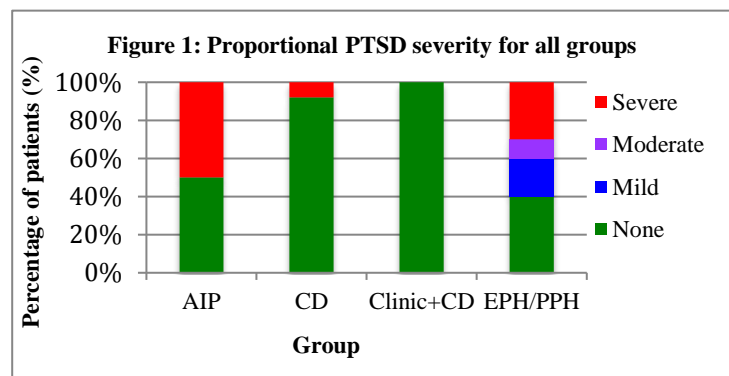


Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): The hidden morbidity of Abnormally Invasive Placenta (AIP)

Objectives: Emergency postpartum hysterectomy (EPH) and significant postpartum haemorrhage (PPH) have been shown to be associated with an increased risk of PTSD. Planned AIP deliveries usually include hysterectomy and are frequently complicated by severe bleeding. It has, however been assumed that as women with an antenatal diagnosis of AIP are prepared for these adverse outcomes and so are less likely to develop PTSD than women with unexpected PPH/EPH. This study aims to investigate if women with AIP are more likely to screen positive for PTSD than those who had an uncomplicated caesarean delivery (CD) and how this compares to women who experienced unanticipated EPH/PPH.

Methods: A postal questionnaire containing a validated screening tool for PTSD was sent to four cohorts: women referred to a specialist clinic who were antenatally diagnosed with AIP, which was confirmed at delivery; women who had an uncomplicated CD; women referred to a specialist clinic who were not diagnosed with AIP and subsequently had an uncomplicated CD; and women who had had unexpected EPH and/or severe (>3000mls) PPH.

Results: Responses revealed significantly higher PTSD screening scores for AIP ($p=0.001$) and EPH/PPH ($p=0.005$) patients compared to both control groups (Figure 1). No significant difference in scores was seen between AIP and EPH/PPH ($p=0.211$).



Conclusions: Fifty percent of women with antenatally diagnosed AIP screened positive for severe PTSD as a result of their delivery experience. This is comparable to those who had an unexpectedly traumatic delivery. This is the first study of its kind, and it reveals a significant, hidden co-morbidity associated with AIP diagnosis. These results should inform future management, for example the initiation of postnatal PTSD screening and intervention program for AIP patients, establishment of a peer support groups and better education for families and primary healthcare professionals.