of the Independent Advisory Committee fro MBRRACE–UK. New Perinatal Death Notification forms currently being drafted and uploaded onto new portal for national collection, due to be used from January 2013.

**3.2**. CC explained process of Topic Selection for CE, to include morbidity and mortality with new topics every 3 years. Current perinatal topic is congenital diaphragmatic hernia with incidence of 300/year and associations with SB and neonatal mortality and morbidity.

**3.3** Future topic selection will seek stakeholder input. CSG can nominate topic via selection process and form – discussion around this concluded we should select normally-formed SB at term.

**4. Future of CSG**

**4.1** Agreement to expand membership of CSG to include Jane Sandall, Alex Heazell, Alyson Hunter and Dimitrios Siassakos.

**4.2** Discussion of Siobhan Quenby re. availability to attend meetings.

**5. Open discussion**

**5.1** Discussion of lunch seminar at next BMFMS conf. allocated to Sands to present issues related to SB. Ideas exchanged. Sands to continue to brainstorm with CSG input.

**5.2** Discussion of Star Legacy survey to look at parental lifestyle issues associated with SB.

**5.3** Discussion of cord clamping. JS to ask BT and refer possibly to Intrapartum CSG for consideration.

**Actions:**

* GS to write to Archie Prentice, RCPath President in support of study day meet between RCOG/RCPath/RCM re. definition of IUGR.
* JS to write to PB re. Birth Cohort Study protocol for enhancement studies.
* NS to look into the possibilities for testing objectivity in perinatal post mortem analysis among professionals.
* CB to request from Jane Verity if David Cromwell might be involved in ‘Key data indicators for stillbirth task and finish group’.
* JS to invite new members onto the CSG
* JS to invite Welsh rep. from the AWPS (All Wales Perinatal Survey) onto the CSG.
* JS/CB to email Siobahn Quenby re. availability for CSG meets.
* JS/CB to speak to BT re. cord clamping and refer on to IC CSG.
* JS to email sleep position researchers.
* CB and JS to draft topic selection form for CE on behalf of CSG and circulate for comment.
* JS/CB to continue dialogue re. lunch time SB seminar at BMFMS.
* JS/CB to organise booking of room for next meeting at BMFMS.

**Next Meeting**: at BMFMS in 25th/26th April 2013.

1. Recent update: possibly an English region and other UK countries to come on board. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Recent update: DH in touch with Sands re. rapid roll out of this programme with budget to spend by end financial year 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)