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AUDIT OF OASI OUTCOMES FOLLOWING THE INTRODUCTION OF THE EPISCISSOR-60

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Episcissors-60 are surgical scissors specifically designed to perform episiotomies at an angle of 60 degrees from the midline of the perineum. This angle has been shown to be the optimum angle for preventing obstetric anal sphincter injuries (OASI) associated with episiotomies¹.

At Bradford teaching hospital foundation trust, we replaced our standard episiotomy scissors with Episcissors-60 to help reduce the risk of OASI associated with vaginal deliveries in 2018.

We performed a retrospective documentation-based audit of women receiving an episiotomy over a 6 month period before and after the introduction of the Episcissor (August - September 2017 and September 2018 to April 2019 respectively). A lag time to allow for adjusting to the new equipment was included. Information was extracted from a departmental database derived from computerised medical records. Where documentation was missing paper notes were hand searched.

399 episiotomies were performed using the standard scissors (group1) and 382 were performed after the Episcissors were introduced (group 2). Within group 1 19 OASI occurred, 4.7% of all episiotomies. Within group 2 16 OASI occurred, 4.1% of all episiotomies. The relative risk of OASI with Episcissors-60 compared to standard scissors is 0.8. In group1 the blood loss for women with OASI was 750ml (150mls to 2500ml) and in group 2 930 mls (400 to 1400ml).

	OASI	No OASI.	Total
Episcissor-60	16	366	382
Standard Scissors	19	380	399

Episcissors-60 reduced the number of OASI associated with episiotomies without any clinical significant increase in blood loss. This relatively modest reduction may be due to incomplete uptake of the eipiscissor-60 in group 2. For 6 of the OASI in group 2 standard Episcissors were used, or the type of scissor was not documented. Episcissors should be included as part of any strategy to decrease the OASI rate in maternity units.

Reference

¹ NICE. National institute for health and care excellence. Episcissors-60 for guided mediolateral episiotomy. Medtech innovation briefing. MIB33. July 2015