

## **Interview guide for Obstetricians/Midwives**

### ***Factors contributing to the rise in C-sections***

#### **Section 1: Introduction and Consent**

1. Brief introduction by interviewer using the participant information sheet (PIS).
2. Obtaining informed consent for voluntary participation and assure confidentiality of the information.

Greetings!

Thank you for accepting to participate in this interview.

3. Could you tell me a little about yourself?
  - o *Probe:* Professional background, years of experience, current role in maternal healthcare

#### **Section 2: Overall Reasons for increasing Trends in C-section Rates**

4. What is your observation regarding the increasing trends in caesarean section deliveries in Andhra Pradesh over recent years?
  - o *Probe:* Factors contributing to the increasing trend in C-sections in Andhra Pradesh?
  - o *Probe:* How do these trends differ across public and private healthcare settings?
  - o *Probe:* In your opinion, are these rising rates justified by medical necessity?
5. How do C-section rates in your hospital compare with state or national averages?
  - o *Probe:* Specific challenges regarding mode of delivery decisions?

#### **Section 3: Patient Demand and Preferences**

6. Do you perceive that the demand for c-section from pregnant women has increased? If so, why has it increased?
  - o *Probe:* What reasons do women commonly give when requesting C-sections?
  - o *Probe:* How has this changed over the course of your practice?
  - o *Probe:* Are there demographic patterns in who requests C-sections (e.g., education level, urban/rural, socioeconomic status)?
7. Do you feel that fear of childbirth/pains is leading to C-sections? Please elaborate.
  - o *Probe:* How do you distinguish between tokophobia (pathological fear of childbirth) and normal anxiety?
  - o *Probe:* What specific aspects of labor and delivery process seem to generate the most fear?
  - o *Probe:* How do you address these fears during prenatal care?

#### **Section 4: Influence of Sociocultural Factors**

8. Do you think there is an influence of socio-cultural norms on the selection of c-sections as a mode of delivery?
  - *Probe:* Are there specific beliefs or practices in Andhra Pradesh that might encourage C-sections?
  - *Probe:* What role does the concept of "auspicious timing" for birth play in elective C-sections?
9. Do you feel that physical and sexual attitudes have an effect on c-section rates? Please elaborate.
  - *Probe:* How do concerns about physical recovery and changes to the body influence decisions?
  - *Probe:* Are concerns about future sexual function openly discussed or more implicit?
  - *Probe:* How do you address these concerns during patient counselling?

#### **Section 5: Provider Practices and Counselling**

10. Do you counsel your clients and encourage them for normal delivery? If so, to what extent are you able to succeed? Please elaborate.
  - *Probe:* At what point in pregnancy do you begin discussing mode of delivery options?
  - *Probe:* What barriers do you encounter when counseling patients toward vaginal delivery?
11. How do you balance patient autonomy with medical recommendations regarding mode of delivery?
  - *Probe:* In what circumstances would you support a patient's request for an elective C-section?
  - *Probe:* How do you handle situations where your medical recommendation conflicts with the patient's preference?

#### **Section 6: Medical Indications and Emergency C-sections**

12. What do you think are the most common medical indications for emergency c-sections? Why do you think they have increased?
  - *Probe:* Have you observed changes in the frequency of specific indications over time?
  - *Probe:* Are there indications that you believe are sometimes applied too liberally?
  - *Probe:* How do resource constraints and staffing issues influence decisions about emergency C-sections?

#### **Section 7: Systemic Factors and Recommendations**

13. What systemic factors in healthcare delivery might be contributing to rising C-section rates?
  - *Probe:* How do time constraints, scheduling, and staffing affect mode of delivery decisions?
  - *Probe:* How does the financial incentives affect the C-section rates?
14. What initiatives would you recommend to address the increasing trend of C-sections in Andhra Pradesh?
  - *Probe:* What changes in clinical training or practice would you suggest?
  - *Probe:* How can we generate awareness among women to make informed decisions about mode of delivery?

*“Thank you so much for sharing your experiences and professional insights. Your perspectives will really help us to identify the factors that influence C-section rates in Andhra Pradesh. If anything else you want to share, please feel free to share with us.”*

\*\*\*\*\*