

Response to
Proposed changes to NIPE hip
screening pathway
June 2018



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15 Mansfield Street
London
W1G 9NH
Tele: 0300 303 0444
Fax: 020 7312 3536
Email: info@rcm.org.uk



The Royal College of Midwives
15 Mansfield Street, London, W1G 9NH

The Royal College of Midwives' response to Proposed changes to NIPE hip screening pathway

The Royal College of Midwives (RCM) is the trade union and professional organisation that represents the vast majority of practising midwives in the UK. It is the only such organisation run by midwives for midwives. The RCM is the voice of midwifery, providing excellence in representation, professional leadership, education and influence for and on behalf of midwives. We actively support and campaign for improvements to maternity services and provide professional leadership for one of the most established clinical disciplines.

The RCM welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation and our views are set out below.

The Royal College of Midwives
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Consultation question 1

What is your view on the proposal to reinforce national guidance for managing 'clicky hips' by removing reference to local management?

The RCM supports the removal of local management and the provision of national guidance about the management of 'clicky hips'. The RCM considers that the guidance should also include the caveat for a referral to a more experienced practitioner for opinion if the midwife is unsure of the findings of the physical examination.

Consultation question 2

2a. What is your view of the proposal that babies who are screen positive on newborn examination or who have risk factors should be treated the same in terms of the timing of their ultrasound examination?

The RCM agrees with the proposal to treat babies the same in terms of the timing of their ultrasound examination if they screen positive on newborn examination or they have risk factors.

2b. What is your view of the proposal that all non-premature babies who are screen positive on newborn examination or who have risk factors should either be discharged or in the treatment pathway by the age of 6 weeks?

The RCM supports the recommendation for all non-premature babies who screen positive on newborn examination or who have risk factors to either be discharged or in the treatment pathway by the age of 6 weeks. We recognise this recommendation may require significant investment in communicating the change in referral times to enable clinical practice to change.

Consultation question 3

What is your view of the proposal that babies should not have hip ultrasound scan undertaken earlier than 3 weeks of age?

The RCM supports the proposal as per the evidence cited.

Consultation question 4

What is your view on the proposal that babies who have an abnormal newborn examination but normal ultrasound can be discharged without need to see orthopaedic surgeon / specialist practitioner?

The RCM is cautious about this new national guidance, as it is not clear which professional will be discharging the babies who have had a positive physical examination but a normal ultrasound screen? The RCM would like the pathway to be clear that if at the 6-8 week infant physical examination the baby continues to have a positive physical examination, referral to orthopaedic surgeon/specialist and/or to ultrasound scan is necessary.

Consultation question 5

What is your view on the proposal that babies who have hip risk factors identified but normal ultrasound should be discharged without the need to see an orthopaedic surgeon or specialist practitioner?

The RCM accepts the evidence that babies who have hip risk factors but a normal ultrasound should be discharged without the need to be seen by an orthopaedic surgeon/specialist with the caveat that should the baby have a positive infant physical examination at 6-8 weeks, there is a robust referral and escalation to orthopaedic surgeon/specialist and/or ultrasound scan.

Consultation question 6

6a. What is your view on the proposal that there should be an allowance for prematurity in deciding at what age a baby's hips should be examined?

The RCM agrees that an allowance should be made for prematurity when deciding on the age at which a baby's hips should be examined.

6b. What is your view on the proposal that 36 completed weeks gestation is the correct age cut-off for eligibility for the NIPE hip examination?

The RCM agrees with this proposal. However, the College acknowledges that the discharge date may be earlier and the baby should have hip examination prior to discharge to reduce the risk of the examination being missed.

Consultation question 7

What is your view on the proposal to only apply breech birth/presentation as a risk factor at or after 28 weeks gestation?

The RCM agrees with this proposal.

Consultation question 8

What is your view on the proposal to remove the above reference to ventral suspension?

The RCM agrees with the proposal to remove the reference to ventral suspension.

Consultation question 9

Do you think any changes need to be made to the screen positive criteria?

The RCM has no further comments.