



The recording of images during diagnostic or screening obstetric ultrasound examinations

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Summary

Sonographers are frequently asked by a woman's partner or other person accompanying them if they will allow them to make their own real-time recording of a diagnostic or screening obstetric ultrasound examination. This request may be to record the examination with a mobile telephone, record on to a DVD or utilise other digital or analogue recording media. SCoR issues this guidance and advice to help departments decide on what policy to take in this regard.

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The decision as to whether to allow this should be made by the individual departments concerned although in general terms the SCoR would discourage this.

Departments should have a clear policy on this issue following a risk assessment that takes account of the following:

- i)** Possible medico-legal complications arising if an abnormality is recorded that is not reported or acted upon. Conversations between the sonographer and the woman and her partner may also be recorded. The employer must be aware of any local arrangements if it is decided to allow this as they may impact on its risk management strategy and insurance arrangements.
- ii)** Sonographer preferences both as a group and individually should clearly be taken into account. Many sonographers may not want to be filmed or recorded and their wishes should be respected.
- iii)** It can be a great distraction and can increase stress levels for the sonographer at a time when they require very high levels of concentration.
- iv)** It has the potential to unnecessarily extend the time of the ultrasound examination.
- v)** Departments should take into consideration the possible existence of local policies allowing the

recording of the actual birth. Many Trusts or Health Boards do try to facilitate this type of request within the Directorates that have responsibility for maternity services.

vi) Departments should consider consulting with any relevant patient liaison groups that the Trust may have and ensure the finally agreed policy is publically available.

vii) Departments might also wish to consider how staff should respond to situations where filming begins or continues without permission and contrary to the agreed policy.

This statement does not refer to the taking of images by the sonographers themselves and that is agreed procedure between the ultrasound department and the employing Trust or Health Board. This is often for a previously advertised fee.

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