**Antenatal Corticosteroids in COVID-19 Pandemic Conditions**

**Introduction:**

Consideration to giving antenatal corticosteroids for fetal lung maturation may be required in situations of threatened or evolving pre-term labour, pre-term pre-labour rupture of membranes (PPROM) or for planned delivery at less than 39 weeks for a wide range of reasons.

**When to Give Steroids:**

Antenatal corticosteroids should be **offered from 24+0 to 33+6**. Consultant consideration to administration of antenatal corticosteroids can also be made from 34+0 to 35+6.

**Do not withhold steroids from a woman with proven or suspected COVID-19 where these would normally be given.** There is no evidence, to date, from COVID-19, SARS or MERS outbreaks that a course of steroids for fetal lung maturation causes any clinically significant adverse effect on the course of the mother’s illness.

**Women who are currently hospital inpatients can have steroids as per the usual 48 hour regime.**

**Where birth is planned after 34+0 weeks’ gestation and administration of steroids would require additional hospital visits, steroids should be withheld (this includes elective caesarean section at less than 39 weeks).** This is on the basis that the benefit to the baby would not outweigh the risks to the mother associated with 2 hospital visits.

If a woman has a planned review (antenatal clinic or Daycase Unit) within 7 days of an elective caesarean section between 34 and 36+6 weeks, a single steroid injection could be considered by the consultant obstetrician at this appointment (although there is no good evidence for efficacy of this).

**Exceptional Circumstances:**

In some situations, the potential risks of the standard 2 dose regime may be justified even if additional hospital visits are required between 34 and 36+6 weeks (for instance a previous still birth). The consultant obstetrician can discuss this further with the mother as required and a joint decision can be taken.

**References:**

NICE Guideline [NG25] Published 20 November 2015. Last updated: 02 August, 2019

RCOG: <https://www.rcog.org.uk/globalassets/documents/guidelines/2020-03-30-guidance-for-maternal-medicine-in-the-evolving-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic.pdf>