OFFENSIVE VAGINAL DISCHARGE

BREAST TENDERNESS

OLIGURIA

TACHYPNOEA

HYPOTENSION

TACHYCARDIA

VOMITING

DIARRHOEA

PYREXIA

SOME OF THE SYMPTOMS OF SEPSIS

SKIN RASH

HYPERPYRESIS

DIARRHOEA

HYPOXIA

URINARY SYMPTOMS

OFFENSIVE VAGINAL DISCHARGE

OLIGutra

IMPARED CONSCIOUSNESS AND FAILURE TO RESPOND TO TREATMENT

WOUND INFECTION

TABLE 3

POTENTIAL SYMPTOMS WHICH SHOULD NOT BE DISCREDITED

A MOTHER FEELING WARM AS A RESULT OF FULL BREASTMILK AND THEREFORE HER TEMPERATURE IS DISMISSED

ABDOMINAL PAIN CONTRIBUTOR TO THE UTERUS INVOLUTING AND THEREFORE NO FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS

Tiredness and lethargy – assumed due to the physical demands of birth and feeding a newborn baby

Abdominal discomfort – contributing factor to the uterus involuting and therefore no further investigations

A mother feeling warm as a result of full breastmilk and therefore her temperature is dismissed

Wound infection

The MEOWS chart is a valid tool in identifying physiological changes preceding critical care. But Jo Killingley questions whether it promotes the development of critical analysis in midwives.

Therefore, critical thinking is an essential skill for midwives.

A critical analysis and understanding of holistic care for a woman must be in line with RCOG (2012) recommendations. They state the MEOWS chart must not be an isolated assessment, but a trigger for the appropriate professional to review and to ensure there is continuous observation to prevent further deterioration.

Wider observation and critical thinking can be supported by a variety of tools (Sepsis Six Plus Two, Think Sepsis, SBAR, PROMPT and escalation policies). In isolation, the tools are poor predictors (Fidwars et al, 2014) so, to care for women safely, a prompt response will provide a clear pathway for a multidisciplinary approach.

Evaluative Thinking (ET) – defined by Buckley et al (2015) as critical thinking applied to contexts of evaluation – can be a complex skill and difficult to develop, especially if it is linked to an event, such as caring for a woman with a deteriorating condition.

For educators and mentors, it is imperative to create a critical analysis in midwives.

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