

MATERNAL CHARACTERISTICS AND PERINATAL CARE COSTS

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Background: The inherent complexity of managing pregnancies and their outcomes presents a significant challenge for the obstetric team and places considerable strain on hospital resources. Tertiary-level maternity wards frequently encounter difficulties in securing adequate financing and optimizing the use of limited resources, all while facing rising demand for healthcare services due to complicated pregnancies and deliveries.

Methods and Objectives: The aim of this study was to examine the association between characteristics of women and the expenses of their delivery in University Gynaecology Obstetrics Clinic Narodni Front. We analysed health record and hospital bill data of 6949 women collected in a cross-sectional study conducted in 2019. Both parametric and non-parametric tests were used to examine these associations.

Results: The extremely high expenses had women older than 35 years ($p<0,01$), primiparas ($p<0,01$), women with premature childbirth (less than 37 gestational weeks of pregnancy) ($p<0,001$), those who conceived via IVF ($p<0,001$) and women with multiple pregnancy ($p<0,001$). Women with „near miss“ conditions like severe bleeding during and after delivery ($p<0,001$), severe preeclampsia or eclampsia ($p<0,001$), systemic infection or sepsis ($p<0,001$), uterine rupture ($p<0,001$), hysterectomy ($p<0,001$), and with perinatal comorbidities ($p<0,001$) incurred notably higher costs compared to those without these conditions. Furthermore, women with extremely high expenses were significantly more likely to be categorized in DRG groups for both complicated and uncomplicated C-sections.

Conclusion: Maternal characteristics can significantly impact the cost of perinatal care. Further analysis is needed to develop effective payment strategies for tertiary-level hospitals and enhance the quality of perinatal care, thereby safeguarding women's health.

Keywords: perinatal care, hospital, childbirth, costs, women's health