

# Did you know? Maternity medication errors



## Did you know?

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# 55

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NHS Resolution received 55 claims relating to medication errors in maternity claims between 1st April 2015 and 31st March 2020.

# 22

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Out of these 55 claims, 22 were settled with damages paid, 13 without merit and 20 remain open.

# £460,728

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The total cost of closed claims is **£460,728**.

The total damages paid in closed claims is **£204,956**.

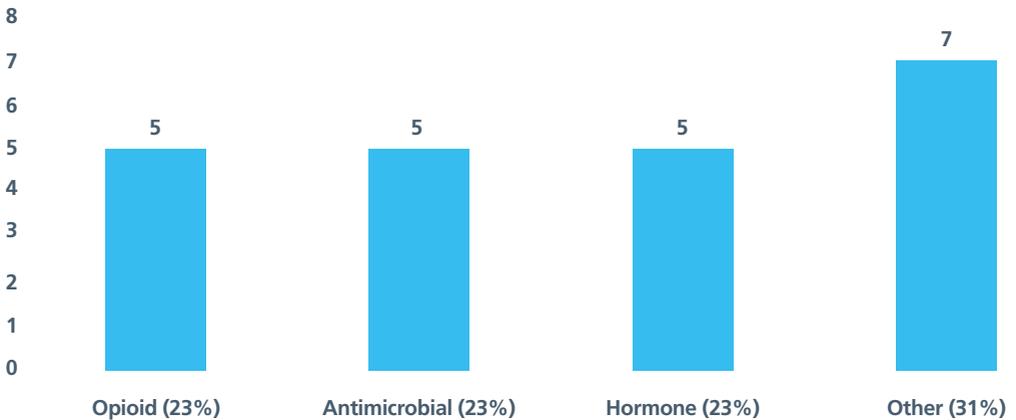
The analysis held within this leaflet only focuses on closed maternity claims that have been settled with damages paid and concern an element of the medication process: prescribing, transcribing, dispensing, administering and monitoring.

# Key facts for maternity

## Did you know?

The chart below demonstrates the most common types of drugs identified in the 22 successful claims.

### Type of drug



## Did you know?

The most common cause of medication errors in the maternity claims:

- Administration error cited in **50% (11)** of the 22 claims.
- Prescribing error cited in **32% (7)** of the 22 claims.
- Wrong dose administration cited in **27% (6)** of the 22 claims.
- Medication contraindicated cited in **27% (6)** of the 22 claims.
- Delay or inappropriate omission cited in **23% (5)** of the 22 claims.

\*Please note that some individual claims cited multiple causes of medication errors.

# What can you do?

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- Ensure staff follow local guidance and appropriately risk assess each woman or baby. If in doubt don't give the medication and escalate it for advice.
- Provide education to ensure staff are aware of the risk of medication errors and what they need to do if one occurs. Review your organisation's reporting procedure for medication errors and ensure learning after claims is shared with all staff.
- Have a standing agenda item on your medicines management board to ensure incidents and near misses are robustly reported and investigation and action plans are implemented and embedded.
- Ensure a designated person reviews and monitors Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) medication safety updates and cascades and actions accordingly to encourage learning across the wider organisation and Local Maternity Neonatal Systems and Integrated Care System.
- Review patient information resources to include manufacturer's guidance, evidence based practices and patient support organisations.
- Support a culture of openness and learning by sharing good practice case stories.

# Did you know? Useful resources

- The RCM provide a medicines management module. The module on Medicines Management in Maternity provides an overview for midwives and students and gives an understanding of their role in medicines management in midwifery and obstetrics. <https://www.ilearn.rcm.org.uk/enrol/index.php?id=247>
- During the second and third trimesters drugs can affect the growth or functional development of the fetus, or they can have toxic effects on fetal tissues. <https://bnf.nice.org.uk/guidance/prescribing-in-pregnancy.html>
- Drugs given shortly before term or during labour can have adverse effects on labour or on the neonate after delivery. <https://bnf.nice.org.uk/guidance/prescribing-in-pregnancy.html>
- The Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Royal College of Midwives(2022) provides guidance on treating Covid-19 in pregnant women. <https://www.rcog.org.uk/globalassets/documents/guidelines/2022-03-07-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-in-pregnancy-v15.pdf>
- Nursing and Midwifery Council <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/standards-for-post-registration/standards-for-medicines-management/>
- General Medical Council [https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/prescribing-guidance-updated-english-20210405\\_pdf-85260533.pdf](https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/prescribing-guidance-updated-english-20210405_pdf-85260533.pdf)

There is a wealth of information and guidance to support professional practice from your professional bodies.

