

## **Impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on routine obstetrical management**

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### **Objective**

Channeling medical resources for coronavirus disease-2019 (COVID-19) management can potentially endanger routine healthcare practices. As a preventive measure, a department of obstetrics and gynecology in Israel constructed a separate, designated complex for its COVID-19-exposed patients. The objectives of this study is to evaluate the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic infection control measures on obstetric care in the obstetrical emergency department and delivery unit.

### **Methods**

The authors collected data retrospectively from February 2020 to March 2020 and compared it to data of a parallel period in 2019.

### **Results**

From 1 February 2020 to 28 March 2020, 3897 women were referred to the emergency department (ED), compared to 4067 the previous year. Mean duration of treatment until decision and referral indications did not differ between 2020 and 2019 (207 vs. 220 minutes,  $P = 0.26$ ; urgent referrals 58.8% vs. 59.2%,  $P = 0.83$ ). A per-week comparison showed a significant reduction in ED referrals only in the last week of the period (337 [2020] vs. 515 [2019],  $P < 0.001$ ). The proportion of women admitted to the delivery unit in active labor was significantly higher in the last three weeks (39.1% vs. 28.2%,  $P = 0.005$ ). During February and March 2020, 1666 women delivered, compared to 1654 during February and March 2019. The proportion of types and modes of delivery did not differ. In a per-week comparison, the number of deliveries did not differ (mean 208 vs. 206,  $P = 0.88$ ).

### **Conclusion**

With timely preparation and proper management, negative impact of COVID-19 can be reduced in obstetrical emergency departments.