

# Perioperative pregnancy testing in young females: a survey of APA members

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## Introduction

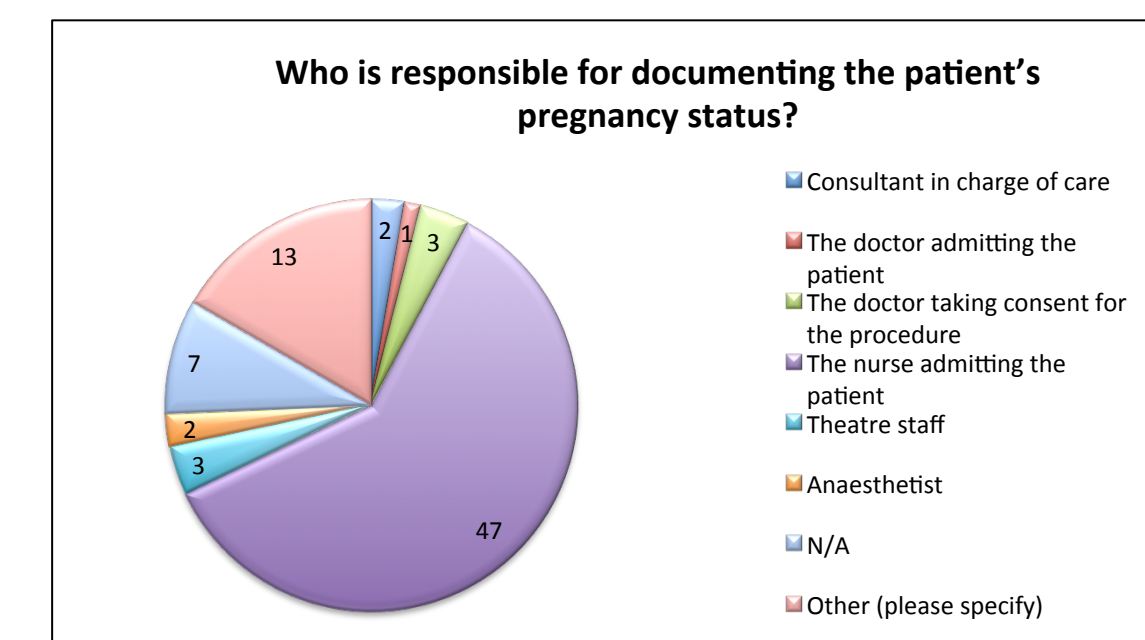
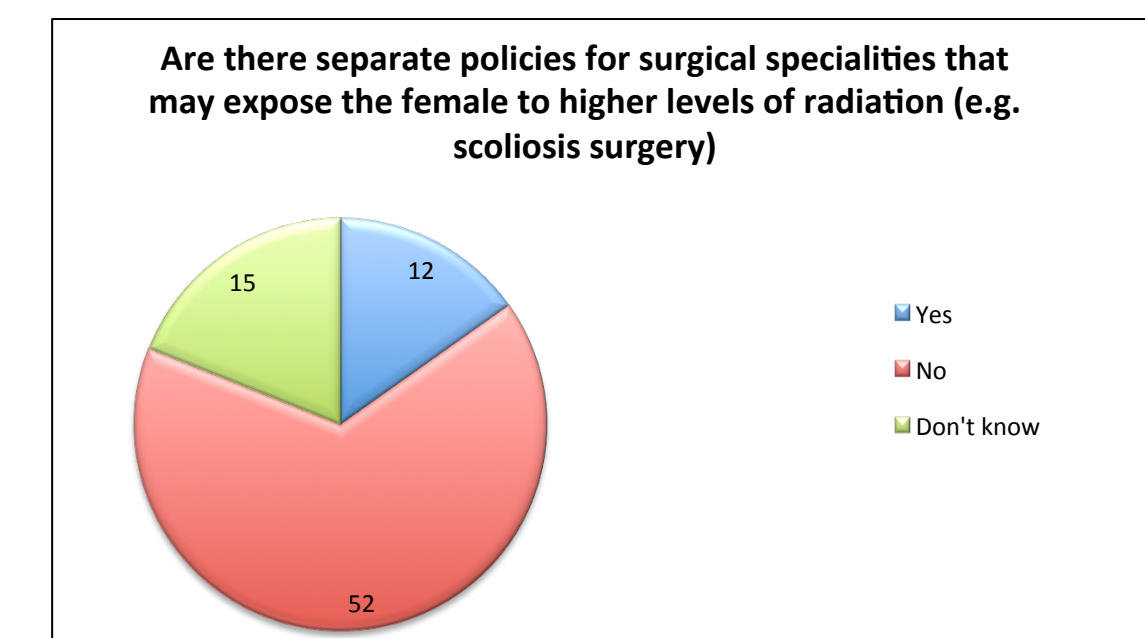
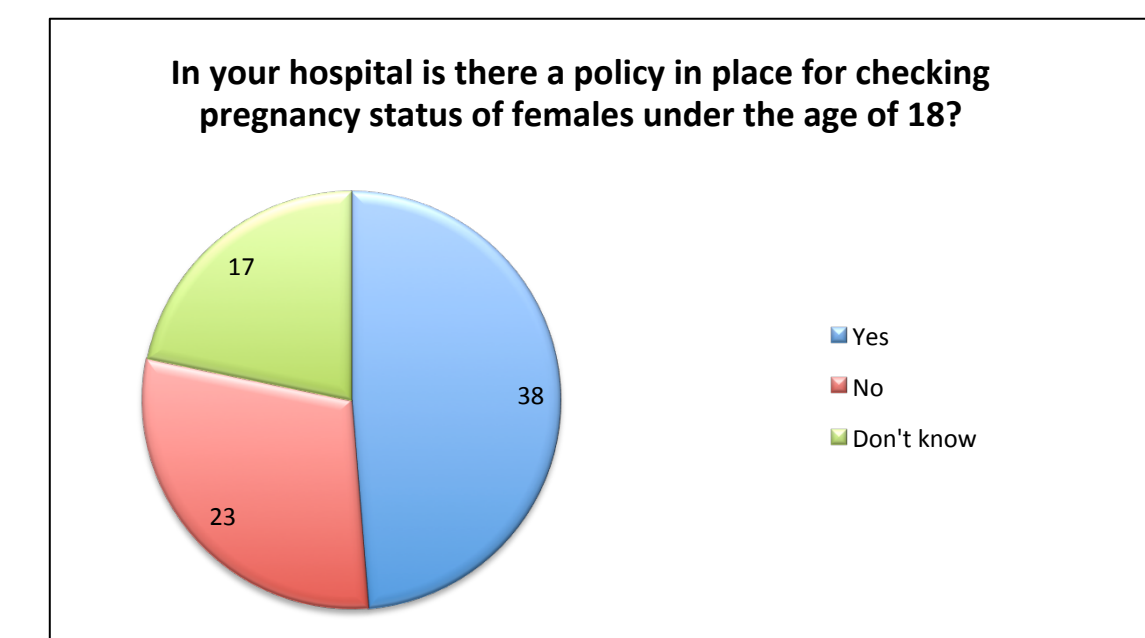
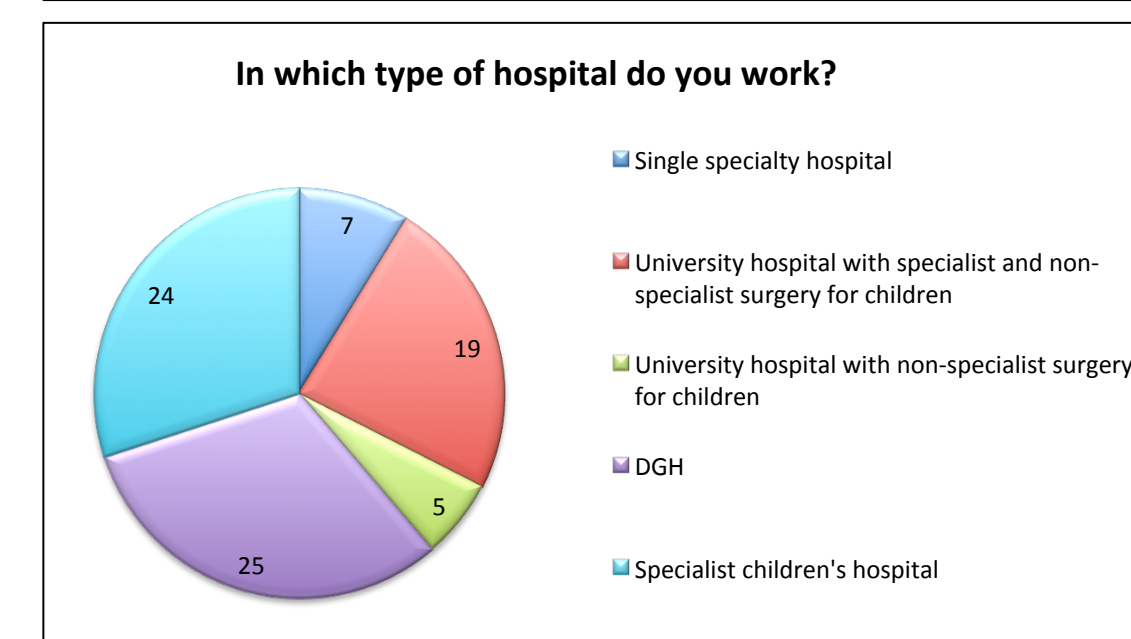
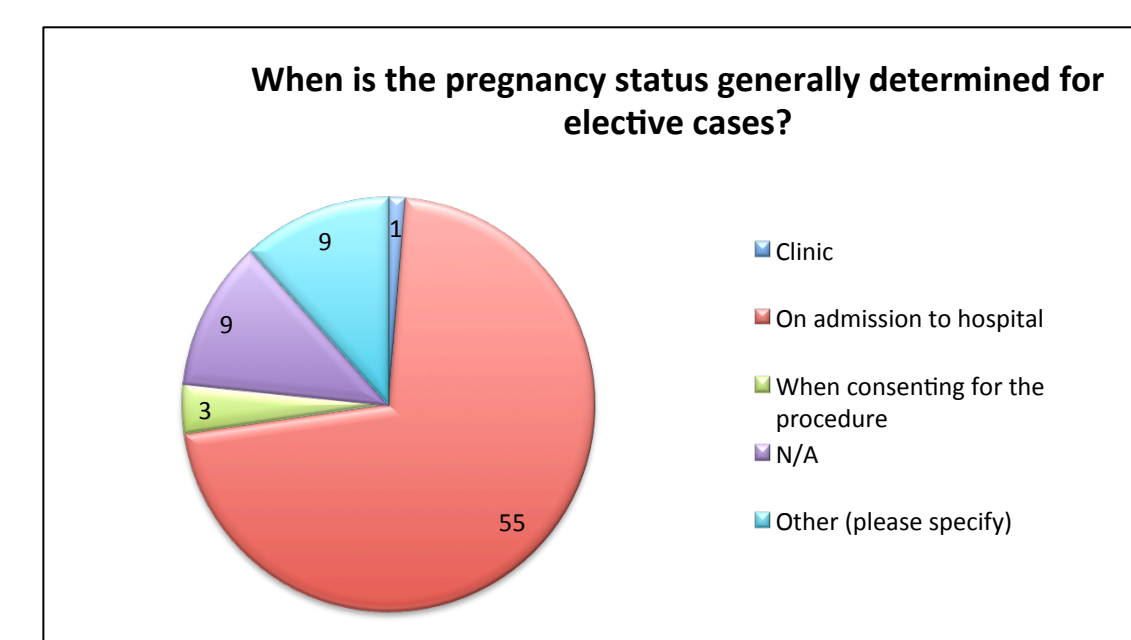
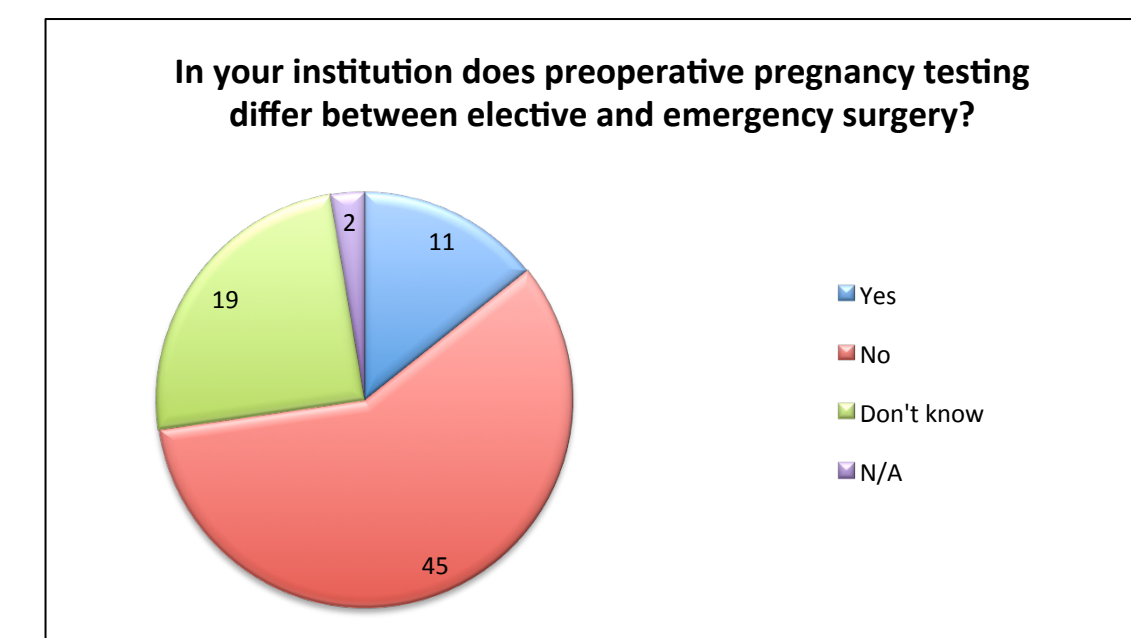
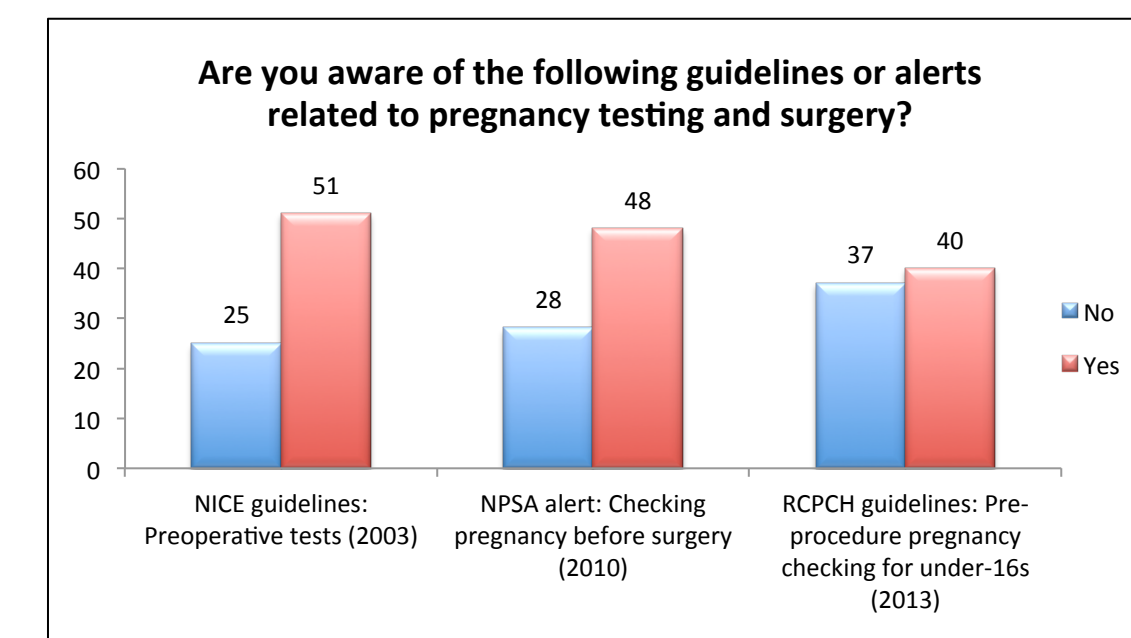
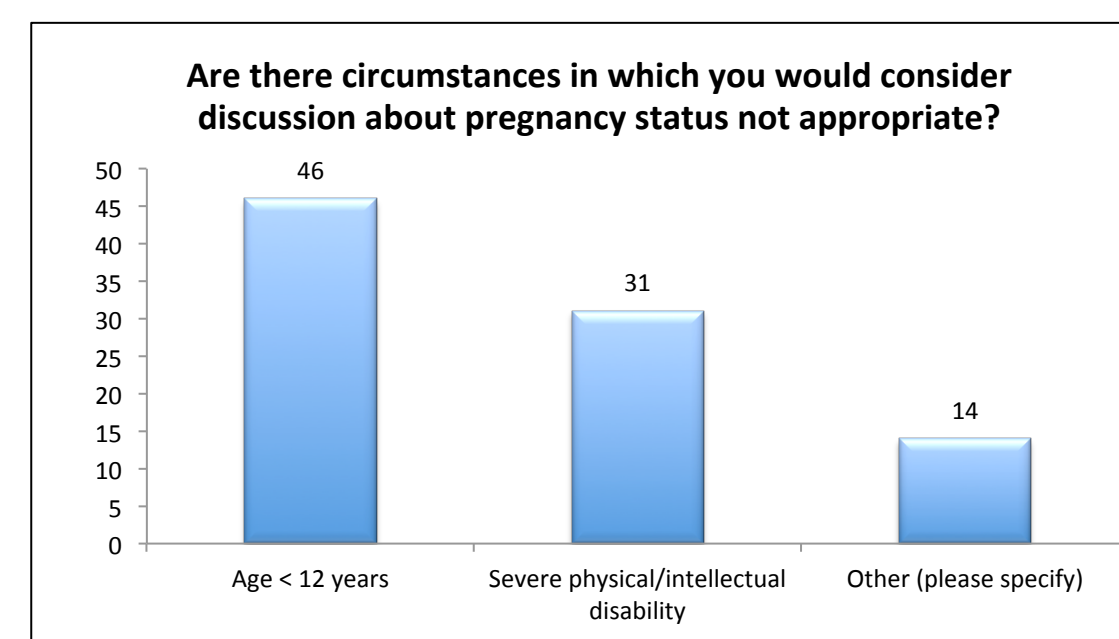
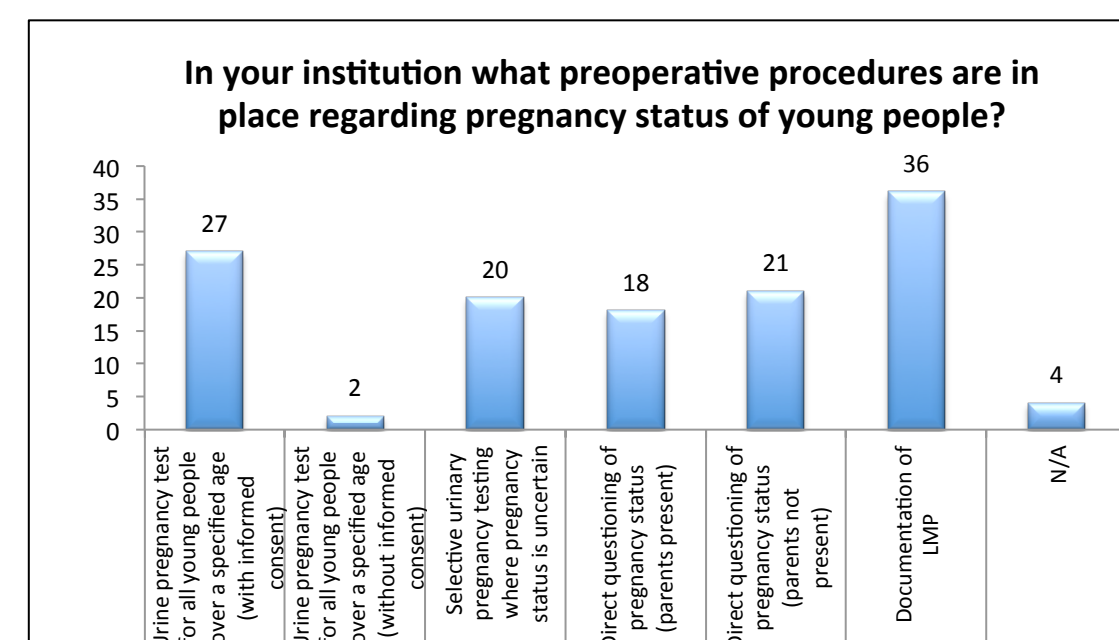
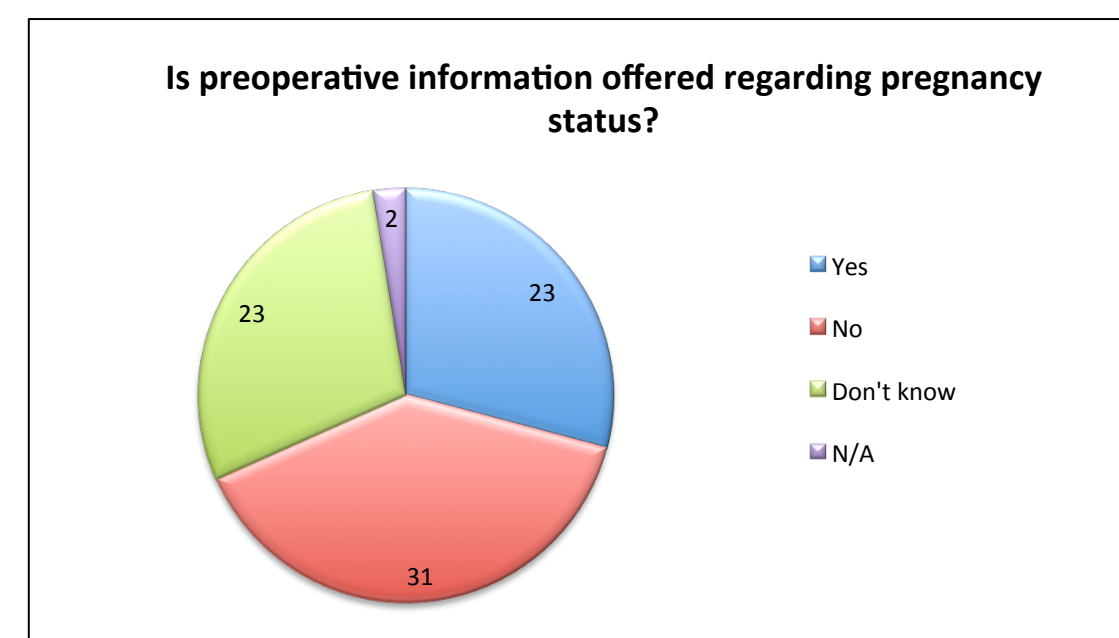
- Whilst the prevalence of pregnancy in girls under the age of 16 is low it remains important to consider pregnancy status prior to surgical and radiological procedures, especially if under general anaesthesia. Anaesthesia and surgery with or without exposure to radiation pose a small but significant risk to the pregnant patient and fetus and it may be preferable to delay or cancel the planned procedure.
- NICE guidance on pre-operative testing<sup>1</sup> suggests that pregnancy status should be established for all young people/ women of child bearing age.
- There are specific additional difficulties in establishing the pregnancy status of young people, with evidence that this information is not well recorded in this subset of patients<sup>2</sup>
- In 2012 the RCPCH published joint guidance on peri-operative pregnancy testing in Young People after extensive consultation<sup>3</sup>
- The aim of this survey was to establish the current knowledge of these guidelines amongst UK APA consultant members and hospital practice in checking the pregnancy status of females under the age of 18

## Methods

- An online survey was distributed via the Association of Paediatric Anaesthetists to all consultant members in January 2014, with a request to provide information about departmental policy.

## Results

81 responses



## References

- Clinical Guidance 3 Preoperative tests NICE 2003
- Checking pregnancy status in adolescent girls before procedures under general anaesthesia. J F Donaldson et al. *Arch Dis Child*. 2012 Oct;97(10):895-9
- Pre-procedure pregnancy checking in under 16s: Guidance for clinicians. November 2012. RCPCH
- Checking pregnancy before surgery. Rapid Response Report. NPSA/2010/RRR011

## Conclusions

- Our results indicate that the checking of pregnancy status in young girls is extremely variable between institutions. Where a policy does exist there seems to be little consensus on the best method to do this.
- We feel there should be greater awareness of the need to establish pregnancy status in appropriate groups prior to anaesthesia and surgery
- Consideration should be given to the development of further practical advice and training to assist clinicians in gaining this information pre-operatively in a sensitive and timely fashion