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ON TRACK Network Forum for Women & Whānau

Te Awhi Rito

Better Health for Mothers and Babies

ON TRACK NETWORK
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Kia ora, welcome to the ON TRACK Network Forum for Women & Whānau newsletter. The ON TRACK Network is a New Zealand-wide clinical trials network. We connect with people from across the whole country who are interested in clinical trials research that aims to improve the health and wellbeing of mums and babies. This includes midwives, obstetricians, neonatologists, nurses, researchers, hospital managers, funding agencies, policy-makers, **and most importantly, consumers – the mums and babies we do the research for.** We produce this quarterly newsletter for you, but to make our Forum easily accessible to everyone, most of our activity runs through our Facebook page. Please take a look and join in: www.facebook.com/ontracknetwork

Ways to be involved

Like our **Forum's Facebook page** and become part of the conversation.

Attend our annual **Trial Development Workshops**.

Contribute to our **newsletter** by emailing us.

Follow us on **Twitter @ONTRACKNetwork1**.

Watch out on our Facebook page for invites to join specific projects.

Contact us at any time:
ontracknetwork@auckland.ac.nz

Share Your Story!

Do you have a clinical trial story to share? We would love to hear from you. You can email us: ontracknetwork@auckland.ac.nz
Or, join us on Facebook:
@ontracknetwork

Taking part in a clinical trial potentially gave me more birthing options - Rosalind's story

Induction of labour is managed differently across New Zealand. What an expectant mum is offered in one hospital may be different to what she would be offered if she was attending a different hospital. The **OBLIGE trial** is comparing two common ways of starting the process of inducing labour (outpatient balloon catheter and inpatient prostaglandin gel). Here Rosalind shares her experience of participating in the clinical trial not once but twice at Tauranga hospital.

"My sister was overdue with her first child four months before I had my first child. She opted into the OBLIGE study and was allocated the option to come home with the balloon in, the study was then offered to me when I was overdue with both my pregnancies and my midwives had briefed me about it.

I was very keen to labour as much as possible in the comfort of my own home rather than at hospital so opted into the trial. For my first pregnancy I was allocated the gel so did not get the chance to go home, but the second time I was allocated the balloon and got to go home for the night.

When I turned up to hospital to be induced for the second time, I was a bit upset. I was really keen on labouring at home, instead I was in a room right by the noisy reception and with nowhere comfortable for my partner to rest for however long we were going to be there. There were a couple of tears – very unlike me. So, **I was stoked to be given the option of taking part in the study again and opted in. I was relieved to get the balloon option!** For my first pregnancy I had the gel and laboured away that day and night in hospital without the comfort and atmosphere of home. The insertion was painless and all I could feel was the length of the catheter between my legs – a bit odd. My partner and I went and had lunch together before picking up our son and heading home. I had a great night's sleep! Labour didn't start on its own however and in the morning, we headed back to hospital where the balloon fell out when I went to the bathroom, so although not in labour I must have been a few centimetres dilated. We went to a delivery room where my waters were broken at about 10am. Still no labour so on to the syntocin drip. By 4pm things were really starting to happen, after a very short session of pushing little Henry was with us at 5.01pm, all in a day's work and on a full night's sleep. While I would still choose labouring at home not attached to any monitors or drips every time, if I had to be induced and had the option of going home with the catheter in, I would definitely choose it."

Outpatient Balloon vs. Inpatient Gel
Oblige

Rosalind benefitted by participating in the trial, receiving care that was innovative and that would not have been available to her if she had not taken part. If you would like to learn more about the OBLIGE trial there is a **short video available** which explains it really nicely. You can access it here: https://oblige.auckland.ac.nz/

Making clinical trials easier to understand

Have you ever been asked if you would take part in a clinical trial but been unsure what this means? You or a member of your whānau may be invited to take part in a clinical trial during a pregnancy. Clinical trials may be difficult to understand at the best of times and especially when you or a loved one is receiving medical care.

It may be that English is not your first language making scientific words often included in clinical trials even more challenging to understand. It really can be confusing and feel a little overwhelming for anyone.

Fortunately, there are ways to help make clinical trials easier to understand. Ways to help explain what they are and how they may be relevant to you. Let us explain how and take a look at some examples including some new ideas.

Participant information sheets A participant information sheet is written for every clinical trial. If you have ever received one of these, you may have noticed they can be quite long. This is because each one must contain sections required by New Zealand ethics committees to ensure key details of the trial are covered. For example, risks and possible benefits of being involved, treatments and clinic visits that will be required, who is funding the trial, and who to contact for further details. Every participant information sheet is approved to make sure anyone considering participating in the trial has all the relevant information for them to make a fully informed decision.

Participant information flyer To make things easier to understand when a trial is first introduced to you, you may also be given a brief summary. These flyers are great ways to start finding out about a study. They may also be available in a variety of languages.

C*STEROID

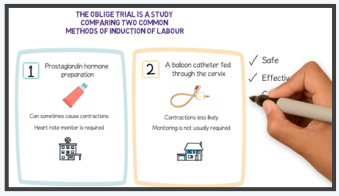
The **C*STEROID Trial** is inviting expectant mums from across New Zealand who are having a planned caesarean section from 35^{+0} to 39^{+6} weeks to take part. This trial has information flyers available in seven languages (English, Chinese - traditional & simplified, Hindi, Samoan, Te Reo Māori, and Tongan). You can access copies on the trial website (scan the QR code left): www.liggins.auckland.ac.nz/csteroid/.

Introductory videos Another great way to help make clinical trials more understandable is to use visual information. Short videos available on the internet use illustrations to take you through the trial step by step.

Outpatient Balloon vs. Inpatient Gel
Oblige

Scan the QR code right for website:

The **OBLIGE Trial** currently recruiting New Zealand expectant mums is looking at different techniques for induction of labour. It has a particularly helpful video available online. The C*STEROID Trial does too. Take a look, see what you think.



The OBLIGE Trial: https://oblige.auckland.ac.nz/

The C*STEROID Trial: www.liggins.auckland.ac.nz/csteroid/

Social media We all spend time on social media and there is plenty of information available here too. The C*STEROID Trial has a Facebook page (www.facebook.com/csteroidtrial), the OBLIGE Trial has a Facebook group and there is our own Forum for Women & Whānau Facebook page (www.facebook.com/ontracknetwork). Facebook provides a great way to access clinical trials information and to learn about trial activities and updates. It also enables you to discuss experiences with other mums and whānau who have participated in trials.

In summary, there are lots of clinical trials taking place across New Zealand that are recruiting expectant mums and their babies to improve health outcomes. To continue the success of these trials more attention is being paid to how information is provided assisting mums and whānau to make informed decisions about their potential participation. We receive great feedback from mums who have participated in the C*STEROID and OBLIGE trials. They often highlight getting trial information to help them gain a better understanding of what they were being asked at the very start has contributed to giving them a positive clinical trials experience.

International Clinical Trials Day

The 20th of May is **International Clinical Trials Day** across the globe. It is an opportunity to celebrate the hard work and dedication of everyone involved in clinical trials research to improve treatment options and health outcomes for everyone accessing healthcare. To celebrate, this year we are hosting a public lecture with the Liggins Institute, University of Auckland.

This lecture will be a celebration of international clinical trials day featuring stories of trial participants and trials successes in Aotearoa New Zealand; our past, our present and our future.

Join us for this inspiring lecture on **18th May at 5:30pm** to learn more about the importance of clinical trials and the difference they make in helping to achieve better health outcomes for mothers and babies nationwide. **Further details and registration can be found on our Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/ontracknetwork**