

4th International Conference on

Obstetrics and Gynecology

November 14-15, 2019 | Singapore

A prospective longitudinal study of postnatal quality of life among Hong Kong women: Comparison between normal vaginal delivery and caesarean section

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To compare the quality of life (QOL) in Hong Kong women who gave birth by normal vaginal delivery (NVD) and those delivered by Caesarean section (CS). Women were evaluated on discharge from hospital and 4 weeks after delivery. This was a prospective longitudinal study conducted in the obstetrics unit of United Christian Hospital in Hong Kong from December 2009 to March 2010. A total of 75 women with NVD and 75 women with CS were recruited. QOL was measured by a generic questionnaire, Short Form 12 version 2 on discharge from hospital and at 4 weeks after delivery. The first questionnaire involved completion of a self-reported form, the second was completed by telephone interview. The data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel and the IBM SPSS software. On discharge from hospital, 86% (129/150) of women returned a completed questionnaire. The mean scores of physical functioning ($p=0.01$), vitality ($p=0.003$), social functioning ($p=0.003$), bodily pain ($p=0.02$), mental health ($p=0.01$), as well as physical component summary ($p=0.01$) and mental component summary ($p=0.03$)

were significantly higher in women who delivered by NVD than by CS. At 4 weeks after delivery, 75% (113/150) completed the questionnaire. There was a remarkable difference in general health ($p=0.01$), physical component summary measure ($p=0.003$), and social functioning ($p=0.05$) between NVD and CS groups. Women who had an NVD enjoyed a generally better QOL than those who delivered by CS, both on discharge from hospital and 4 weeks after delivery. NVD is recommended for women without indications for CS.

Speaker Biography

Maise SM CHAN commenced her nursing career for more than 15 years. She has practiced in various clinical settings and worked as a midwife in local public hospital for more than 7 years. She is currently training Registered Nurse at School of General Nursing of Hospital Authority. She completed her master's degree in the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Her research paper was presented in Asian Chinese Quality of Life Conference and was published in Hong Kong Journal of Gynecology, Obstetrics and Midwifery. Her professional interest focus on midwifery and nursing education.

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