

Introduction and evolution of a Perinatal Mental Health Service in a large Irish University Maternity Hospital: A Cross Sectional Survey.

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Introduction

Pregnancy does not protect against mental illnesses such as depression, but is a time of vulnerability for women to become mentally unwell (Rich-Edwards, 2006). Specialist perinatal mental health services (SPMHS) have been introduced in each of Ireland's six hospital groups to better serve the complex mental health needs of women in the perinatal period (HSE 2017). In the Coombe Women and Infants University Hospital (CWIUH) there was a rapid expansion in the SPMHS between 2019 and 2020. The SPMHS provides multidisciplinary outpatient care, and liaison ward-based inpatient care to the hospital.

Aims

- Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Services (SPMHS) are a new development in Ireland.
- This study evaluated the impact of the introduction of the SPMHS multidisciplinary team (MDT) at a large Irish maternity hospital on prescribing practices and treatment pathways.
- Adherence to internationally recognised prescribing standards were evaluated.

Methods

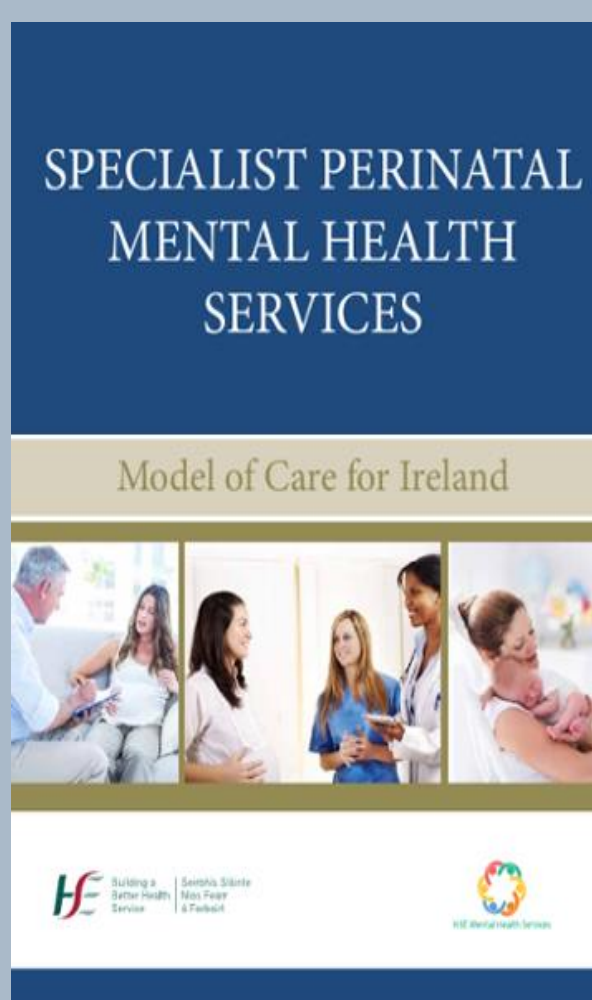
- All new patient assessments were reviewed from 9th September 2019 to 27th September 2019.
- An anonymised data base of their clinical details was generated on Excel and then analysed using SPSS (IBM, Armonk, New York).
- The time points were chosen to allow for the intervening expansion of the SPMHS and also to allow for education sessions targeted at NCHDs within the service.
- The audit cycle was repeated in September 2020 following this intervention – induction of NCHD staff in July 2020.
- Details were then broken down into 2019 and 2020 referrals and comparisons made.
- Results were presented as frequencies (n) for categorical data and medians for continuous data. Characteristics were compared between cohorts using chi-squared tests.
- Prescribing practices were measured against the Standards for Community Perinatal Mental Health Services (4th Edition), 2018.

References:

Health Service Executive (HSE) (2017): Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Services: Model of Care for Ireland.

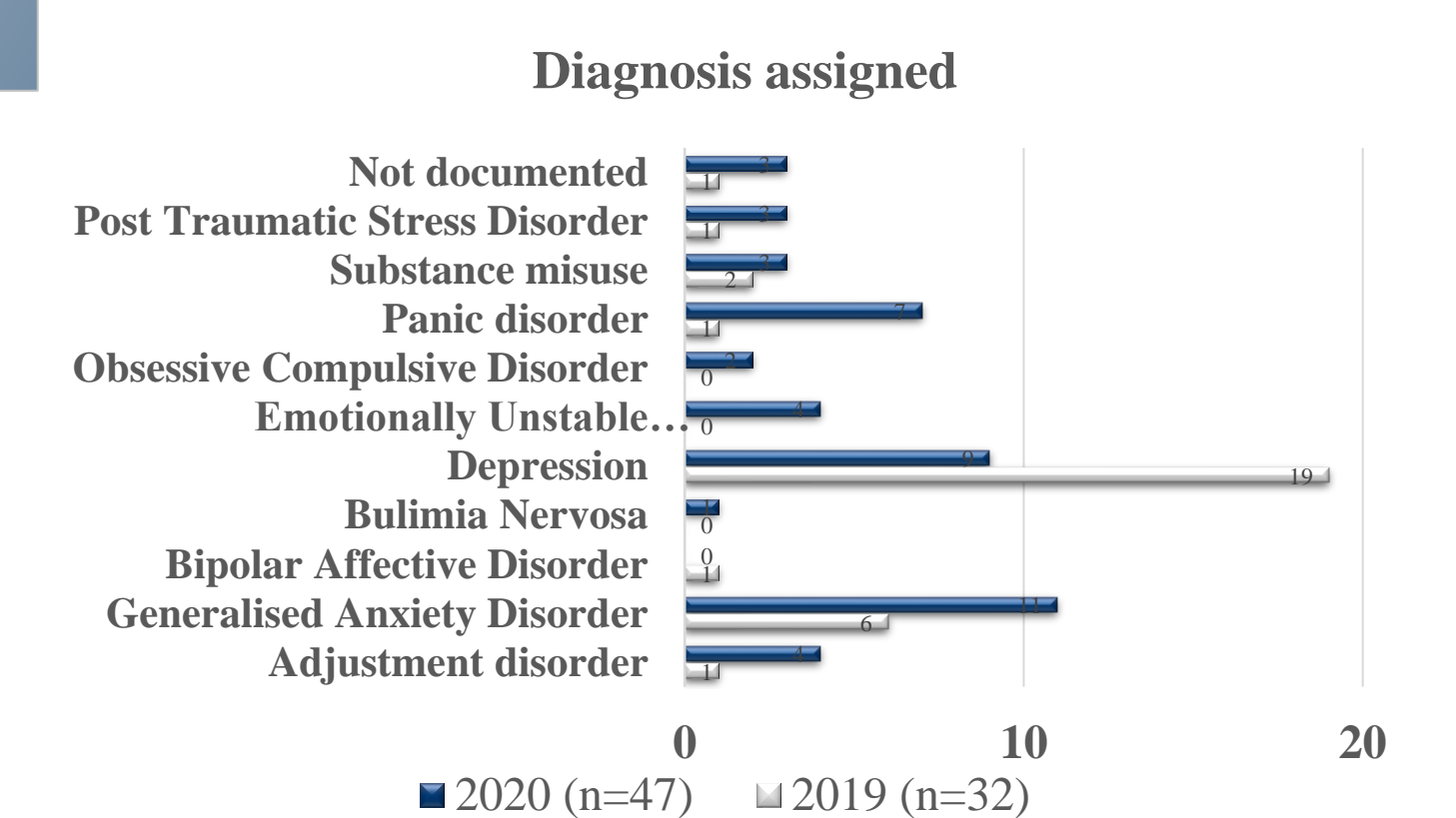
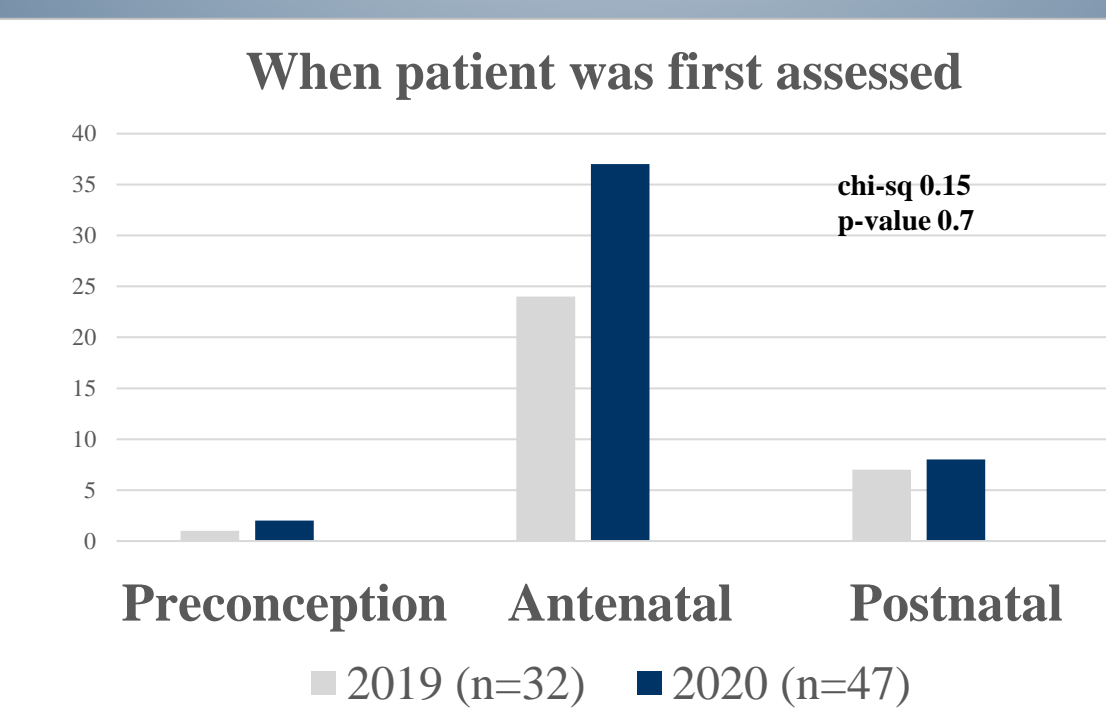
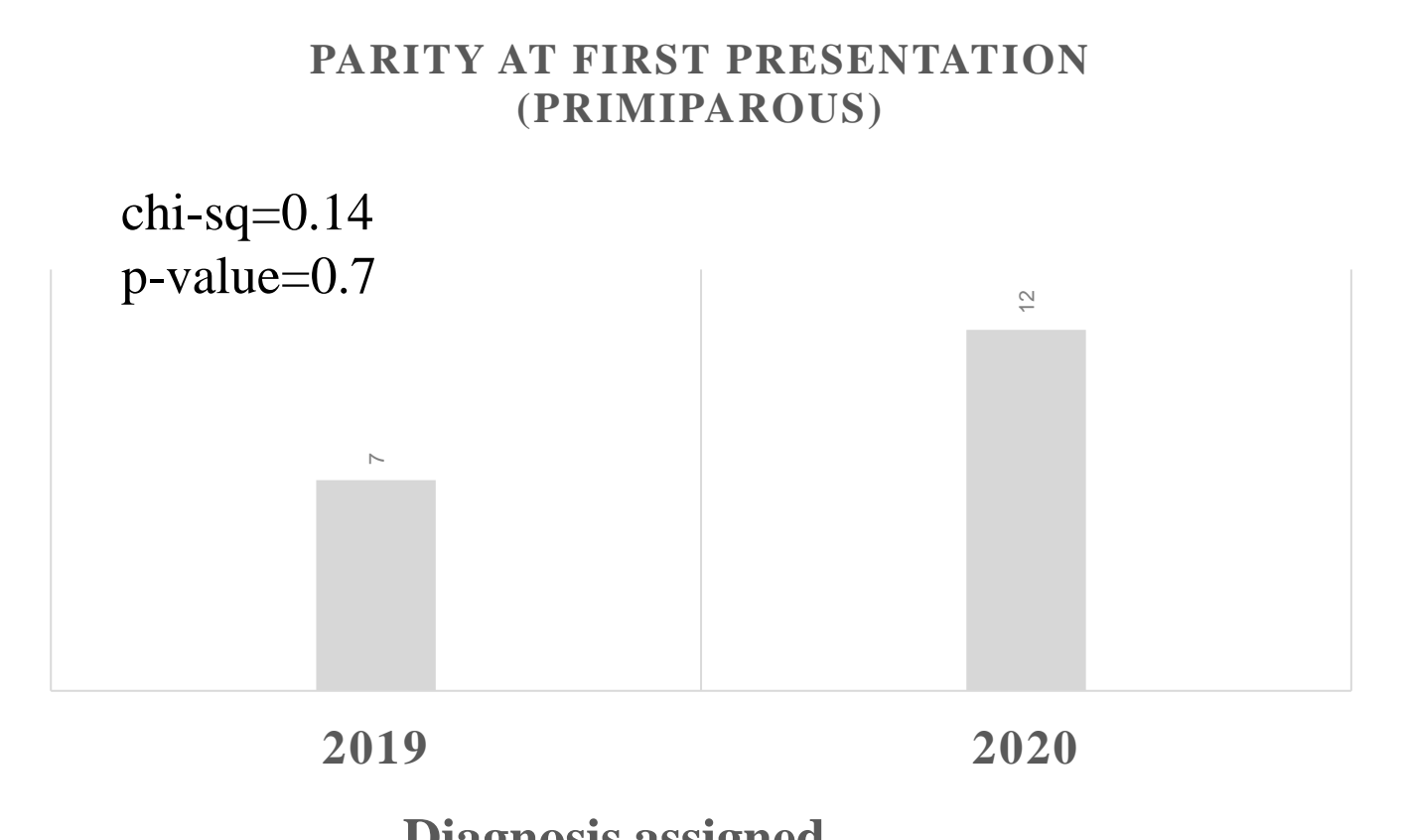
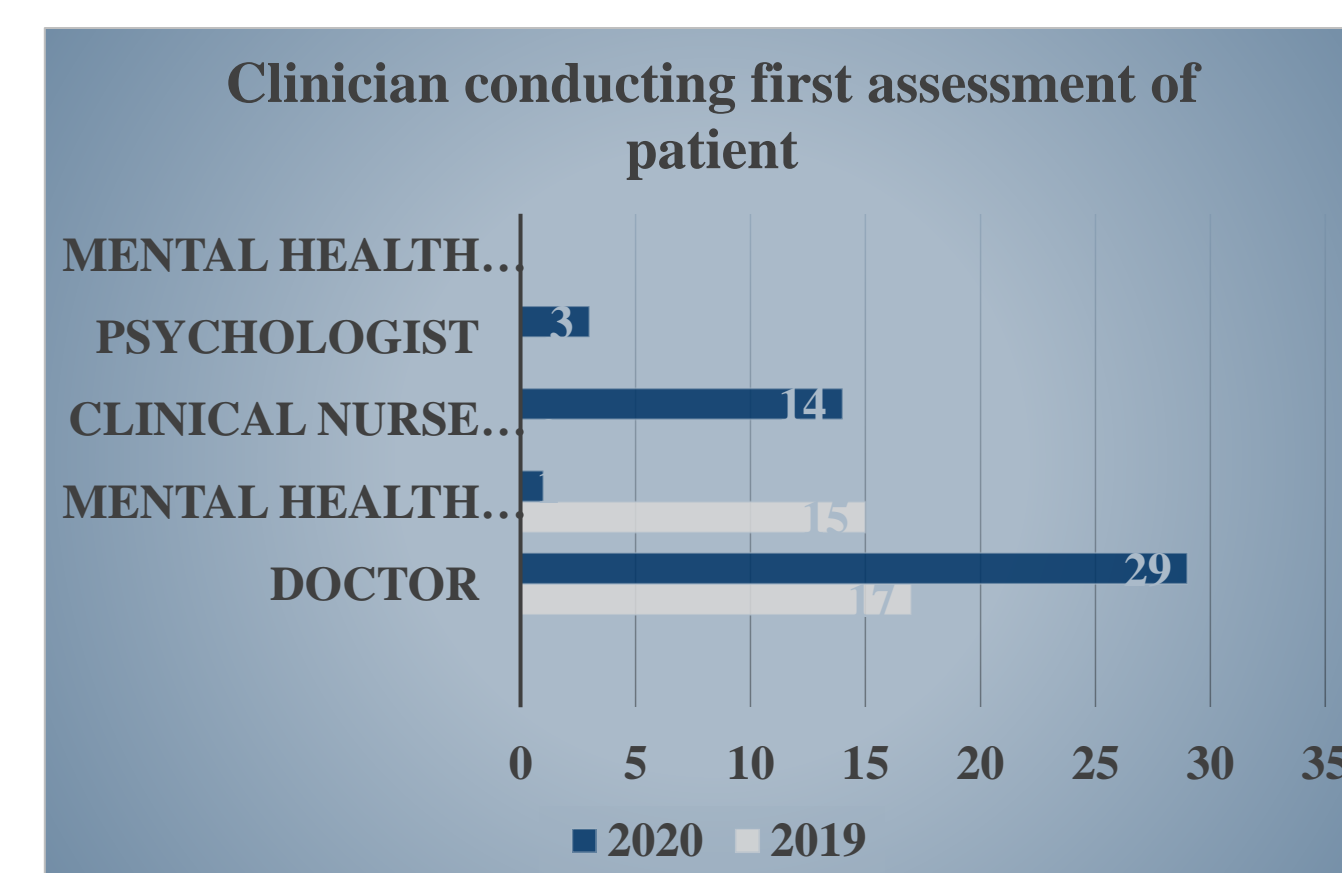
Rich-Edwards, J., 2006. Sociodemographic predictors of antenatal and postpartum depressive symptoms among women in a medical group practice. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 60(3), pp.221-227.

(2021) *Repsych.ac.uk*. Available at: https://www.repsych.ac.uk/docs/default-source/improving-care/ccqi/quality-networks/perinatal/pqn-standards-for-community-perinatal-mental-health-services-4th-edition.pdf?sfvrsn=f31a205a_4 (Accessed: 25 May 2021), 2021)

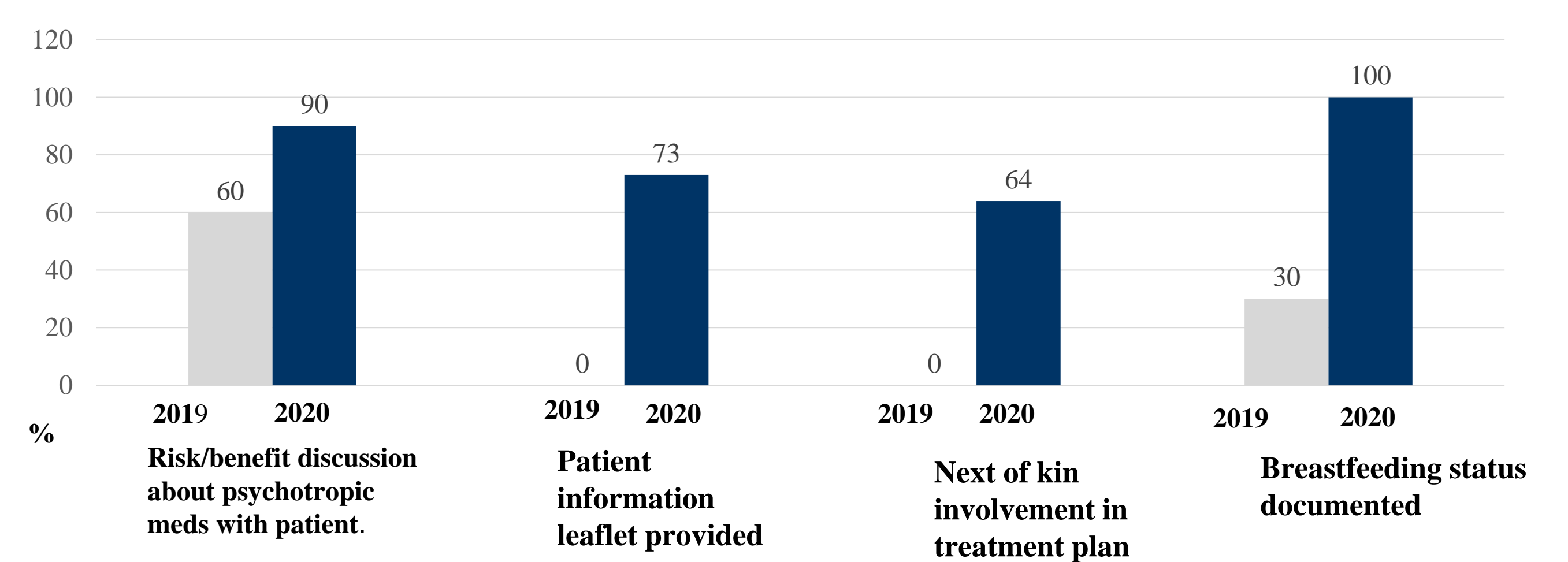


Results

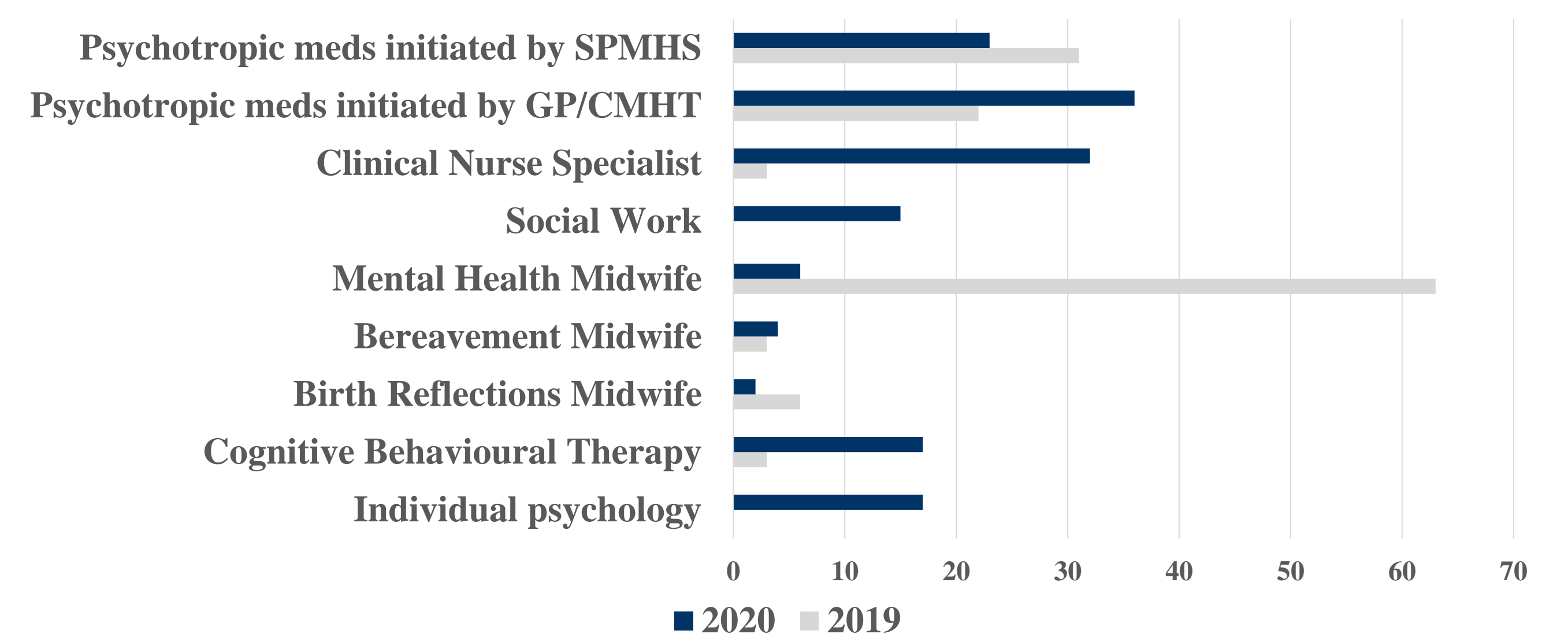
Patient demography and characteristics



Prescribing practices measured against the Standards for Community Perinatal Mental Health Services (4th Edition), 2018.



Interventions provided to patient with the Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service (SPMHS) at the Coombe Women and Infant's University Hospital



Conclusion

- Prescribing rates remained unchanged between 2019 and 2020, despite the Covid-19 pandemic occurring in the intervening time and more referrals being seen.
- Improvement occurred in adherence to prescribing standards.
- Increased provision of MDT interventions and a wider variety of diagnostic categories were employed in 2020 indicating that the service is now providing more individualised and patient centred care.

Consent for Clinical Audit obtained from the Audit Committee of The Coombe Women and Infant's University Hospital.