

## Equitable perinatal healthcare for migrants, Portugal: Comparative analysis of a self-assessment tool

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Migration is seen as a common risk factor in obstetric management. Migrants often have a higher risk of experience worse pregnancy outcomes, higher rates of operative delivery, and a higher likelihood to receive less adequate postpartum care when compared to native women. This study evaluates self-perceived assessment of migrant women and hospital directors on equitable migrant friendly perinatal healthcare quality and access during intrapartum and postpartum period at public maternity units across Portuguese mainland between 2017-2019.

This cross-sectional study analyses perinatal health data from migrant women over 18 years giving birth in public maternity units from between April 2017 and March 2019 as part of the baMBINO project. Data on the assessments of maternity units' directors on equitable migrant friendly healthcare was

collected in a self-assessment tool. Two standards on healthcare access and on healthcare quality were developed by: 1) scoring 25 and 30 questions, respectively, from 0 (worst) to 5 (best); 2) calculating the average of each score. The One-Sample Wilcoxon Test (non-parametric) was applied to compare the assessment of hospital directors with the migrant mothers and the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance to test for regional differences.

Significant differences between migrant woman and healthcare directors' assessments on migrant friendly healthcare access and quality of care were found. Directors rated healthcare access with a median score of 2.4, twice as good as migrant women (1.3). Migrant women rated healthcare quality with a median score of 4.0 (directors: 3.2). Significant differences between the regions for quality of care and healthcare access were found. Statistically significant difference between migrants from Portuguese and non-Portuguese speaking countries was identified for healthcare access (p-value < 0.001) and healthcare quality (p-value < 0.05).

**Key messages:**

- The need to guarantee equitable healthcare access and quality contemplates as a first step to overcome health inequalities for migrant women in Portugal.
- The comparison between patients and healthcare providers' assessments assists in the understanding of existent barriers in access to health care and improves quality assurance.