

Abortion

The English Experience

Peter Thompson
Consultant Fetal Medicine



By your side

West Midlands and our Fetal Medicine Unit



Birmingham Women's
and Children's
NHS Foundation Trust

- Population of almost 6 million
- Regional Fetal Medicine Service for this region
- Maternity Unit large 8000
- Deliver babies that require complex surgical care
- Facilitate care for others who may deliver elsewhere
- Support women in their decision re whether to continue with their pregnancy



- Abortion Act 1967
 - Stated that medically induced abortion was not unlawful if
 - 2 medical practitioners in good faith
 - Agree that at least 1 clause is met
- HFEA Act 1990
 - Defined upper limit gestations for clauses C and D
- Clause E
 - There is a substantial risk that if the child were born it would suffer from such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped

IN CONFIDENCE **ABORTION ACT 1967** **CERTIFICATE A**

Not to be destroyed within three years of the date of operation
Certificate to be completed before an abortion is performed under Section 1(1) of the Act

I,
(Name and qualifications of practitioner in block capitals)

of
(Full address of practitioner)

Have/have not* seen/and examined* the pregnant woman to whom this certificate relates at
.....
(Full address of place at which patient was seen or examined)

on
and I
(Name and qualifications of practitioner in block capitals)

of
(Full address of practitioner)

Have/have not* seen/and examined* the pregnant woman to whom this certificate relates at
.....
(Full address of place at which patient was seen or examined)

on

We hereby certify that we are of the opinion, formed in good faith, that in the case
of
(Full name of pregnant woman in block capitals)

of
(Usual place of residence of pregnant woman in block capitals)

(Ring appropriate letter(s))

- A the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk to the life of the pregnant woman greater than if the pregnancy were terminated;
- B the termination is necessary to prevent grave permanent injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman;
- C the pregnancy has NOT exceeded its 24th week and that the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk, greater than if the pregnancy were terminated, of injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman;
- D the pregnancy has NOT exceeded its 24th week and that the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk, greater than if the pregnancy were terminated, of injury to the physical or mental health of any existing child(ren) of the family of the pregnant woman;
- E there is a substantial risk that if the child were born it would suffer from such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped.

This certificate of opinion is given before the commencement of the treatment for the termination of pregnancy to which it refers and relates to the circumstances of the pregnant woman's individual case.

Signed Date

Signed Date

* Delete as appropriate

Form HSA1 (revised 1991)



Number of Terminations of Pregnancy Eng & Wales 2015

England and Wales, residents

numbers

Grounds	Gestation weeks				
	Total	3 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 19	20 and over
Total abortions	185,824	149,034	21,248	12,665	2,877
A (alone, or with B, C, D) or F or G	91	18	8	42	23
B (alone, or with C or D)	131	84	22	18	7
C (alone)	181,231	148,102	20,570	10,758	1,801
D (alone, or with C)	1,158	816	259	83	0
E (alone, or with A, B, C or D)	3,213	14	389	1,764	1,046



Clauses A and B

- The continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk to the life of the pregnant woman greater than if the pregnancy were terminated
- The termination is necessary to prevent grave permanent injury to the physical or mental wellbeing of the woman
- there is a real and substantial risk to her life that may be removed only by termination of pregnancy

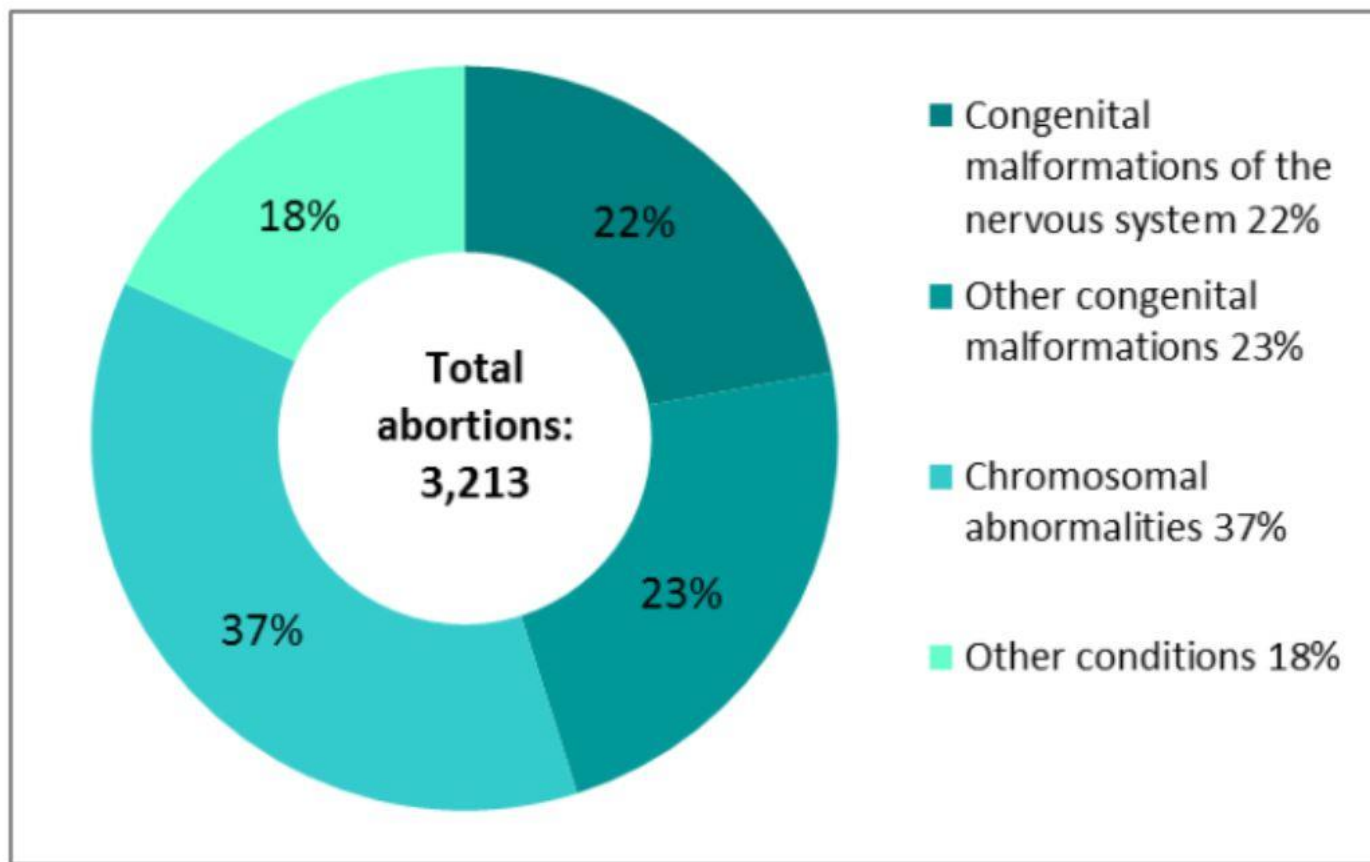


Clauses A and B

- Rarely performed after 24 weeks gestation
- delivery an option then
- Personal experience of this
 - Women with severe pre-eclampsia and growth restriction
 - Women with complex congenital and acquired heart disease
 - Women with sepsis following early membrane rupture



Indications for Termination of Pregnancy under Clause E



Gestation at time of termination for Clause E

England and Wales, residents

numbers

Procedure	Gestation weeks for abortions performed under ground E						
	Total	under 13	13 & 14	15 & 16	17 to 19	20 & 21	22 and over
Total abortions	3,213	403	875	508	381	534	512
Surgical	842	214	371	133	60	23	41
Vacuum Aspiration	426	163	250	13	0	0	0
Dilatation and Evacuation	295	19	103	105	49	19	0
Feticide with a surgical evacuation ¹	121	32	18	15	11	4	41
Medical	2,371	189	504	375	321	511	471
Antiprogestosterone with or without prostaglandin	1,833	187	501	367	313	428	37
Other medical agent	30	2	3	8	8	9	0
Feticide with a medical evacuation ²	508	0	0	0	0	74	434

¹ includes feticide with no method of evacuation and surgical 'other'.

² includes 8 cases where use of feticide was not confirmed at time of publication.



Irish residents

- 5190 not resident in Eng & Wales
- 66% resident in RoI
- 16% resident in Northern Ireland

- RoI cases
- 135 are under clause E



Indications for Termination in RoI residents 2015

Irish Republic residents

	principal mentions	number of mentions
Total ground E alone or with any other ¹	135	
Q00-Q07 the nervous system total	57	87
Q00 anencephaly	7	8
Q01 encephalocele	2	2
Q02 Microcephaly	1	1
Q03 hydrocephalus	3	3
Q04 other malformations of the brain	1	2
Q05 spina bifida	9	10
Q06-Q07 other	0	4
Q20-Q28 the cardiovascular system	10	19
Q35-Q37 cleft lip and cleft palate	0	1
Q38 Congenital malformations of digestive system	0	1
Q60-Q64 the urinary system	4	8
Q65-Q79 the musculoskeletal system	13	19
Q86-Q89 other	7	9
Q90-Q99 Chromosomal abnormalities total	69	72
Q90 Down's syndrome	40	42
Q910-Q913 Edwards' syndrome	13	13
Q914-Q917 Patau's syndrome	7	7
Q92-Q99 other	9	10
other conditions total	9	10
P00-P04 fetus affected by maternal factors	1	1
P05-P08 fetal disorders related to gestation and growth	0	0
P83.2-P833 hydrop fetalis not due to haemolytic disease	1	1
O30 multiple gestation	2	2
E849 Cystic fibrosis	1	1
G71.0 disorder of the muscles	1	1
D18.1 Cystic Hygroma (Lymphangioma)	3	4

ICD-10 codes are taken from the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health problems (Tenth Revision) published by the World Health Organisation (WHO)



Care Pathway

- Screening
- Diagnosis
- Counselling
- Options
- Time
- Further Investigation
- Feticide after 22 weeks gestation

Gestation (weeks)	Live births		
	(n)	(%)	(95% confidence interval)
20	404	3.5	1.7-5.2
21	429	5.4	3.2-7.5
22	235	6.4	3.3-9.5
23	154	9.7	5.1-14.4

Case Study A Microcephaly

- Normal 20 week scan
- Scans performed from 28 weeks gestation due to previous history of small babies
- 28 week scan noted a small head circumference
- Referral to fetal medicine unit
- Confirmation of findings karyotype normal
- MRI decreased cerebral cortex, delayed sulcation
- Discussion with Paediatric Neurologist
- MDT meeting
- Feticide



Microcephaly

- Usually non lethal
- Variable prognosis
- Dependant upon other differences
- Neuronal migrational disorders and delayed sulcation are associated with severe neurological delay
- Important to gain as much information as possible to allow informed choice
 - Ultrasound
 - Fetal MRI
 - Chromosomes
 - Counselling



Case study B Selective Reduction

- MCDC pregnancy
- Diagnosed at 11 weeks gestation
- One fetus with acrania

- Anencephaly
 - Lethal
 - Increased liquor and preterm delivery increased

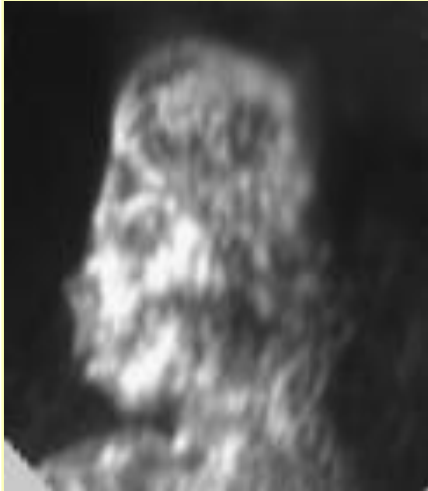


Monochorionic Twins

- Share the same placenta
- Are in separate amniotic sacs
- Are from a single zygote, “identical”
- Only 18% will be concordant for fetal abnormalities
- Have vascular connections
- If one twin dies there is a risk of death of the co-twin and risk of severe neurological consequences



Abnormalities in twins



Prevalence DC:MC = 4:1

Defects in DC = X1 singleton



Defects in MC = X4 singleton

Discordancy for defects:
MC = DC



Selective Reduction

- Loss of a wanted pregnancy by active act
- 10-15% risk of miscarriage dependant upon gestation
- Small risk of termination of wrong fetus, not in this case

Conservative management

- Increased maternal risks with twin pregnancy
- 15-20% risk of FFTS
- 17% risk of severe selective IUGR
- Risks of single intrauterine fetal death
- 10% risk of preterm delivery before 32 weeks gestation

Summary

- 2% of terminations in England and Wales are under Clause E
- Only 500 of these are performed after 22 weeks gestation
- 3000 women a year from the RoI have abortions in Eng & Wales
- 135 have termination under clause E
- Commonest indications are chromosomal differences and nervous system abnormalities
- Selective reduction can improve survival for other fetuses



Thank You



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