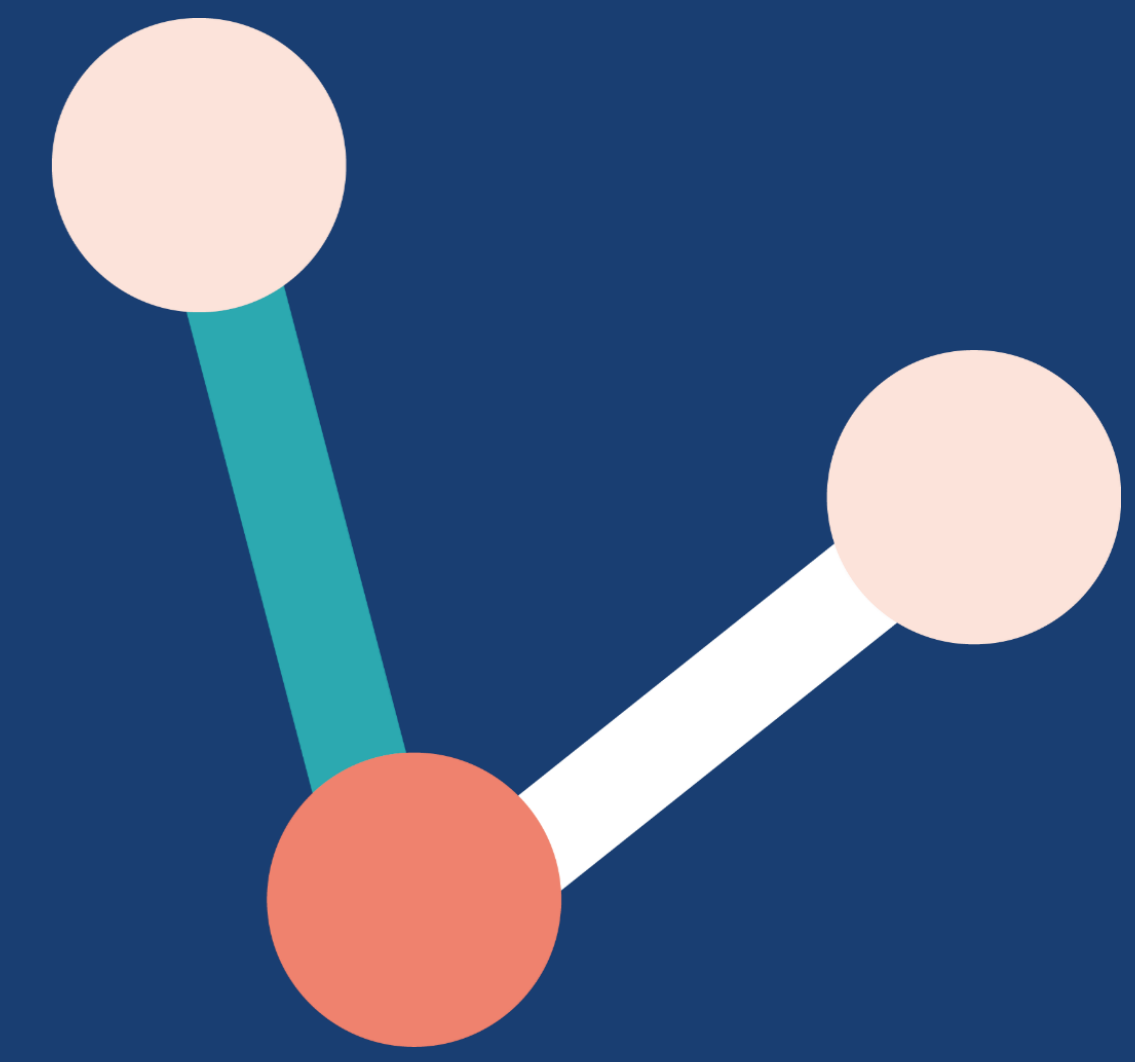


Clinical practice recommendations for weight management during pregnancy

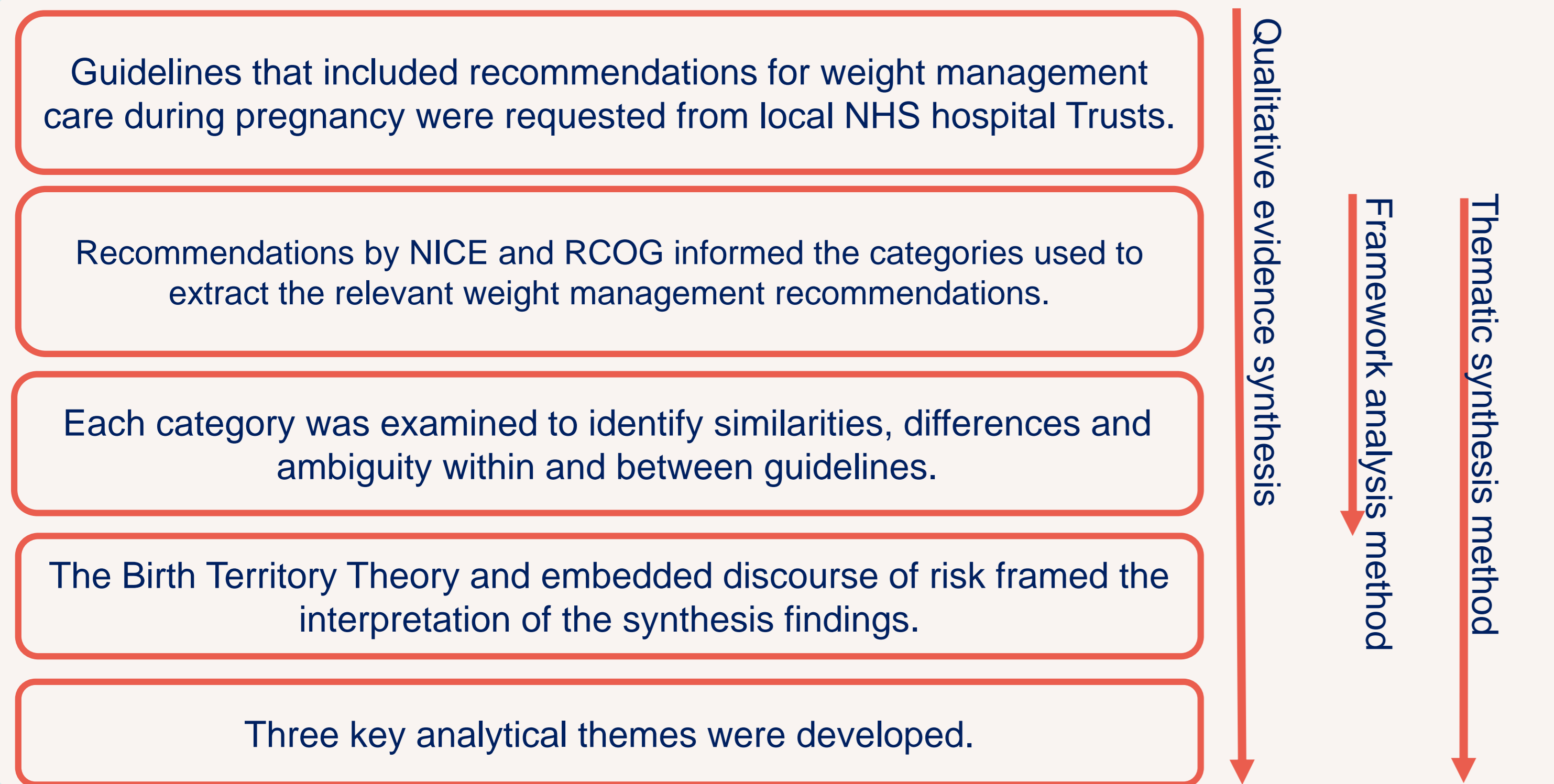
Miss Lucy Goddard, Dr Nerys Astbury, Professor Richard McManus, Dr Katherine Tucker, Dr Jennifer MacLellan
Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford



Background and aim

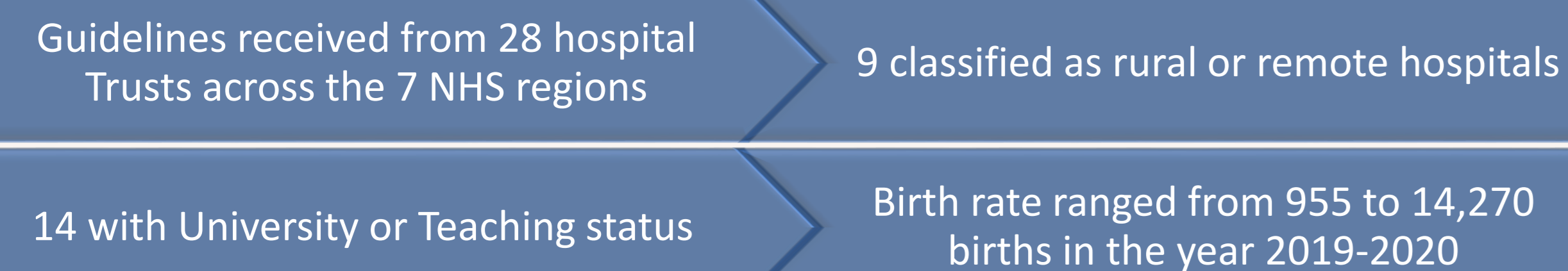
- Being overweight or obese during pregnancy may increase risks and birth complications.
- Pregnant women and birthing people report receiving confusing advice about weight.
- Healthcare professionals use guidelines to help women to manage weight during pregnancy but report a lack of skill and confidence in providing advice.
- We examined the recommendations for weight management care during pregnancy at different local NHS hospital Trusts. We did this to understand variation and similarities to offer possible explanation for the experiences reported by healthcare professionals and by women.

Method



Results

Local guidelines are evidence-based, reflecting national guidance, but there are inconsistencies. The guidelines challenge healthcare professionals' ability to provide weight management advice that is holistic and that promotes a partnership with women and birthing people.



Main findings

- **Local recommendations were largely reflective of national guidance.**
- **The most consistent recommendations were to obtain a weight measurement at booking, inform women of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, and of the risks associated with being obese during pregnancy.**
- **Specific, practical advice about how to achieve a healthy lifestyle was lacking, there was variation in the adoption of routine weighing practices and referral pathways were unclear.**
- **There is a disconnect between the partnership approach to care that is advocated in national maternity policy and the risk dominated discourse in practice recommendations for weight management during pregnancy.**



Implications

- Weight management during pregnancy is complex. It involves biological, psychological, environmental and social factors that are often overlooked in clinical practice guidelines.
- Reconceptualising weight management care to align with the partnership approach that empowers women and birthing people is needed.
- Co-designing clinical guidelines with women who have experienced pregnancy with obesity could help design the tools we use to deliver sensitive, supportive and safe weight management care.

Talking about weight with women and healthcare professionals

- We have had discussions with pregnant, or recently pregnant, women and their healthcare professionals.
- With women we have discussed their experiences of weight management care being sensitive to potential issues around weight and food outside and during pregnancy.
- Healthcare professionals have discussed the nature of conversations about weight during pregnancy and providing lifestyle advice including where some have experienced challenges.
- This work is ongoing and supports the development of the current study in reinforcing the need to reflect on current weight management guidance.

Contact

Lucy Goddard: lucy.goddard@phc.ox.ac.uk
www.arc-oxtv.nihr.ac.uk | @arc_oxtv

This research is funded by the National Institute for Health Research Applied Research Collaboration Oxford and Thames Valley (NIHR ARC Oxtv) Oxford. The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the NIHR, the NHS or the Department of Health and Social Care.