Kejsersnit paa moders oenske [Caesarean section on maternal request: a health technology assessment]

Danish Centre for Evaluation and Health Technology Assessment

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Authors' objectives
Caesarean section on maternal request has become the object of considerable interest among other things in the media, in the health professional circles and in the Danish parliamentary Health Committee. The object of this report is to contribute to the debate and provide an input for decision making in relation to the future management of this issue. The report is intended to contribute by collating information and set out an overall assessment of the benefits and risks in a planned caesarean section on maternal request seen in relation to a vaginal delivery. The report analyses the risks for mother and child in a planned caesarean section which is carried through, the patient-related background parameters and consequences are evaluated, and finally the organisational and economic consequences are investigated. To this is added an ethical analysis of the problem, to form an overall comprehension framework for the rest of the analysis.

Authors' conclusions
The main conclusion of this report is that more should be done to ensure that women's first birth experience is a good one. The caesarean section is mostly requested by multiparae who have had a bad earlier experience and it is therefore the key point to prevent the wish for an elective caesarean by ensuring good first-time births. The information given to pregnant women as a basis for their choice is another central point. Pregnant women requesting a caesarean section should be informed of the benefits and risks to both themselves and to the child. They should also be informed about implications for later pregnancies and births and even on the possibility to become pregnant again. It is also recommended that research should be undertaken in a number of areas to establish a better knowledge foundation concerning caesarean section on maternal request.

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