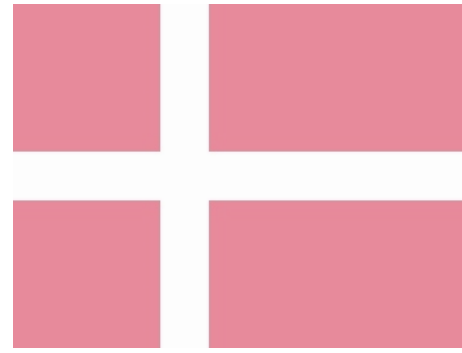


Exploring the concept of early labour and its association with labour interventions, outcomes and women's experience

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RM, PhD





Early labour care in a Danish Context

- Maternity care services are universal and tax-funded
- 60,000 annual births in 18 hospitals
- Midwives provide antenatal and intrapartum care
- 97% of all births take place at hospitals
- In early labour women and partners contact the birth facility by telephone for support and decision-making on when to go to the hospital
- Our Hospital: 7,000 annual births

Early labour care is not simple!

- Women presenting to the labour ward in latent vs active labour and women with prolonged early labour are more likely to have multiple birth interventions and caesarean sections
(Bailit et al. 2005; Kaufmann et al 2016; Iobst et al 2019; Ängeby; Gjerum et al 2022)
- Women who stay in hospital during early labour are more likely to have multiple birth interventions and caesarean section, than those who return to their home
(Lundgren et al 2013)

Only associations and not necessarily causation

Risk of confounding

say nothing about actual care needs....

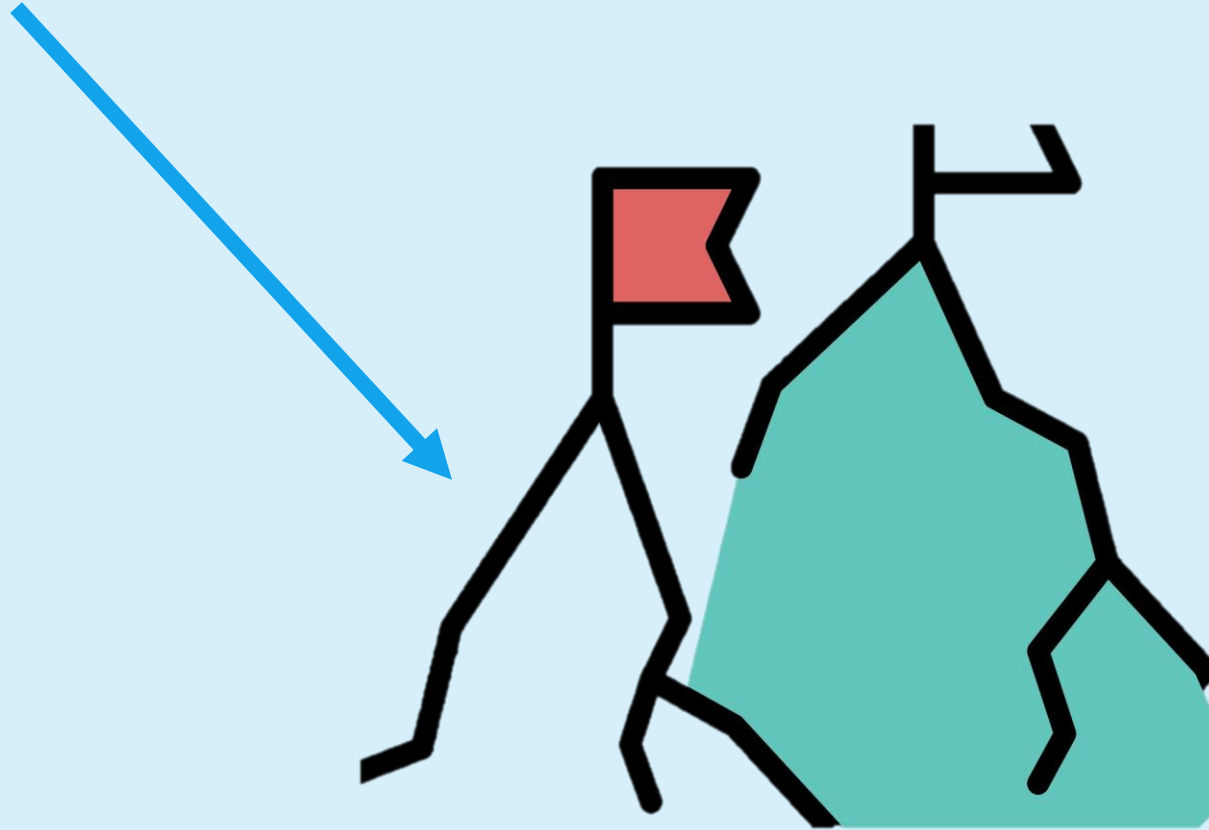
Women seek care in early labour

- Although encouraged to stay home in early labour as many as 18-80% of women seek midwifery care during early labour

(Bohra et al 2003; Janssen et al 2006; Lundgren et al 2013)



Work in progress



Study aims

1

To further clarify the concept of early labor in terms of onset, symptoms, and duration from women's self reported perceptions

2

To describe the women's sense of preparedness for early labour, access to social and professional support and describe care trajectories in early labour

3

To explore associations between early labour features and birth interventions/outcomes/patient experience

Study Design

Cohort study combining data from patient-reported questionnaires and birth records





Data sources and variables

Birth records

- Maternal factors
- Birth data (events, interventions, outcomes)
- Care trajectory (telephone, visits)



Questionnaires

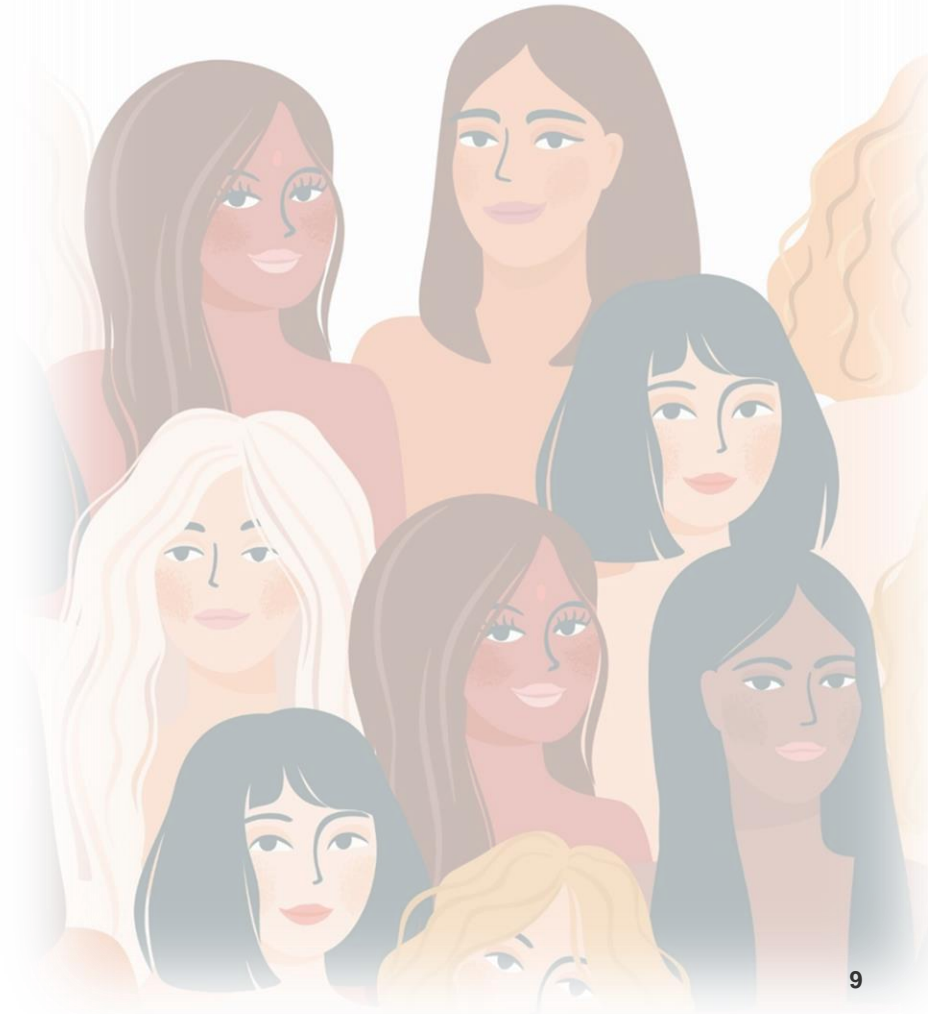
- Self-identified onset of labor and symptoms
- Support persons at home
- Participation in antenatal education
- Reasons to seek midwifery care
- Early Labor Experience Questionnaire (ELEQ)
- The Childbirth Experience Questionnaire (CEQ)
- Socio-demographics

Study population

- Women with a term spontaneous onset of labour ($n \approx 3,500$)
- 1 January -31 December 2023 at Hvidovre Hospital, Denmark
- Permission granted to identify participants by medical diagnosis codes

Procedure

- Questionnaire sent by digital post 4-6 weeks after birth via REDCap
- Will be linked linked with data from birth records



Status project



Data collection is ongoing



Translation, cultural adaptation and validation of Swedish version of ELEQ into Danish



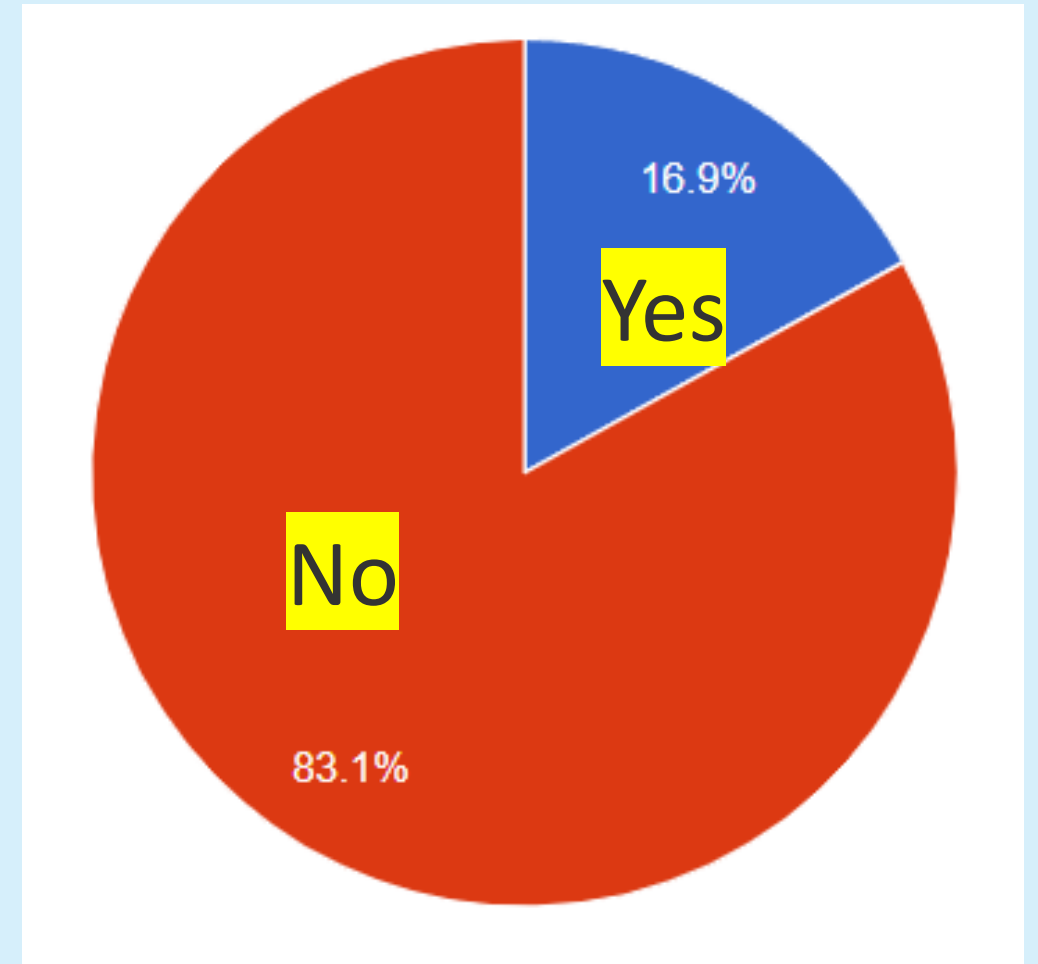
Data analysis, writing up results and presenting them (2024)



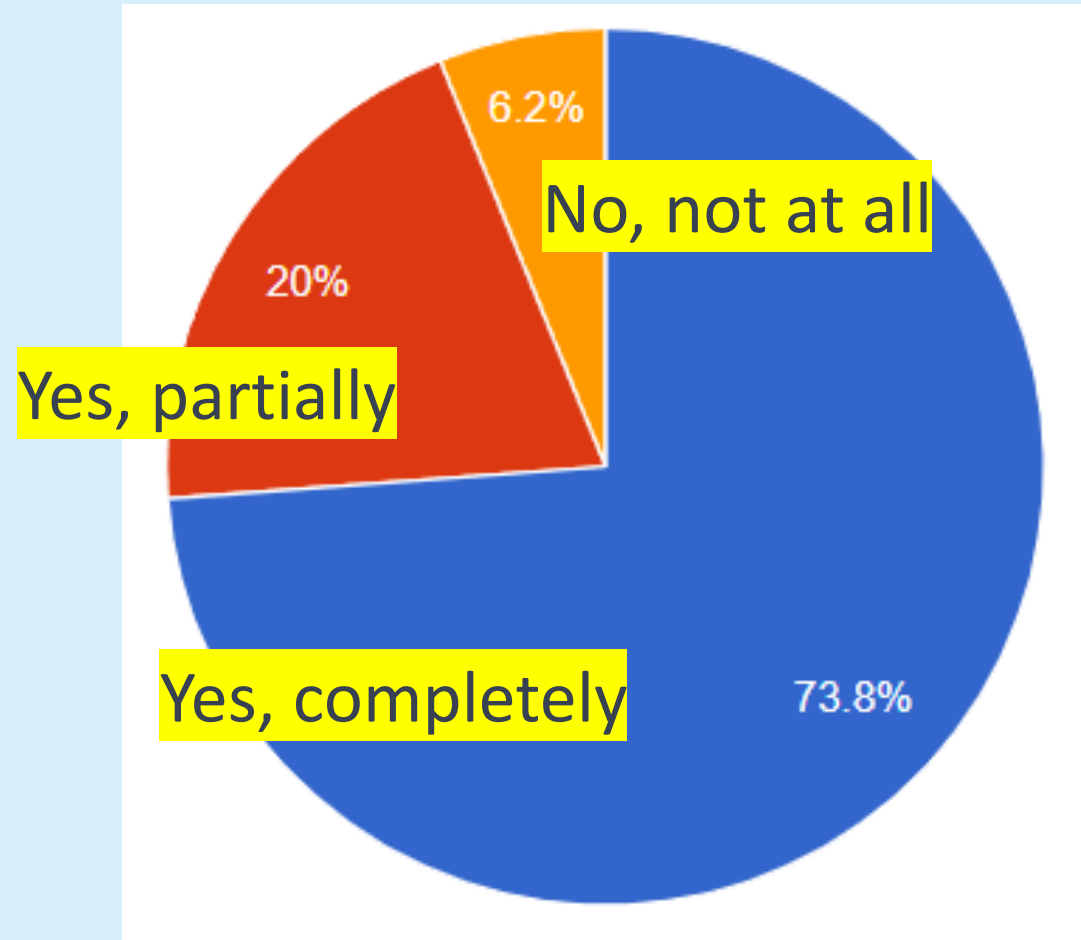
sneak peek

Questionnaire data

Did you go to the hospital for a check-up during early labour but had to go back home again? (n=382)



Were you satisfied with the decision to go back home after the check-up? (n=65)



Thank you for listening

Contact

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EARLY LABOUR WEBINAR



Any Questions?