

# Study questions impact of pregnancy-related programme on stillbirth rates

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Clinicians in many countries are using what's known as the Growth Assessment Protocol (GAP) to monitor fetal growth in pregnant women. Some reports state that the programme may be linked with reduced rates of stillbirth, but rigorous studies have not been conducted. A study published in *Ultrasound in Obstetrics & Gynecology* calls these claims

into question.

By studying more than 11 million singleton pregnancies in UK regions with similar healthcare systems, the study's investigators demonstrated that the stillbirth rate in Scotland declined faster than in England and Wales between 2010 and 2015, despite a significantly lower uptake of the GAP program in Scotland. The findings suggest that the reduction in stillbirth rate in England and Wales cannot be attributed solely to implementation of the GAP program.

"The greater decline in the stillbirth rate in Scotland, despite the low uptake of the programme, suggests that other beneficial public health measures common to both systems are responsible," the authors wrote.

**More information:** S. Iliodromiti et al, UK stillbirth trends in over 11 million births provide no evidence to support effectiveness of Growth Assessment Protocol program, *Ultrasound in Obstetrics & Gynecology* (2020). [DOI: 10.1002/uog.21999](https://doi.org/10.1002/uog.21999)

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