

# A CHECKLIST COLLABORATIVE

*involving women and birth partners in 'harm free care'*

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**Timeline**

**2007**  
NICE Intrapartum Care: Care of healthy women and babies during childbirth.

**2008**  
Kings Fund (2008) Safe births: Everybody's Business. An independent enquiry into the safety of maternity services in England.

**2010**  
National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit (2010) Delivered with Care. A national survey of women's experience of maternity care.

**2012**  
February, The Francis Report, One Year on.

**2012**  
September, The creation of the Maternity Expert Panel to develop a Maternity Safety thermometer.

**2012**  
December, Shine Award.

**The challenge**

Having a baby in the UK is the safest it has ever been. However women and babies are still being exposed to substantial and sometimes multiple avoidable harms, during labour and birth. Human factors, working culture, communication and teamwork are key themes associated with avoidable harm in maternity care. The success of the WHO surgical checklist in reducing harm and improving team work and communication in operating theatres is a model which is transferable to labour and birth.

**Our response**

To create a safety checklist that will be used in collaboration with women and their birth partners. The project aims to improve communication between the midwives/other clinical staff and the birth partners, meaning that in effect the development of the checklist will be personal and potentially empowering for mothers and partners during labour and birth to ensure that basic care is delivered reliably and safely.

2013: March. Generating ideas for the birth partner checklist. Focus groups, the purpose of these were to generate ideas from healthcare professionals for the content of what potential themes could be incorporated into the checklist. We used the NICE Intra partum Birth Guidelines as a reference to help inform some of the suggestions (see Figure 1, right).

Midwife quote: 'After today's session I will go away and have a look at my parent craft input and probably tweak the parent craft presentation to look at it a lot more from a birthing partner's point of view and hopefully get them to be a little bit thought provoking and involve them more in the process of labour.' Another Midwife, said: 'I did not want to expect but it has all been extremely positive and it is nice to hear that there could be some extremely improved changes to how we care.'

2013: May and June. Interviews with new parents Parent (1) highlighted that 'having a checklist in labour would be very helpful, knowing what will happen and what to do if there is a problem would really help'. Parent (3), said 'I always like to know what is going on and if I have a checklist this would help me to have an understanding of when thing need to be done.' Let me introduce some of the parents we interviewed (see Figure 2, right).

Table 1. Cross referenced data

NICE Intrapartum Guidelines	Expert suggestions	Women/Birth Partner suggestions
Assessment of progress	✓	✓
Maternal Temperature	✓	✓
Maternal Pulse	✓	✓
Progress	✓	✓
Colour of Waters	✓	
Frequency of vaginal examinations	✓	
Contractions		✓
Being able to drink	✓	✓
Being able to pass urine	✓	✓
Mobilising in labour	✓	✓
Frequency of listening into baby's heart beat	✓	✓
Options for pain relief	✓	✓
Explanations	✓	✓
Time frames		✓
Bleeding	✓	✓
Feeling unwell	✓	✓
Calling a midwife	✓	✓

2013, August: Creation of the checklist and supporting information for testing (see Figure 3, right). 2013, September: Commenced testing.

Number of organisations invited to participate	Number of organisations who agreed to participate	Number of organisations who actually participated in testing
6	6	3 (3 labour wards and 2 midwifery led units)

**Evaluation of the project**

See graphs, right.

**Qualitative data**

The qualitative part of the evaluation took the form of a thematic analysis of the responses to the open ended questions. A full thematic analysis is included in the report.

'I think it's a really useful way for partners to feel they are doing something and avoid the helpless feeling.'— Midwife

'It is not appropriate to give this during labour at a time of high anxiety.'— Midwife

'Helped to monitor progress of birth and felt more involved having the whole care explained and then able to track it.'—Birth partner

'Got a bit muddled on tracking time when it crossed the hour but the care of both midwives was superb.'—Birth Partner

Figure 1.



Figure 3. Birth Partner Checklist and Birth Partner Checklist Guide

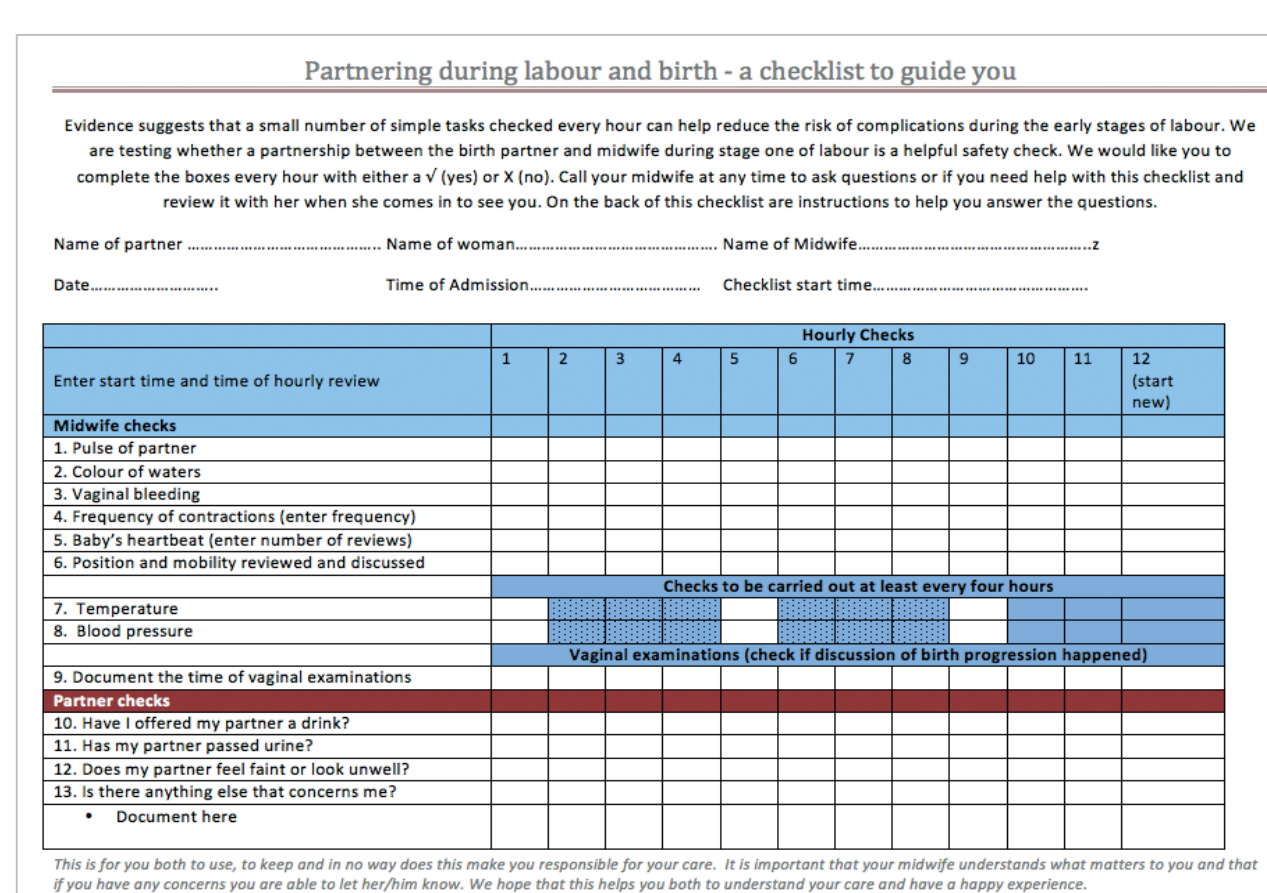
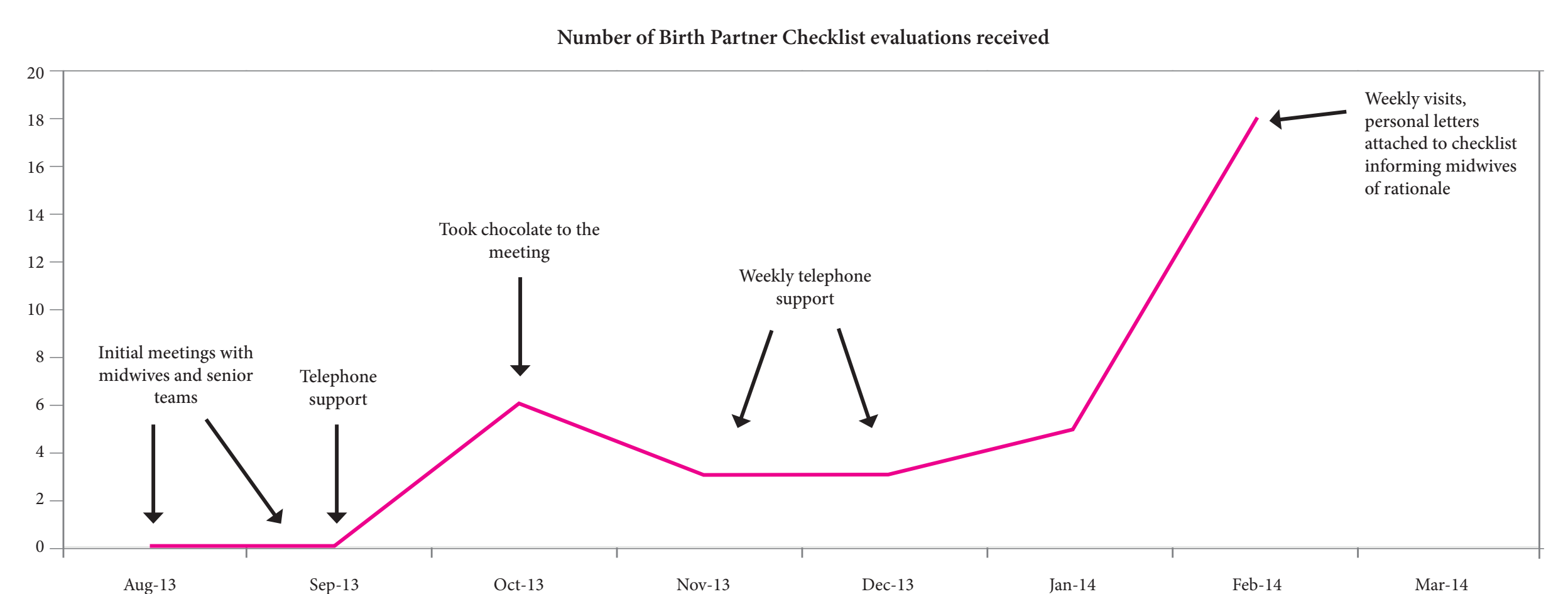
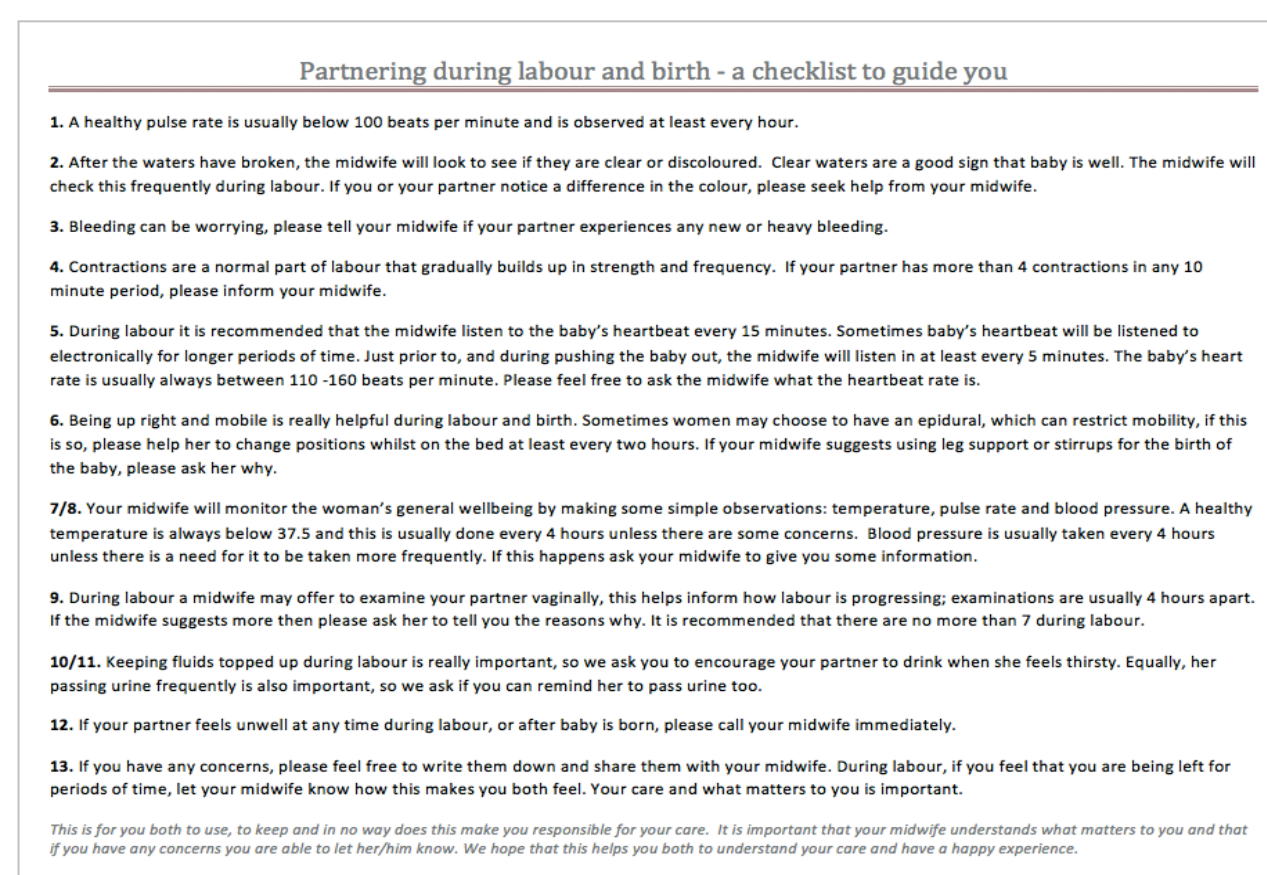
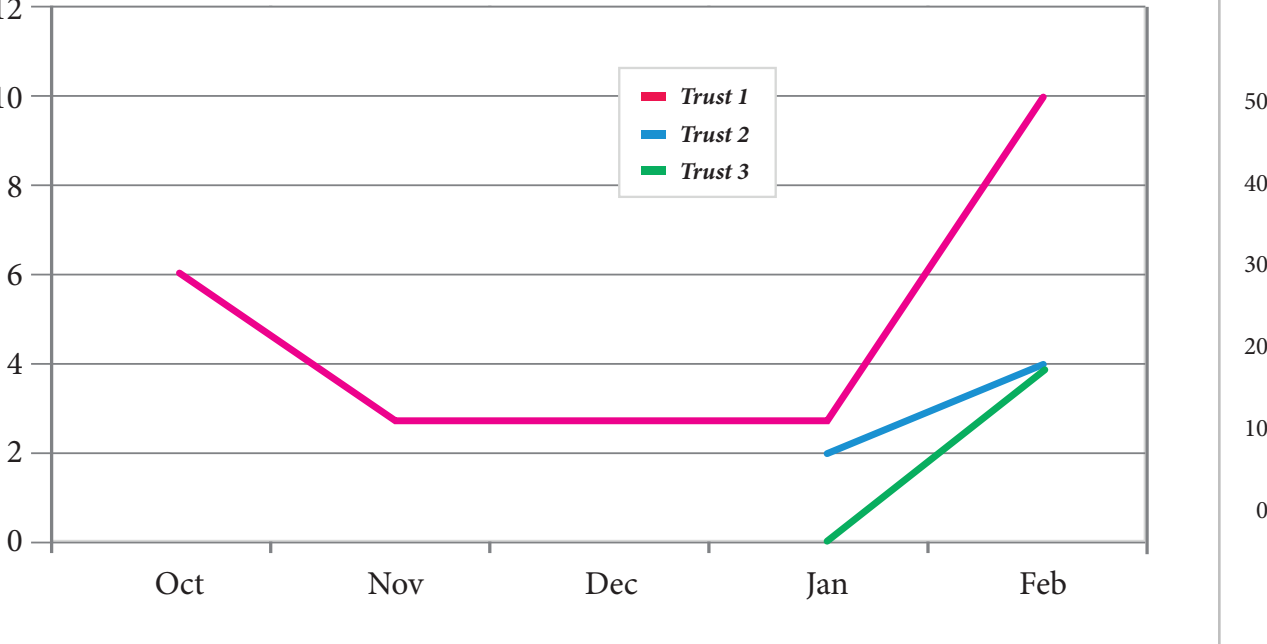


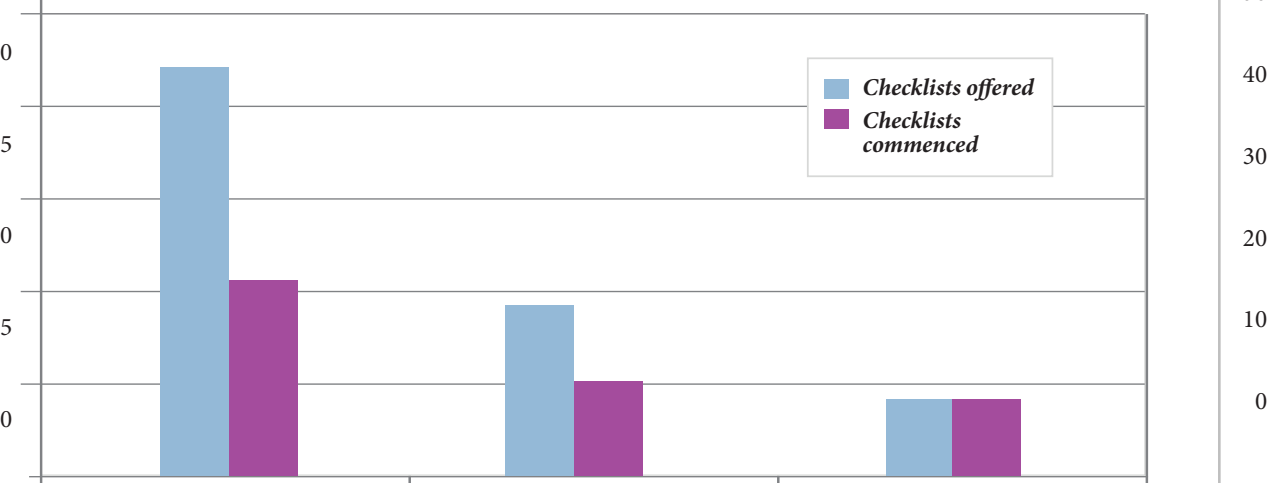
Figure 2.



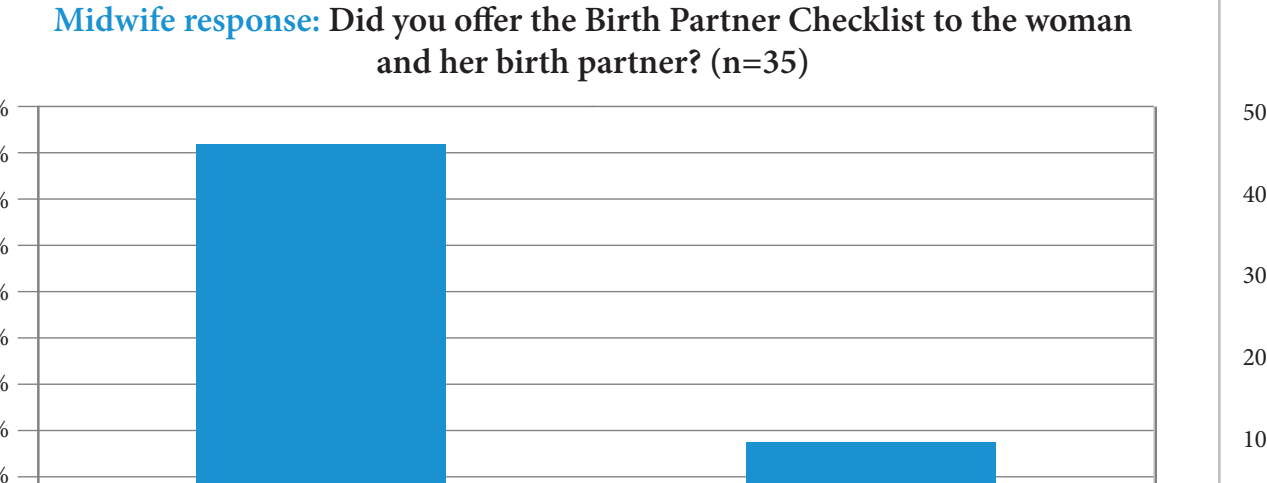
Testing of Checklist by Trust (n=35)



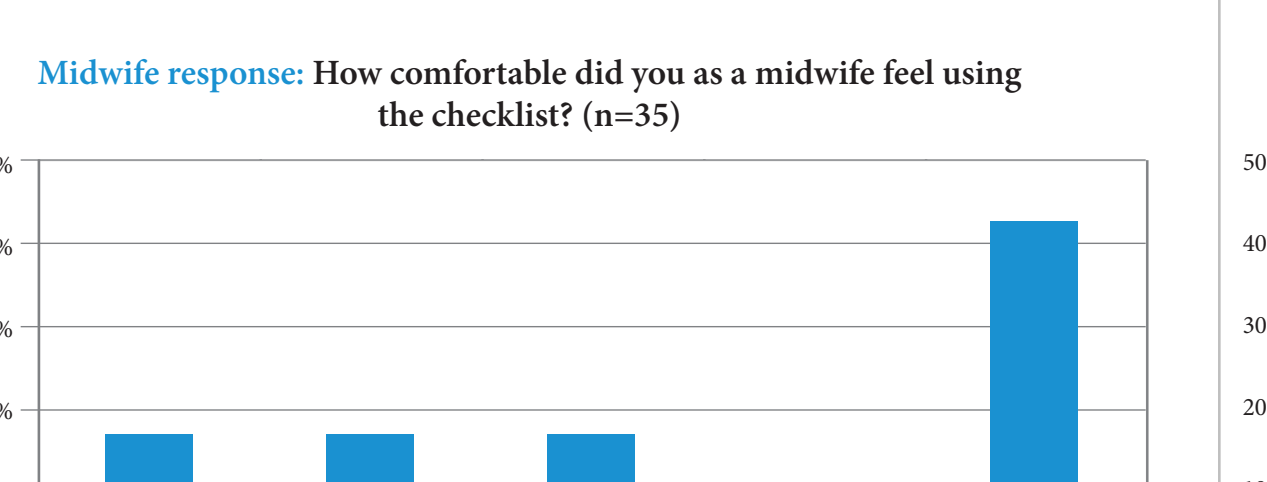
Number of checklists offered and number commenced (n=35)



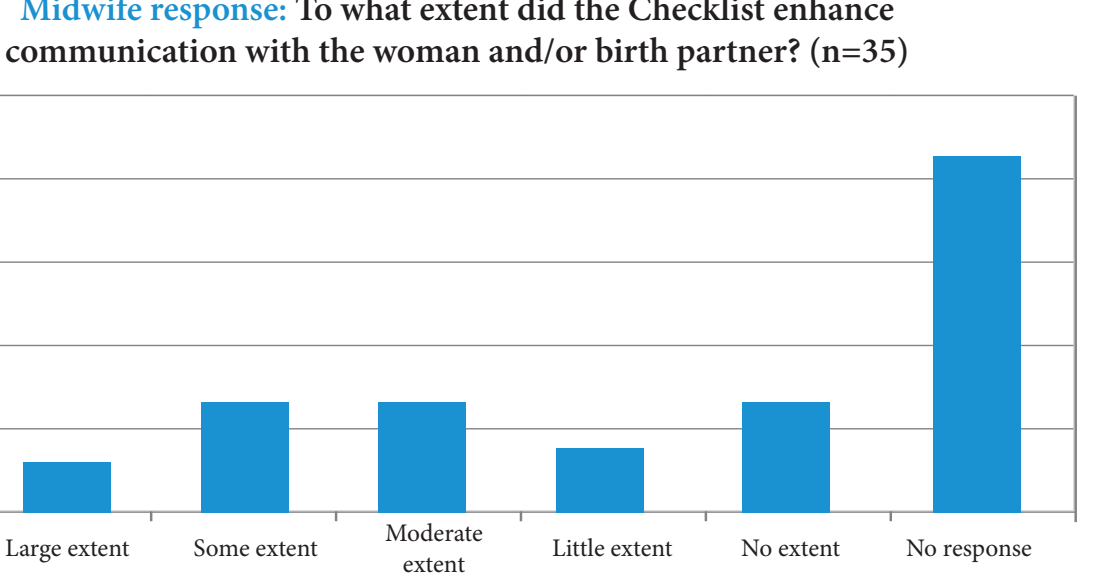
Midwife response: Did you offer the Birth Partner Checklist to the woman and her birth partner? (n=35)



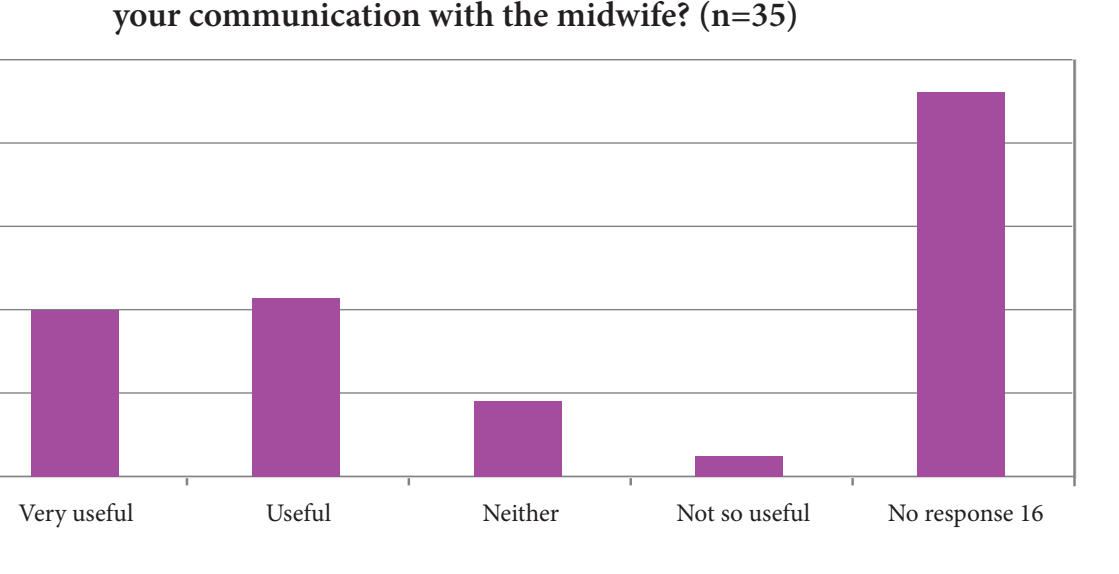
Midwife response: How comfortable did you as a midwife feel using the checklist? (n=35)



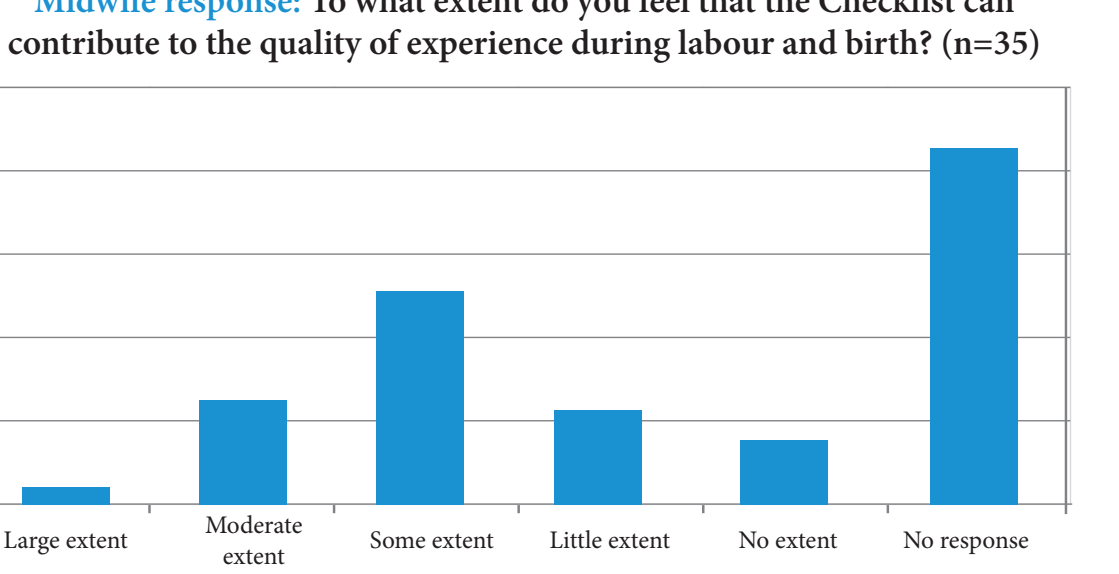
Midwife response: To what extent did the Checklist enhance communication with the woman and/or birth partner? (n=35)



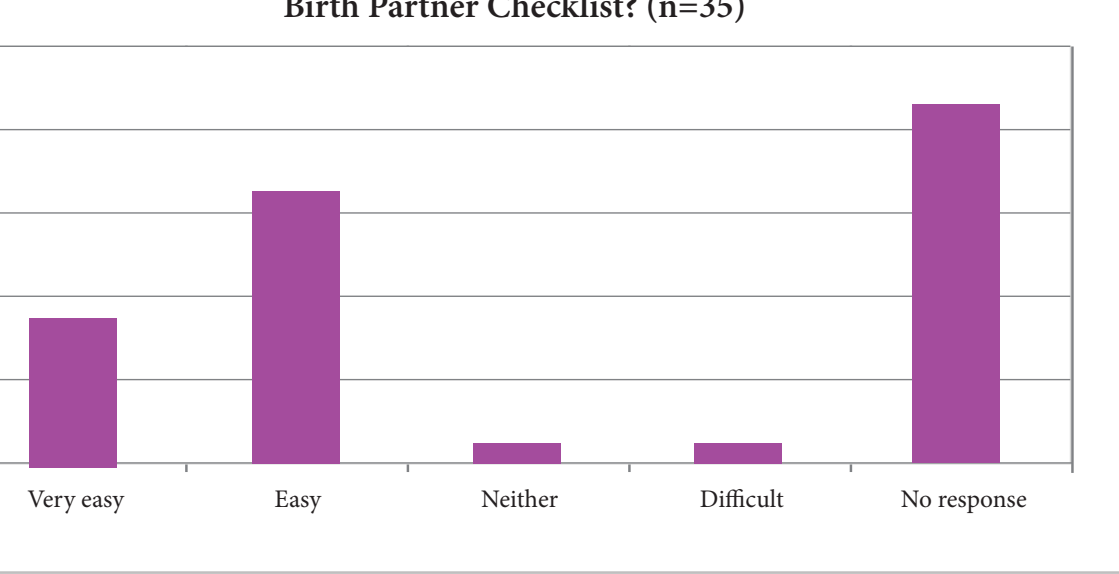
Birth Partner response: How useful was the Checklist improving your communication with the midwife? (n=35)



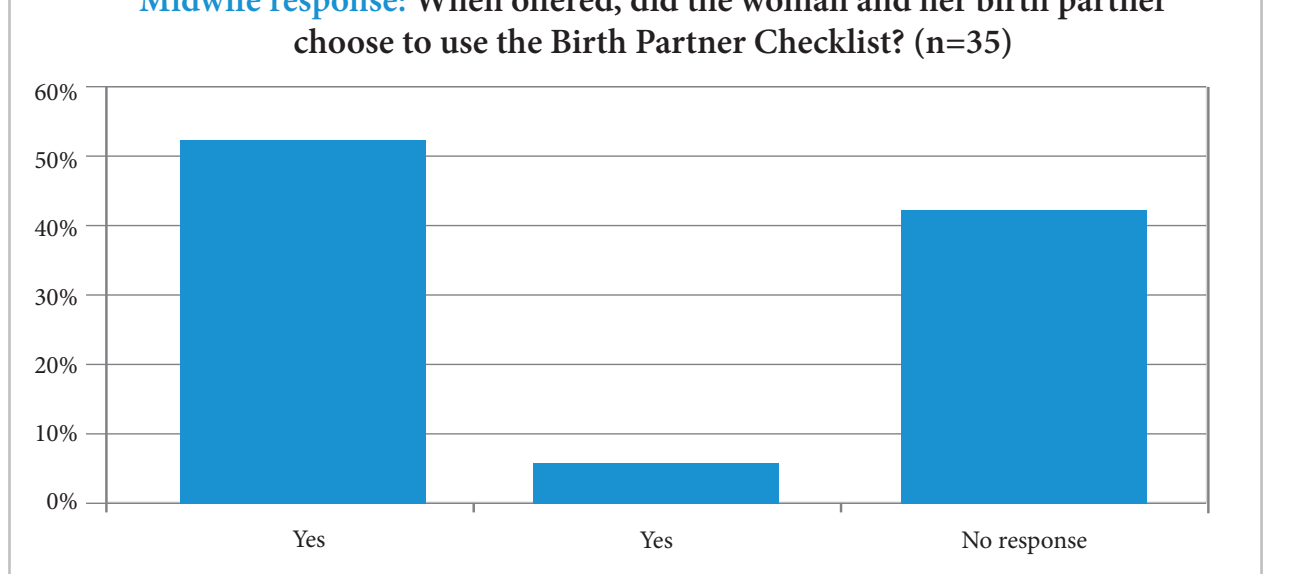
Midwife response: To what extent do you feel that the Checklist can contribute to the quality of experience during labour and birth? (n=35)



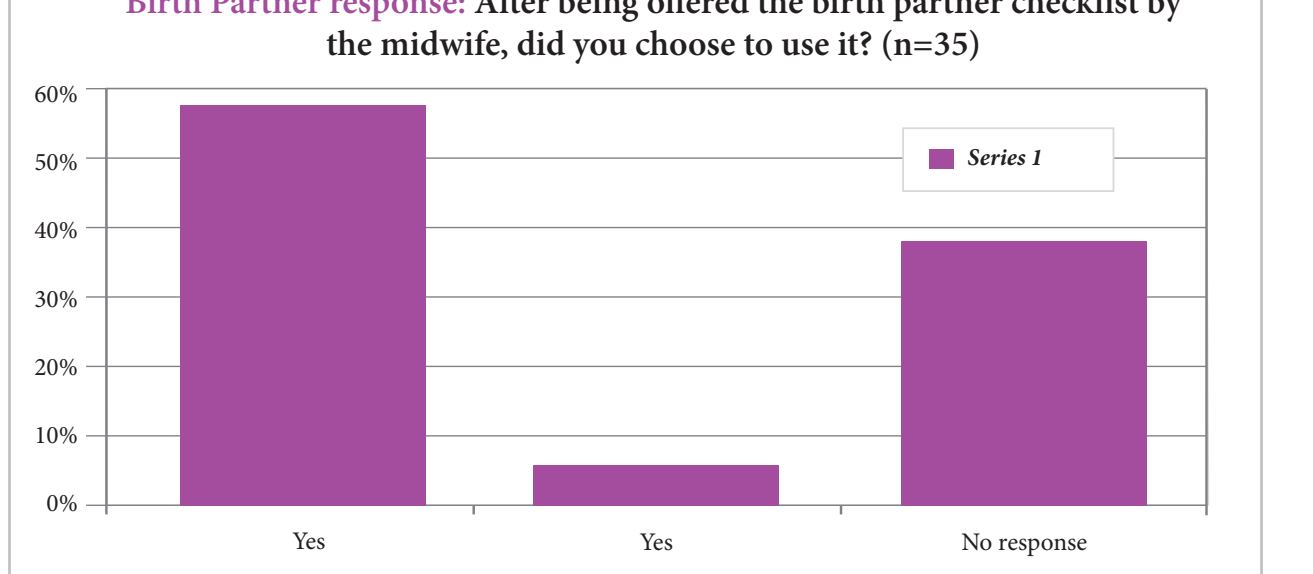
Birth Partner response: Overall, how did you find using the Birth Partner Checklist? (n=35)



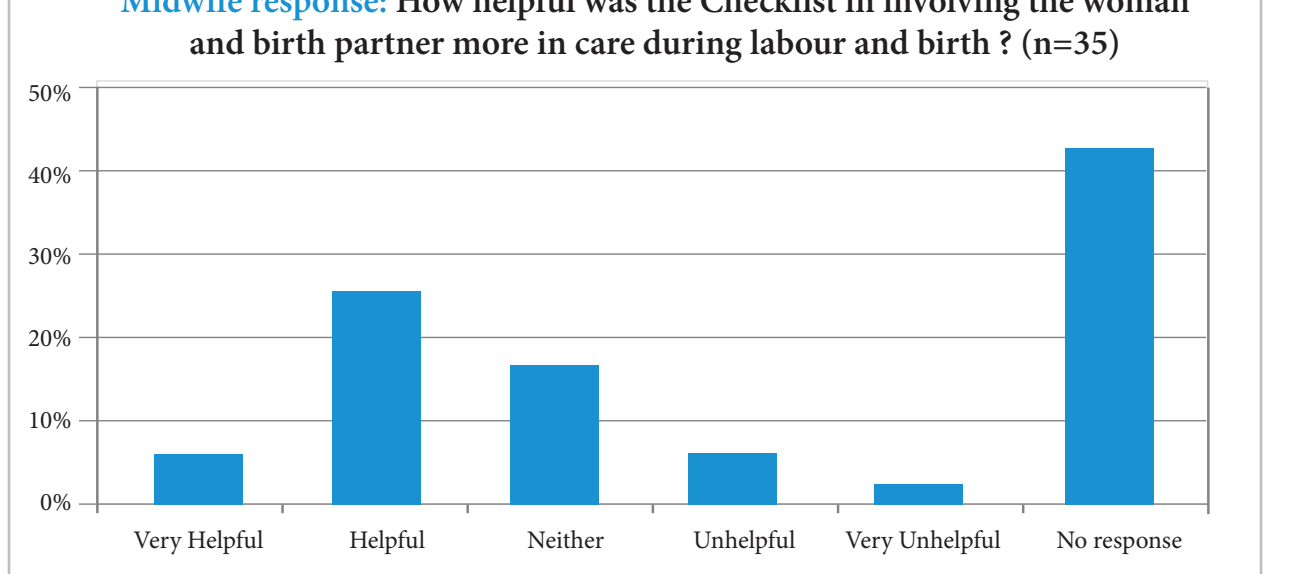
Midwife response: When offered, did the woman and her birth partner choose to use the Birth Partner Checklist? (n=35)



Birth Partner response: After being offered the birth partner checklist by the midwife, did you choose to use it? (n=35)



Midwife response: How helpful was the Checklist in involving the woman and birth partner more in care during labour and birth? (n=35)



Birth Partner response: How helpful was the Checklist in involving you in care during labour and birth? (n=35)

