

ORIGINAL PAPER**New mothers' perceptions regarding maternity care services provided in a prefecture of Northern Greece**

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Abstract

Background: The use of health care services during pregnancy assists in decreasing neonatal deaths and improves the quality of life of pregnant women and their newborn children.

Aim: To investigate the perceptions of new mothers in a prefecture of Northern Greece regarding the maternity services provided during pregnancy and childbirth.

Methodology: The sample consists of 133 mothers of newborn babies who were hospitalised, after in-hospital delivery, between April and June 2008 in a prefecture of Northern Greece. The instrument used for the data collection was the Kuopio Instrument for Mothers (KIM).

Results: 97% of participants were married, 42.2% had higher education and 23.3% were full-time employees. 42.9% of the mothers were primiparous and 57.1% were multiparous. 56.8% had vaginal delivery, while 42.9% had caesarean section. 84.2% of the participants stated that they would prefer to have their next delivery in a private maternity clinic, and 3% stated that they would prefer to give birth at home. 15.3% had participated in childbirth preparatory courses. Finally, the participants considered that maternity services, such as pregnancy monitoring, preventative examinations for foetal abnormalities, PAP-test and preventative examinations for breast cancer, should be provided by the state free of charge.

Conclusions: It is necessary to further develop and modernize maternity services in such a way that they will correspond to pregnant women's needs.

Key words: Maternity, pregnancy, labour, delivery, mothers' experiences, Greece.