Covid-19 BIB cohort study

Interview with partners – initial interview during partner's pregnancy

Introduction

Good morning/afternoon,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this part of the research project and taking tome to speak with me today. Your views and experiences of your partner's pregnancy and your health and wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic are really important to us. This work is being carried out to inform local and national services about how to reduce the impact of the outbreak on those women and families most in need. Longer term, what we find out in this study will be used to inform what services might look like when the pandemic is over.

Can I check that you have read the information sheet about the study and had a chance to discuss the research with your family/friends? Do you have any questions? Can you please answer Yes or No to the following questions so that we can be sure that you are happy to take part in this study. Can you please confirm that you understand that:

- The interviews will be audio recorded, transcribed into words and stored in the Born in Bradford online secure database
- Your participation in this interview is voluntary and you are able to stop the interview at any time without giving a reason. You can also withdraw from the study at any time by contacting BiB using the details on the information sheet.
- the information you give us will be used anonymously for this study and in published reports.
- We will keep your information confidential unless we have concerns that you, or someone else, is at risk of harm. In this case we would have to let the relevant healthcare services (e.g. your midwife) know.
- As part of the same study we would like to find out about your experiences after you have had the baby and will contact you to do 2 more interviews, one about 3 months after your baby is born and one about 9 months after your baby is born.
- Are you happy to take part in this study?

I'm going to ask you about a few topics we are interested in; for each topic there will be a series of open questions. Please feel free to discuss whatever you wish to, especially the issues most important to you or that you are most concerned about. The interview should last about 45mins-1 hour.

Experiences of supporting your pregnant partner during the Covid-19 pandemic

First of all, I'd like to talk about your experiences of supporting your pregnant partner during the pandemic.

1. **Please tell me generally about how you feel about your partner being pregnant the time of the pandemic?**
   - Have you had any concerns for your partner during this time? What are these?
   - Have you had any concerns about the new baby during this time? What are these?
   - Have you had concerns about yourself during this time? What are these?

2. How **safe** do you think it is for your partner being pregnant during the Covid-19 pandemic?
   - Have you done anything differently to keep you and your partner safe? (e.g. avoiding public transport, avoiding people with covid-19 symptoms, working from home, social distancing, personal protection like handwashing etc)
   - What could be done to make you and your partner feel safer?

3. What have you been **most worried or anxious** about in the last week? (e.g childbirth, money/financial issues, preparation for the new baby, being a good parent)
   - How has this affected you?
   - What have you done about this? Have you sought any support or help?
   - How helpful was the support you received?

4. How do you feel about your partner **giving birth in a hospital setting** during the pandemic?
   - What concerns you most about this?
   - Will you be able to be present at the birth? How do you feel about that?
   - Do you worry about exposure to covid-19 while in hospital?
   - Do you worry about your new baby being exposed to covid-19 in the hospital?
   - Have you sought any help or support to relieve those concerns? (e.g. self-help, previous experience, partner, professional, other)?
   - How helpful was the support you received?

Involvement in antenatal and pregnancy appointments

Next I'd like to ask you a few questions about your involvement in antenatal appointments.

1. **Have you attended any midwifery appointments with your partner during the pandemic?**
   - If yes, how easy is it for you to attend with your partner?
   - Have you experienced any problems attending appointments with your partner? What, why?
   - If not, why have you not been able to attend? How did this make you feel?
   - What could be done to make it easier for partners like yourself to attend antenatal care during the pandemic?

2. **How satisfied** have you been with the midwifery appointments you have experienced?
   - What have been the best and worst aspects? Why?
   - Have you received enough information about how covid-19 affects pregnancy and birth?
   - What else would you like to have known about?
   - How included did you feel in discussions with the midwife?
   - What could be done to help partners feel more included in discussions?

3. Have you attended any **parenting classes** with your partner, to help prepare for birth and looking after the baby?
   - If yes, what has been your experience of these classes? Positive and negative aspects
   - Have you been able to attend regularly? Why, why not?

- How included do you feel in the classes?
- What could be done to make partners feel more included?
- Do you feel you have received enough support from parenting classes during covid-19?
- If you are not attending, why not? What stopped you attending? What could have been done to enable you to attend?

Relationship with partner and family

I'd like to know more about your relationships with your partner and friends, especially how things may have changed during the pandemic.

1. How has your **relationship with your partner** been during pregnancy?
   - How involved do you feel you have been in your partner's pregnancy?
   - Would you have liked to be more involved? In what way?
   - Has covid-19 affected your involvement in your partner's pregnancy in any other ways?
   - How do you feel about this? How has this affected you? And your relationship?

2. Tell me a bit about your **social network** – who do you see or speak to regularly?
   - How easy has it been to have contact with these people during the Covid-19 pandemic?
   - How has this affected you?
   - Have you been able to talk to other dads or parents to be? How do you feel about this?
   - How easy or difficult has it been to make new friends or contacts during the Covid-19 outbreak? Why?

General impact of Covid-19 on services

1. **Overall, what would you say about how the local midwife and pregnancy care services have responded to the Covid-19 crisis?**
   - What has been done well? What has not been done well?
   - What else can be done to help pregnant women and their partners cope during the outbreak?
   - Are there any positive changes to services that should continue after the pandemic? What are these and why?
   - Are there any negative impacts that need to be addressed? What are these and why?

Wrap up

We have come to the end of the interview. I don't have any more questions for you, but do you have anything else you would like to say about what we have discussed today? Thank you for your time today, it has been really valuable to talk with you. We will next be in touch on XXX.