

Follow-up lacking for women with severe maternal morbidity

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(HealthDay)—Women in New Zealand who experienced severe

maternal morbidity (SMM) often do not receive information, an offer of support, or a follow-up appointment before their hospital discharge, according to a study published in the June issue of the *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*.

Mary Furniss, from the University of Otago in New Zealand, and colleagues retrospectively reviewed the cases of 257 patients who experienced SMM (admission to intensive care during pregnancy or up to 42 days postpartum) to determine what information, support, and follow-up had been offered to them. They looked for documented evidence of four components of care: event debrief or explanation, referral to social support and/or [mental health services](#), detailed discharge letter, and follow-up specialist appointment.

The researchers found that 8.9 percent of the women were offered all four components of care, while 38.5 percent received an event debrief, 39.7 percent received a referral to [social support](#) and/or mental health services, 57.6 percent received a detailed discharge letter, and 51 percent received a follow-up appointment.

"It is incumbent on clinicians and the maternity care system to improve these aspects of care for all women experiencing a potentially life-changing SMM event to minimize the risk and burden of long-term mental illness," write the authors.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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