

Criteria that influence the patient's choice of maternity hospital

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For the purpose of a more patient-orientated obstetric practice, that is with the intention of adapting our clinical activities to the request of the pregnant women in a better way, several studies were carried out at our hospital. In 1978 and in 1981 standardised questionnaires were filled out by pregnant women, wherein they expressed their criteria for their choice of hospital for delivery. In 1978 500 women taken from various groups of patients (Read-course participants, participants of the infant care courses of the Maternity Welfare Organisation, patients referred from practising obstetricians for ultrasonic examination as well as general outpatients) were questioned. Out of these 500, 60% were expecting their first child, 29% their 2nd child, 9% their 3rd child and 2% their 4th or next child.

The questionnaires could be answered freely, however 97% described only one criterion, their main one, for the choice of their maternity clinic. Tab.I is showing the results of this general inquiry.

	TOTAL N=500	READ- COURSE N=112	OUT- PATIENTS N=155	ULTRA- SOUND N=148	INFANT- CARE- COURSE N=85
CLOSENESS OF HOSPITAL	15%	12%	12%	16%	21%
MODERN MEDICINE	29%	24%	28%	36%	25%
NEONATOLOGY	7%	7%	6%	7%	5%
SELF EXPERIENCE	11%	4%	20%	14%	2%
ROOMING-IN	15%	13%	18%	14%	13%
PDA	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%
READ-COURSE	-	10%	-	-	4%
FATHERS ATTENDING THE DELIVERY	5%	6%	5%	4%	5%
OTHERS	17%	24%	14%	9%	24%

TABLE I

In 1981 this inquiry was repeated. 112 women attending the Read-courses were questioned. In this inquiry however, 5-6 criteria

were described by each candidate on the average. In comparison with the previous study there could be noticed that the criteria medical safety, recommendation and rooming-in were mentioned to the same degree. Yet there is now clearly greater preference for neonatology (from 7% up to 12%) and the presence of the husband during childbirth (from 6% up to 15%).

The evaluation of the answers (N=627) with regard to the number of questioned patients (N=119) is shown in Tab.II.

	N=119 (627 ANSWERS)
CLOSENESS OF HOSPITAL	43%
MED. SAFETY	72%
RECOMMENDATION	27%
NEONATOLOGY	68%
ROOMING-IN	78%
FATHERS ATTENDING THE DELIVERY	79%
PDA	13%
READ-COURSE	18%

It is clear that the pregnant women are expecting to the same extend the presence of the father during childbirth as rooming-in or as medical safety and neonatology. That means they are expecting all the medical safeties for themselves and the newborn as well as a family orientated atmosphere.

In our opinion the maternity hospitals can and also should offer both, medical safety as well as human warmth and the feeling of security.

TABLE II

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