

# THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE PROVISION OF RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE: FINDINGS FROM A GLOBAL SURVEY OF HEALTH WORKERS

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## Background



## Objective

- This unique study explored how the COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected frontline health workers' ability to provide respectful maternity care (RMC) globally.

## Methods

- Design: A longitudinal mixed methods global online survey (The MATCO study). <https://bit.ly/MATCOstudy>
- We used data from the second-round survey (July – December 2020)
- Qualitative responses were analysed using content analysis

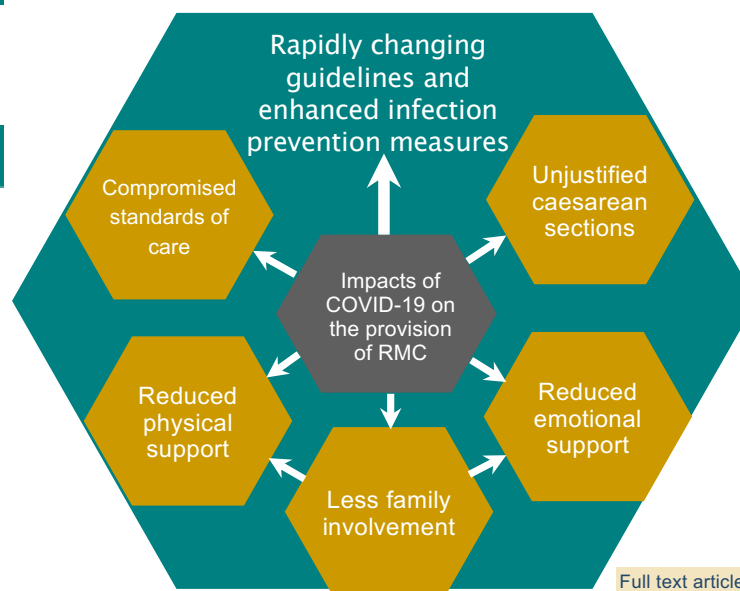
Total participants in the second round survey (n=1127)

Participants whose ability to provide RMC was compromised (n=192)

Participants who provided open text responses (n=120) – from 33 countries

## Results

- 17% of participants (n=192) reported reduced ability to provide RMC during the COVID-19 pandemic
  - 62 participants from HICs provided responses to the RMC-focused open-ended questions (44 MICs, and 14 LICs)
- We identified six themes of how the COVID-19 negatively affected the provision of RMC globally
  - Rapidly changing guidelines spans over the other themes



"Some women spend most of their labour without a supportive partner. The infant's first days of life also passed without the presence and support of the partner." (Midwife, referral hospital, Italy)



"All patients with confirmed COVID-19 are being discriminated, no one wants to help them in fear of getting the disease since we have no proper PPE." (Midwife, district hospital, Malawi)



"... due to logistics, breastfeeding and support is not being carried out and mothers are being separated from their babies." (Oby/Gyn, privately-practicing, Panama)

## Conclusions

- Our unique study, drawing from the experiences of health workers, revealed that COVID-19 pandemic had the potential to reverse the gains made on RMC globally
- The low proportion of reduced ability to provide RMC suggests that RMC was already compromised in diverse settings even before the first wave of COVID-19
  - System wide actions are needed to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the provision of RMC.

Full text article: <https://bit.ly/ImpactsofCOVID-19onRMC>

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