Validation of The Joint Commission Exclusion Criteria for Elective Early-Term Delivery


(Obstet Gynecol 2014;123:29–33)

1. This study focuses on early-term births. List all categories of term births recently identified by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (Definition of term pregnancy. Committee Opinion No. 579. Obstet Gynecol 2013;122:1139–40.) and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this categorization of term births.

2. How is elective early-term birth defined? How is the elective early-term birth rate calculated? What is the rate at your main hospital?

3. The Joint Commission, the National Quality Forum, Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services, and LeapFrog agencies are involved in the efforts to eliminate elective early-term births. Describe these organizations and their roles in monitoring early-term births.

4. Briefly describe the methods used by the authors’ organization to monitor compliance with elective early-term delivery targets. The methods described include interrater reliability testing. What is interrater reliability and what are acceptable thresholds for it?

5. Summarize the main methods and the key findings of this study. In your opinion, what type of study design is this (and why)?

6. If any, what elements of the authors’ findings and conclusions do you disagree with? Why?

7. Discuss any potential conflicts of interests that the authors may have had and how they are addressed in the study.

8. Describe the policy and monitoring in place, if any, regarding elective early-term births at your main hospital. The authors mention three approaches including a “hard-stop” policy. What are the other two approaches, and which is the approach at your main hospital?

9. The number of national, regional, and local initiatives to control elective early-term births is increasing. In your opinion, is this a worthwhile effort? Why or why not?