

What Women in Croatia Emphasize as Important Aspects of Care in Childbirth: a research article

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Abstract

Objective: To collect information regarding important aspects of care during and after childbirth and to emphasize the importance of patient-centered healthcare. **Design:** The study is based on data from the Babies Born Better online survey, version 2. **Setting:** The maternity care system in Croatia. **Population:** The study involved 619 women who gave birth in Croatia between 2013 and 2018. **Methods:** The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics for closed questions and content analysis for open-ended questions. **Main outcome measures:** Discussing and comparing answers to open-ended questions. **Results:** This study shows that 257 (22.8%) respondents related the friendliness and attitude of medical staff toward the mother as a positive experience related to childbirth, while 106 (9.4%) mentioned the general quality and expertise of health providers. These were also the reasons why the respondents would recommend the facility where they gave birth to others. When asked what they would change regarding childbirth, 139 (15.8%) respondents listed the lack of information during childbirth and respect for the mother's needs and the right to make decisions, while 97 (11%) mentioned material conditions in the hospital, and 89 (10.1%) emphasized kindness and the attitude towards the mother. **Conclusion:** This study confirmed that the overall attitude of the medical staff is the most crucial factor in mothers' evaluation of their birth experience. We also found considerable dissatisfaction with the current healthcare system and a need for change.

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