

## **Obstetric hospitalizations among Italian women, regular and irregular immigrants in North-Eastern Italy.**

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**OBJECTIVE:** Italy has become an important host country for economic immigrants. The study is aimed at providing a descriptive analysis of obstetric hospitalizations among Italian and immigrant women in North-Eastern Italy.

**DESIGN:** Population-based registry descriptive study.

**SETTING:** Veneto Region, Italy.

**METHODS:** All obstetric hospitalizations in 2006-2007 were extracted from the regional archive of hospital discharge records (n = 144,698). Discharges for vaginal delivery, cesarean section, threatened abortion and other antepartum diagnoses, miscarriages, and induced abortions were identified among residents with Italian or foreign citizenship, and irregular immigrants. Hospitalization rates for the above diagnostic categories were computed for Italian and foreign Veneto residents.

**MAIN OUTCOME MEASURES:** Delivery rates, proportion of cesarean sections, hospitalization rates for antepartum hospitalizations, miscarriage, induced abortion, and hospitalization rate ratios of immigrants versus Italian women.

**RESULTS:** Among Italian women, regular and irregular immigrants, the percentages of teenage deliveries were 0.7, 2.9, and 8.4%; the ratios of miscarriages to deliveries were 0.16, 0.15 and 0.35; the ratios of induced abortions to deliveries were 0.13, 0.24 and 0.81, respectively. Regular immigrants accounted for 10% of population aged 15-49 and for 20% of deliveries. The age-related increase in miscarriage risk was steeper among regular immigrants. The induced abortions to deliveries ratio peaked among Italians aged <25 and regular immigrants aged ≥35 years. 40% of Italians and 30% of regular immigrants sought care outside nearest hospitals.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Wide differences in reproductive behavior, health status, and patterns in the access to health services exist between Italians, regular and irregular immigrants even though they represent three connected populations.

**FULL TEXT PER GLI UTENTI REGISTRATI ALLA RIVISTA**

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