

# Preventing Stillbirth: Patient and Public Involvement in Research

Younger A<sup>1</sup>, Miyazaki Sankar R<sup>1</sup>, Villar de Onis J<sup>2</sup>, Craik R<sup>1,2</sup>, Papageorghiou AT<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nuffield Department of Women's and Reproductive Health, University of Oxford

<sup>2</sup> Oxford Maternal and Perinatal Health Institute, University of Oxford

## BACKGROUND

Stillbirth affects ~ 2 million pregnancies annually. Recognizing the psychological distress linked to stillbirth, research should incorporate patient input to ensure a respectful and sensitive approach.

## AIM

To understand patient and healthcare provider perspectives on testing of emerging technologies that may prevent stillbirth.

## METHODS



Participants completed questionnaires and were invited to focus groups.



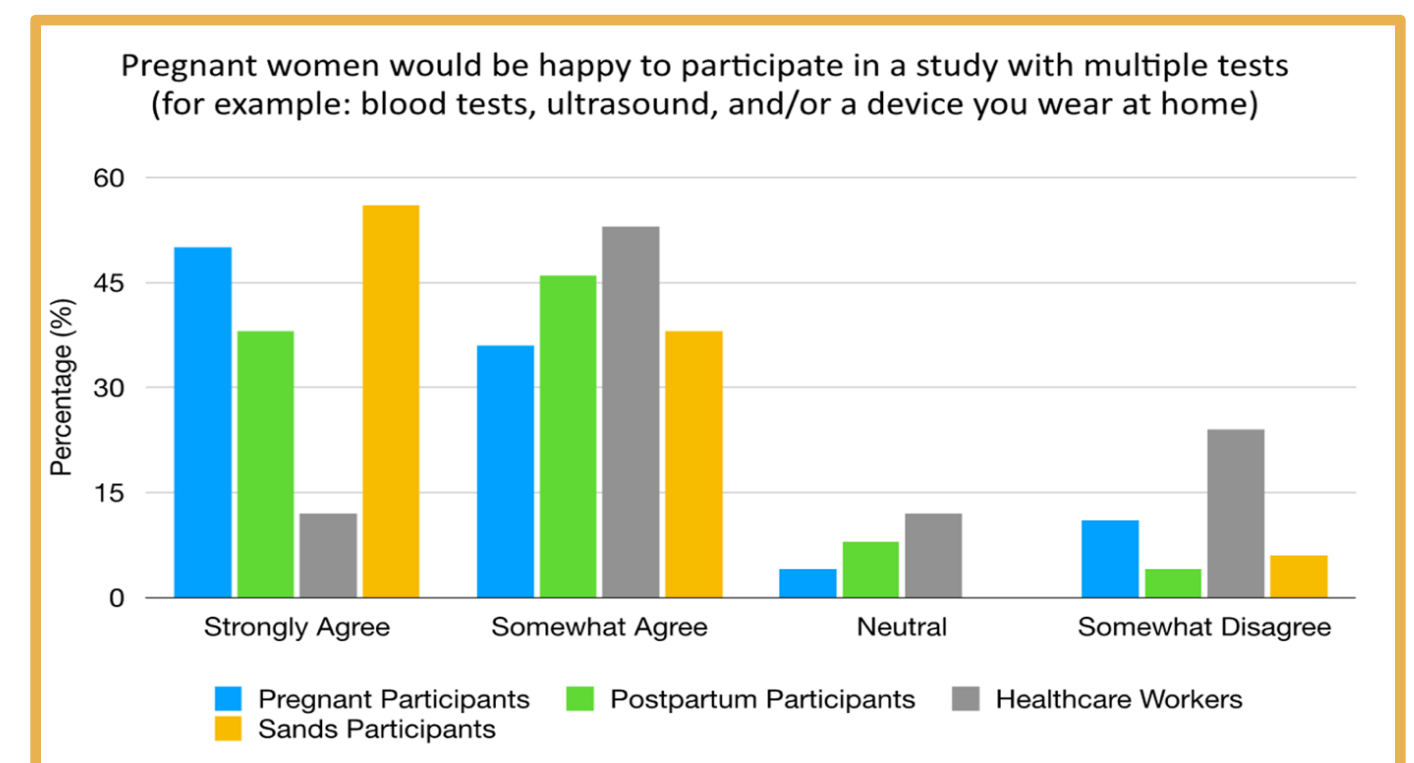
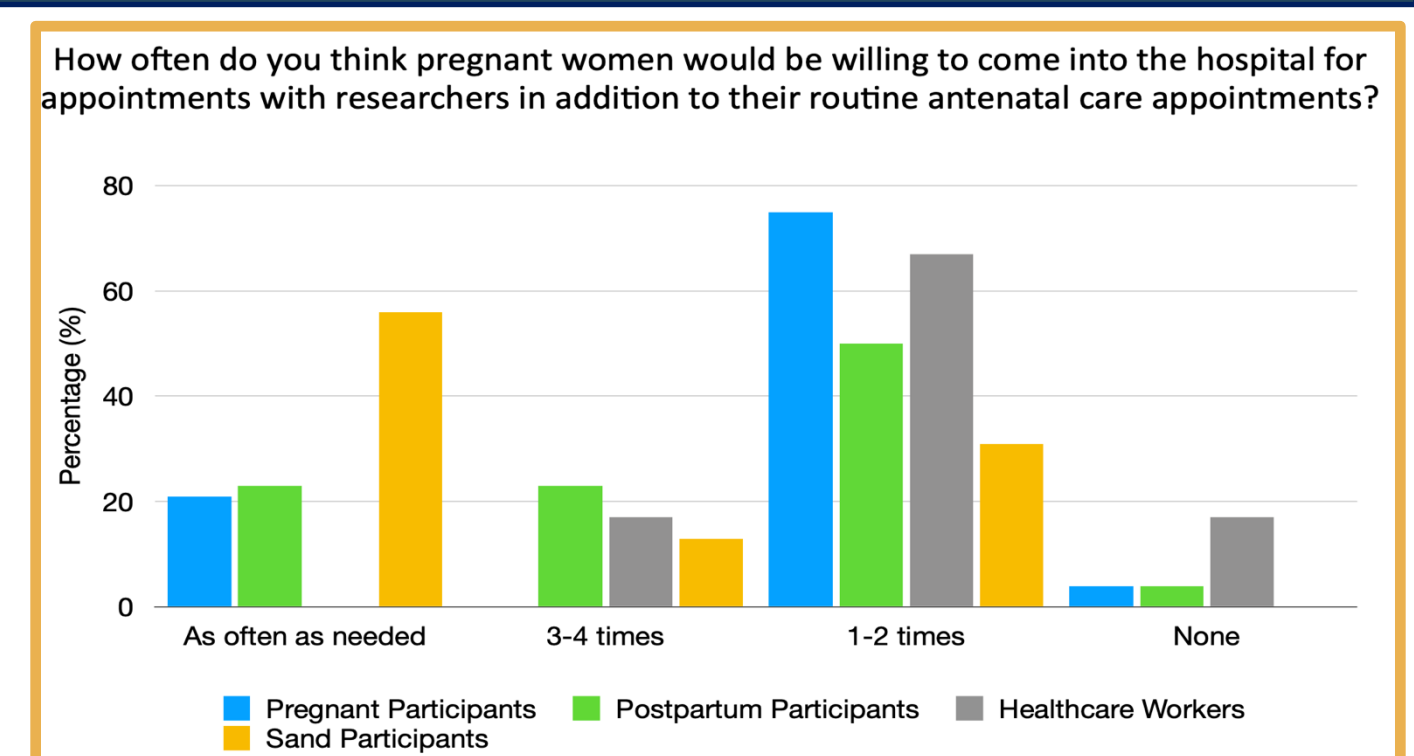
Themes were developed through inductive content analysis.

Participants	Recruitment Strategy	Results
Pregnant women	Antenatal care outpatient waiting room	29 completed survey, 2 focus groups
Post-partum women (< 6 months)	The Oxfordshire Maternity Voices Partnership	25 completed survey, 2 focus groups
Healthcare workers	Contacts identified through clinician networks	19 completed survey, 3 focus groups
Participants with stillbirth experience	Sands Network	14 completed survey, 9 agreed to focus group

## RESULTS

A total of 91 participants completed the survey. 5 focus groups were conducted (Dec 2023-Feb 2024). Themes that emerged were acceptability, participation and communication.

Acceptability and Participation Questionnaire Results



Acceptability	Participation	Communication
<p>Openness to testing multiple technologies</p> <p><b>Barriers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time and location</li> <li>• Comfort and safety</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitive recruitment</li> <li>• Care integration</li> </ul>	<p>Favorable attitudes towards participation</p> <p><b>Barriers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple wearables</li> <li>• Third trimester demands</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community midwives</li> <li>• Stillbirth prevention</li> </ul>	<p>Clarity during recruitment and engagement</p> <p><b>Barriers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confusing study aims</li> <li>• Routine care disconnect</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early recruitment</li> <li>• Research goals</li> </ul>

## CONCLUSION

Pregnant women, despite the emotional distress of stillbirth, are **more willing to participate in stillbirth research than healthcare providers assume**; researchers should focus on clear communication, continuous support, and occasional incentives to encourage their involvement