

The Perineal Protection Bundle; Does It Reduce Severe Perineal Injury?

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BACKGROUND

Severe perineal injury (perineal tears of 3rd or 4th degree) resulting from vaginal delivery can lead to debilitating symptoms including chronic pelvic pain, incontinence and dyspareunia.

In 2018 Women's Health Australasia (WHA) released an "Intervention Bundle" to reduce the occurrence of severe perineal traumas.

OBJECTIVES

To assess the effectiveness of the WHA Intervention Bundle in reducing severe perineal trauma in a busy outer metropolitan hospital in Melbourne.

THE INTERVENTIONS

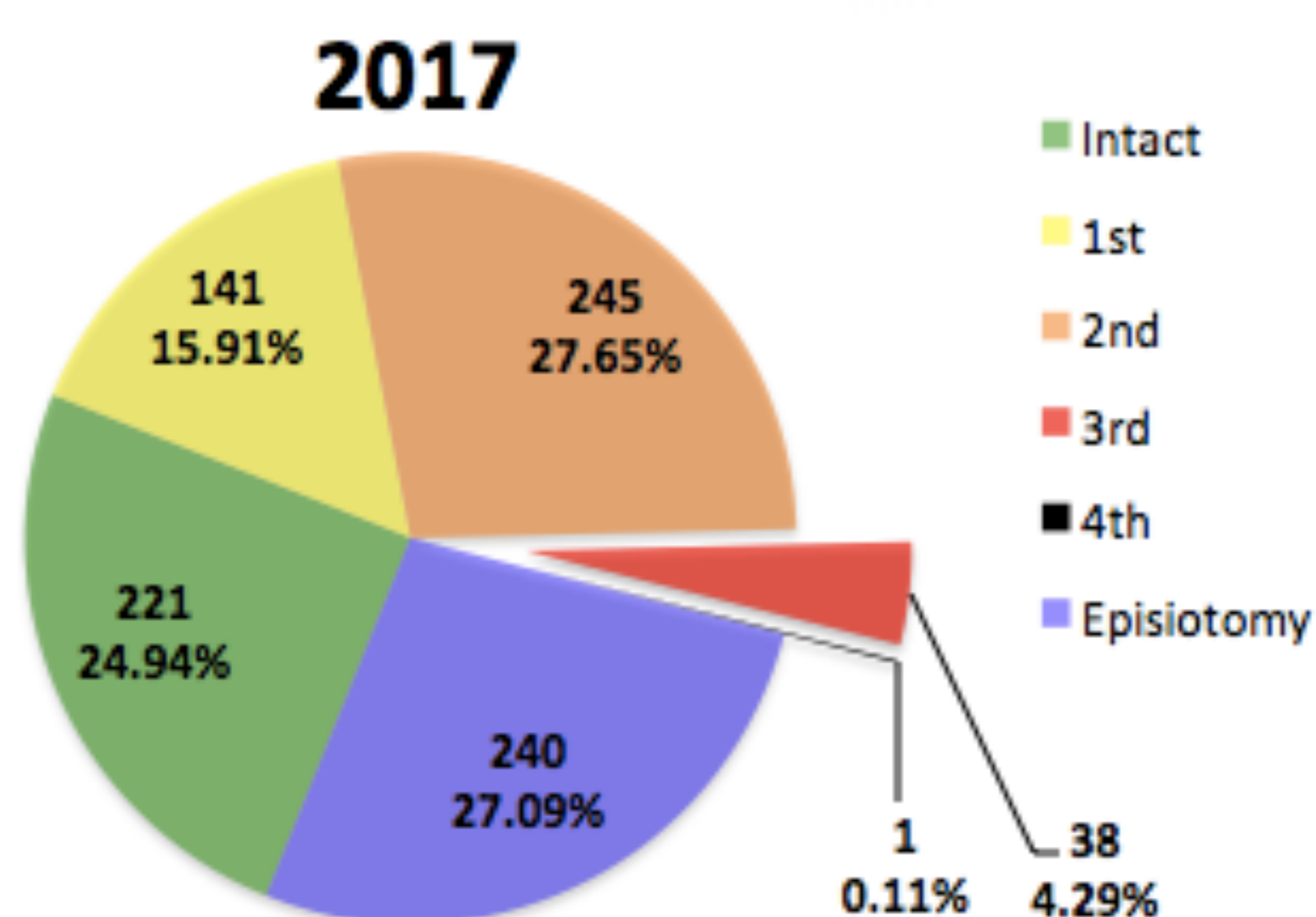
- 1 – Apply a warm compress to the perineum during the second stage of labour at the commencement of perineal stretching
- 2 – Use gentle verbal guidance for delivery of the fetal head and shoulders with counter pressure on the fetal head
- 3 – When appropriate perform an episiotomy, with a 60° mediolateral incision, at the crowning of the fetal head
- 4 – Genito-anal examination including a PR exam
- 5 – Grading of trauma according to RCOG guidelines and confirmed by a second experienced clinician

METHODS

An audit of all births that occurred between January 1st and April 30 in 2017 was performed. This was compared to an audit of the same time period in 2019, after the Intervention Bundle had been released.

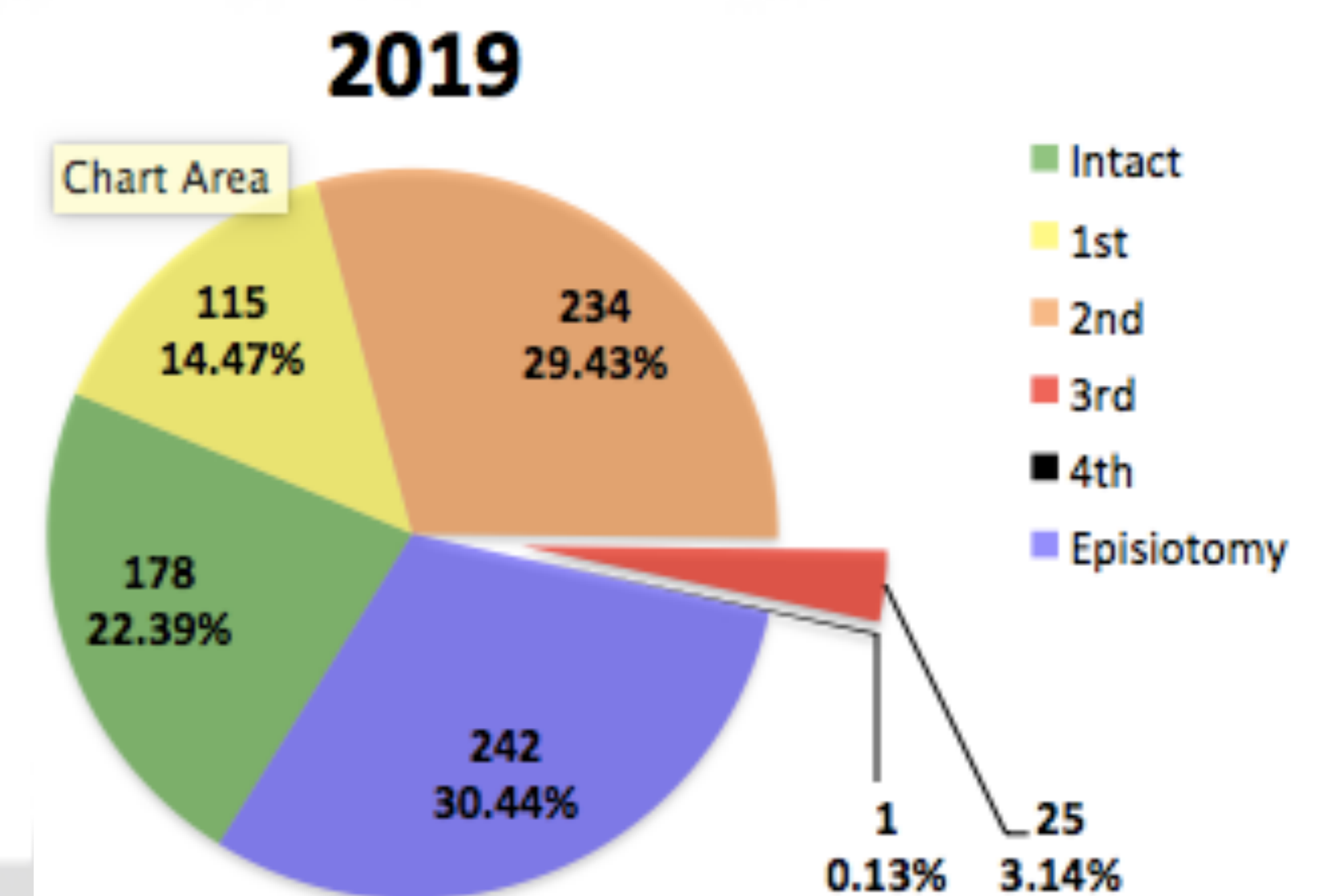
RESULTS

In 2017, prior to the introduction of the WHA Intervention Bundle, 4.29% (n=39) of 886 vaginal births resulted in a severe perineal injury. In comparison to this in 2019, after the 5 Interventions had been implemented, 3.27% (n=26) of 795 vaginal births resulted in severe perineal injury. The RR of this intervention was 0.7430 with a statistically insignificant p=0.23



CONCLUSION

With the samples compared there is not yet sufficient evidence to support the effectiveness of the WHA Intervention Bundle.



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