

# Impact of COVID-19 pandemic towards family planning in Malaysia

**Siti Hajar Abd Azman, Chew Kah Teik, Nor Azlin Mohamed Ismail, Nur Azurah Abd Ghani, Muhammad Azrai Abu, Shamsul Azhar Syah**

Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bandar Tun Razak, Cheras, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the health service including that of family planning. Our study was to evaluate the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on family planning among women of reproductive age. **Methods:** This prospective cross-sectional study was conducted between January and April 2022. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed among eligible participants, which contained demographic and clinical details. Four domains were evaluated: 1) type of contraception and its reason, 2) practice of contraception during the pandemic, 3) reason for not using contraception, and 4) perception of accessibility of contraception. The psychological impact was assessed using the validated Malay version of Impact of Event Scale-Revised (IES-R). **Results:** A total of 381 women were recruited. The mean age was 32.8 (SD 5.5) years with 78.7% of participants practiced contraception. There was a change seen in the preferred method of contraception to intrauterine device (21%), birth control pills (14.7%) and implant (13.3%) due to better efficacy. The majority of respondents (66.6%) planned to defer their pregnancy. Women who did not practice contraception were worried about the side effects (52.8%) and demonstrated inadequate knowledge of fertility (40.4%). The contraceptive service was less available, due to the movement control order (MCO) and unclear SOP given by the authorities. Although a majority of respondents (81.4%) expressed concern for post-traumatic stress disorder, there was no significant association with the practice of contraception ( $p=0.752$ ). **Conclusion:** COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on women's family planning practice. Action should be taken to improve contraceptive services to reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies.

# The effectiveness of transvaginal ultrasound (TVS) in the detection of occult anal sphincter injury: The convenient and accessible way

**Zalina Nusee<sup>1</sup>, Fazlin Harun<sup>1,4</sup>, Hafizah Pasi<sup>3</sup>, Nurul Hikmah MN<sup>1</sup>, Azmi Mat Noor<sup>2</sup>, Khong Jac Mun<sup>1</sup>, Mohd Fadli MD Aris<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of O&G, International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM), <sup>2</sup>Colorectal Unit, IIUM, <sup>3</sup>Department of Community Medicine, IIUM, <sup>4</sup>Department of O&G, Hospital Tunku Azizah (HTA)

## ABSTRACT

**Introduction and Hypothesis:** The defect of the anal sphincter as a result of obstetric anal sphincter injury (OASIS) is a powerful marker for the subsequent risk of anal incontinence. Up to 40 % of perineal injuries were undiagnosed, leading to the possibility of occult anal sphincter defects. The gold standard in diagnosing anal sphincter injury is via Endoanal ultrasound (EAUS). However, it is costly and inaccessible. The readily available transvaginal ultrasound (TVS) probe is utilized to examine the presence of OASIS compared to EAUS. **Methods:** A cross-sectional study of 44 parous antenatal women was examined for detection of residual OASIS using TVS followed by EAUS. A TVS probe was positioned in the vaginal introitus, with the tip directed towards the pelvic floor. Defects of the anal sphincter found by TVS were compared with EAUS. **Results:** Out of 44 women, occult anal sphincter defects were detected in 25 (56.8%) women. TVS detected positive occult OASIS in 19 cases which was further confirmed by EAUS. Six were found negative on TVS but detected positive on EAUS. The sensitivity of TVS in the detection of occult OASIS is 76% (CI 54.4-89.8), with a specificity of 100 (CI 79.1-100). Good strength of agreement between TVS and EAUS is demonstrated with Kappa Value 0.73 (CI 0.54-0.92). **Conclusions:** TVS is a reliable, and accessible screening tool to detect occult OASIS comparable to the gold standard Endoanal Ultrasound Scan.