A MULTI-CENTRE RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIAL OF PERINATAL SUPPORT TO IMPROVE BREASTFEEDING OUTCOMES IN WOMEN WITH A RAISED BMI: THE LATCH ON STUDY

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BACKGROUND

Breastfeeding has benefits for both mothers and children, providing optimal nutrition for infants from birth to two years old and beyond(1), and reducing maternal risk of cancer and diabetes in later life(2)

Breastfeeding rates in Ireland are among the lowest worldwide(2,3). At hospital discharge, approximately 60% of infants are breastfed, at 3 months of age, 42% of infants receive any breastmilk(4).

Women with a high BMI are at increased risk of poorer breastfeeding practices, with lower initiation rates and duration of breastfeeding observed(5). This is a particular concern in Ireland, given the rise in maternal obesity rates(6).

AIMS

The primary aim of this study is to identify breastfeeding rates at 3 months among a cohort of women who presented with a raised BMI during pregnancy, with intention to breastfeed.

Secondary outcomes include intention to breastfeed, breastfeeding initiation rates, attitudes towards breastfeeding and breastfeeding self-efficacy.

METHODS

Women are currently being recruited at four maternity hospitals in Ireland for a multi-centre, randomised controlled trial of perinatal breastfeeding support in women with a raised BMI (>25kg/m2). Ethical approval has been granted for this study.

Inclusion criteria

- 18 years and older
- BMI ≥25 at first antenatal visit
- Primipara
- Singleton pregnancy
- 26-34 weeks pregnant at recruitment
- Proficient in English
- Have an identifiable support partner willing to participate in the trial

Exclusion criteria

- Preterm delivery (<37wks) and any condition contradicted to breastfeeding

The study targets mothers and their support partners and spans the perinatal period from late pregnancy to six weeks postpartum, and comprises of an intervention group and a control group.

Women in the intervention group will receive extra breastfeeding support:

- Antenatal breastfeeding education for prospective mothers and their support partners
- One-to-one consultation with International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) pre-hospital discharge
- Professional support to six weeks' postpartum and weekly phone calls from IBCLC

Women in the control group will receive routine antenatal care.

- Women complete questionnaires twice during pregnancy, and at 6 weeks, 3 months and 6 months postpartum
- Support partners complete questionnaires twice during pregnancy

RESULTS

- To date 225 women are involved in the study across the four hospital sites.
- Currently the primary outcome rate is at 80%
- Recruitment is finishing with the last eligible EDD the 12/12/2021
- Data collection aims to be complete by June 2022
- The study aimed to be completed by December 2022

CONCLUSION

The intervention is targeting attitudes toward breastfeeding, breastfeeding self-efficacy, and subjective norms around infant feeding with the aim to normalise breastfeeding.

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