

Is care of stillborn babies and their parents respectful? Results from an international online survey

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Abstract

Objective To quantify parents' experiences of respectful care around stillbirth globally. **Design** Multi-country, online, cross-sectional survey. **Setting and Population** Self-identified bereaved parents (n=3769) of stillborn babies from 44 high- and middle-income countries. **Methods** Parents' perspectives of 7 aspects of care quality, factors associated with respectful care, and 7 bereavement care practices were compared across geographical regions using descriptive statistics. Respectful care was compared between country income groups using multivariable logistic regression. **Main Outcome Measures** Self-reported experience of care around the time of stillbirth **Results** A quarter (25.4%) of 3769 respondents reported disrespectful care after stillbirth and 23.5% reported disrespectful care of their baby. Gestation <30 weeks, and primiparity were associated with disrespect. Reported respectful care was lower in middle-income countries (MICs) than in high-income countries (HICs) (aOR=0.35, 95%CI (0.29-0.42), p <0.01). In many countries, aspects of care quality need improvement, such as ensuring families have enough time with providers. Participating respondents from Latin America and Southern Europe reported lower satisfaction across all aspects of care quality compared to Northern Europe. Unmet need for memory-making activities in MICs is high. **Conclusions** Despite improvements, many parents still experience disrespectful care around stillbirth. The gap between parents' access to memory-making activities in MICs and HICs needs urgent attention. **Tweetable abstract** A quarter of parents of stillborn babies experience disrespectful care. There is global unmet need for memory-making activities

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