

## PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Paediatrics Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

### ARTICLE DETAILS

<b>TITLE (PROVISIONAL)</b>	Parenting a new-born baby during the Covid-19 pandemic in Ireland: a qualitative survey
<b>AUTHORS</b>	Sledge, Hailey Lawler, Marguerite Hourihane, Jonathan Franklin, Ruth Boland, Fiona Dunne, Sumi McCallion, Naomi O'Mahony, Liam Byrne, Susan

### VERSION 1 – REVIEW

<b>REVIEWER</b>	Reviewer name: Dr. Peter Flom Institution and Country: Peter Flom Consulting, 515 West End Ave New York, 10024, United States Competing interests: None
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	16-Nov-2021

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>I confine my remarks to statistical aspects of this paper. These were very simple, but appropriately so, and I have only a couple of minor points to clarify before I can recommend publication.</p> <p>p. 4 line 46 Insert "significant" between "no" and "difference".</p> <p>p. 6 line 57 Data cannot be parametric or non-parametric. That is a quality of models. Do you mean non-normal? Qualitative? Something else?</p> <p>Word cloud: What does the color of the word represent (if anything)?</p> <p>Peter Flom</p>
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<b>REVIEWER</b>	Reviewer name: Dr. Lynn Snow Institution and Country: Leicester Partnership Trust, community paediatrics Competing interests: None
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	30-Nov-2021

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>This is an easy to read paper which gives us the voice of parents of young children. Overall I would like to see more development of the "so what".</p> <p>L25 – face to face schooling- many children attended virtual school although this may have not been the case in Ireland. P6 L3-13 would be better logically placed higher up in the introduction as until then I wasn't sure what the study was about. P5 l10-57 – good summary of the impact of covid P7+ 8 results – I will not comment on statistical analysis as this is not my forte but the results are easy to read and understand. Did</p>
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	<p>having multiple children or other particular age children relate at all to the negative words?</p> <p>P10 discussion – would be worth thinking about what could have been done differently – or learning for a future pandemic(!) to prevent isolation</p> <p>Could comment that further studies could compare a control group or to follow up any long term impacts of the isolation</p> <p>I would like to know what changed in the service provision alongside family isolation which may have contributed.</p> <p>P10 L42 conclusion- could be expanded a bit. What about reparative support after the event – what is the challenge from the findings? For policy? For practice? Does it teach us about the good parts of our services from pre pandemic which were suspended in pandemic? Does it tell us what helps parents and therefore what we should be promoting in non pandemic times?</p>
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<b>REVIEWER</b>	<p>Reviewer name: Dr. Denise McDonald</p> <p>Institution and Country: Tallaght University Hospital, Child Development and Neurodisability</p> <p>Competing interests: None</p>
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	29-Nov-2021

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>This is a really nice paper - simple in its methodology with compelling findings. You acknowledge the absence of a control group, and I mention it as it would provide an interesting comparison - for example, I wonder if the words tiring/exhausting or worrying would feature significantly at any time for parents of an infant. I am also interested in the lack of reference to which parent provided the words - was this offered to both parents to do together, or to the parent who attended clinic to provide there and then? If the latter, was it predominantly mothers who provided responses? I think this is an interesting point, and may inform a comparison between mothers and fathers of the impact of the loss of generational support on them. I have suggested a minor revision specifically to provide clarity on this part of the methodology - single parent responses (assuming attendance of both parents at follow up was limited due to COVID), or both parents' responses (if given time to respond away from clinic setting); if both parents had the opportunity to respond, could you say what was the contribution of mothers vs fathers, either quantitatively or qualitatively.</p>
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## VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

We thank the editorial team for giving us the opportunity to address comments raised upon review of this paper. We hope that our amendments are satisfactory.

### Formatting Changes

#### Figures below 300 dpi

Please ensure that your figures are a minimum of 300 dpi and a maximum of 600 dpi. For online reviewing we do not require print quality images and the larger file sizes can slow down the running of the review process.

-The image has been formatted to 300dpi.

#### Editor in Chief Comments to Author:

Title amend to "Parenting a new-born baby during the Covid-19 pandemic in Ireland: a qualitative survey". Our titles do not convey results.

-Title has been amended.

Add a sentence in the Methods about ethical approval. I note that it is mentioned elsewhere.

-Ethical sentence has been added to Methods section.

Add a supplementary table listing all the words and the number of parents who used them.

-Supplementary table has been added with all the words and number of parents. Only words used four times or more have been included to retain anonymity.

Discussion page 10 line 13 delete the sentence "Our study is the first to look at the perspective of parenting a baby born during the pandemic ...". Journal style is to avoid describing a study as the first (see Instructions to authors)

-Wording has been changed to comply with the journal style.

What this study adds: Delete the first statement as it is Methods. I suggest adding "A quarter of infants had not met another infant in a social setting during the first year of their life"

-Sentence regarding what study adds has been amended per suggestion.

Reviewer: 1

Dr. Peter Flom, Peter Flom Consulting

Comments to the Author:

I confine my remarks to statistical aspects of this paper. These were very simple, but appropriately so, and I have only a couple of minor points to clarify before I can recommend publication.

p. 4 line 46 Insert "significant" between "no" and "difference".

-“No” has been added to make the sentence “...no significant difference in reported negative or positive word number...”

p. 6 line 57 Data cannot be parametric or non-parametric. That is a quality of models. Do you mean non-normal? Qualitative? Something else?

-The data described using median was fixed to “non-normal”

Word cloud: What does the color of the word represent (if anything)?

-Only the size, not the color, of the words represents the frequency of usage. This has been clarified.

Reviewer: 2

Dr. Denise McDonald, Tallaght University Hospital

Comments to the Author:

This is a really nice paper - simple in its methodology with compelling findings. You acknowledge the absence of a control group, and I mention it as it would provide an interesting comparison - for example, I wonder if the words tiring/exhausting or worrying would feature significantly at any time for parents of an infant. I am also interested in the lack of reference to which parent provided the words - was this offered to both parents to do together, or to the parent who attended clinic to provide there and then? If the latter, was it predominantly mothers who provided responses? I think this is an interesting point and may inform a comparison between mothers and fathers of the impact of the loss of generational support on them. I have suggested a minor revision specifically to provide clarity on this part of the methodology - single parent responses (assuming pare

-Questionnaires were posted to the family home where they were completed by the parents.

Unfortunately we did not ask which parent completed the form and if the words used were representative of mother/father/both. We have mentioned this within the limitations.

Reviewer: 3

Dr. Lynn Snow, Leicester Partnership Trust

Comments to the Author:

This is an easy to read paper which gives us the voice of parents of young children.

Overall, I would like to see more development of the "so what".

L25 – face to face schooling- many children attended virtual school although this may have not been the case in Ireland.

-Amended per suggestion

P6 L3-13 would be better logically placed higher up in the introduction as until then I wasn't sure what the study was about.

-Amended per suggestion

P5 l10-57 – good summary of the impact of covid

P7+ 8 results – I will not comment on statistical analysis as this is not my forte but the results are easy to read and understand. Did having multiple children or other particular age children relate at all to the negative words?

-There was no significant difference between being first time parents or having other children on negative word frequency P8, L13-23.

P10 discussion – would be worth thinking about what could have been done differently – or learning for a future pandemic(!) to prevent isolation

Could comment that further studies could compare a control group or to follow up any long-term impacts of the isolation

→A comment was added regarding potential future studies

I would like to know what changed in the service provision alongside family isolation which may have contributed.

-Most services became virtual at that time including most primary care services and public health nurse follow up.

P10 L42 conclusion- could be expanded a bit. What about reparative support after the event – what is the challenge from the findings? For policy? For practice? Does it teach us about the good parts of our services from pre pandemic which were suspended in pandemic? Does it tell us what helps parents and therefore what we should be promoting in non pandemic times?

-This is a very important point, and while not the primary focus of this study, very important to mention. This could potentially be another aspect in a future study, so a comment about this has been added in the discussion section.