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Title: Maternal smoking rates and associated adverse birth outcomes in an Irish hospital over the ten year period 2000 – 2009

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Body: Maternal smoking in pregnancy is an important risk factor for low birth weight (LBW) (< 2,500g) and prematurity (<37 weeks gestation) [1]. The purpose of this study was to examine smoking rates and prevalence of associated adverse birth outcomes in The Coombe Women and Infants University Hospital, Dublin over a ten year period 2000 –2009. A cross-sectional observational study was conducted using routinely collected data from the Euroking K2 maternity system from January 2000 – December 2009 (n= 77,533). Smoking prevalence declined significantly from 29.6% to 17.4% over the period. Rates in teenage mothers remained very high (44.3% in 2009). Smoking prevalence was almost twice as high in mothers of LBW compared to normal birthweight babies, one and a half times higher in mothers of preterm babies compared to full term and more than twice as high in mothers of Small for gestational age (SGA) babies compared to non SGA. A statistically significant decline was seen in the prevalence of SGA babies in the period. No statistically significant change was seen in the prevalence of LBW or preterm babies. Prevalence rates in pregnancy are high in Ireland compared with other developed countries. Increased focussed efforts are needed to reduce smoking rates. References 1. Surgeon General: The Health Consequences of Smoking A Report of the Surgeon General. Washington: US Department of Health and Human Services; 2004.