

RCA Case Study

As Incident Manager for Crayfields Hospital you receive an Incident Form that has been reported relating to the birth of Mohammed Abboud on 10 December 2019. The form indicates that Midwife Chambers had concerns about the length of time taken by the paediatrician to attend Theatre when Mohammed was born by Caesarean section.

On obtaining the medical records you establish the following:

- Mrs Abboud is a refugee and speaks little English. She was 39 at the time of Mohammed's birth.
- This was her fourth baby, the previous three having been delivered in her home country, apparently without difficulty. She was a late booker who missed several antenatal appointments towards the end of her pregnancy, but there is no note of any particular antenatal problems.
- She arrived alone at the hospital at 08.00 hours having mild contractions. She was 10 days past her due date. An admission CTG trace showed early decelerations, dipping to 80 beats per minute and some loss of baseline variability. Midwife Dhaliwal considered that there was no cause for concern and allowed Mrs Abboud to mobilise. No doctor was called at this stage.
- At 10.00 hours Mrs Abboud's membranes ruptured and Midwife Dhaliwal noted that there was meconium-stained liquor. At this point Miss Wood (Registrar) was called and she requested continuous CTG monitoring.
- An entry at 10.45 hours states that Midwife Dhaliwal had located a CTG monitor but when she brought it in to Mrs Abboud's room the latter was nowhere to be found.
- At 11.30 hours the CTG was recommenced. It showed late decelerations with poor recovery, no accelerations and loss of baseline variability. Midwife Dhaliwal called Miss Wood, who examined Mrs Abboud and made the decision that an urgent Caesarean section was required.
- At 11.45 hours Sister Romano made the arrangements for the Caesarean section, fast bleeping the anaesthetist, Dr Jackson and the paediatrician, Dr Shark.
- At 11.50 hours Mrs Dhaliwal arrived in Theatre and Miss Wood was ready to operate, but Dr Shark was not there. (The procedure could not go ahead until he arrived)
- The Caesarean section was commenced at 12.05 hours and Mohammed was born at 12.10 hours. He appeared unwell. He was intubated and taken to Special Care Baby Unit. The subsequent records indicate that he is thought to have some developmental delay and a diagnosis of cerebral palsy has been suggested.

Questions

Q1. How would you go about investigating this incident?

i) What documents should you obtain?

ii) Which witnesses should you obtain statements from?

Q2. During the course of your investigation you receive a letter from solicitors seeking disclosure of the medical records for Mrs Abboud and Mohammed, together with "any other relevant documents" in relation to the clinical negligence claim which is contemplated regarding Mohammed's birth. Do you have to disclose your entire SI investigation file?

Q3. Using the Fishbone Analysis, what factors do you believe contributed to the incident?