Pre-eclampsia Day Assessment Unit Guideline

for midwives

(Recommendations 9 and 10)
# PRE-ECLAMPSIA DAY ASSESSMENT UNIT GUIDELINE: SUMMARY CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1 diagnosis</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Action by DAU midwife: Step 2</th>
<th>Action by DAU midwife: Step 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New hypertension without proteinuria; no clinical suspicion of fetal compromise; no symptoms</td>
<td>Diastolic BP $\geq 110$mmHg or Systolic BP $\geq 170$mmHg</td>
<td>ADMIT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diastolic BP 100-109mmHg or Systolic BP 160-169 mmHg</td>
<td>Arrange medical review to consider admission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diastolic BP 90-99mmHg</td>
<td>Blood tests relating to pre-eclampsia. Serum urate not required *</td>
<td>Abnormal blood and/or Doppler results*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If onset $\leq 36$ completed weeks:</td>
<td>Normal blood and/or Doppler results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Umbilical artery Doppler</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New hypertension new proteinuria, no clinical suspicion of fetal compromise; no symptoms</td>
<td>Diastolic BP $\geq 90$mmHg and new proteinuria $\geq 2+$</td>
<td>ADMIT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diastolic BP 90 - 99mmHg and 1+ proteinuria (use higher of community or DAU dipstick results)</td>
<td>Urinary PCR** or 24 hour urine collection as out-patient (if no maternal symptoms or fetal concern)</td>
<td>PCR $\geq 30$ or significant proteinuria (with hypertension)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Blood tests relating to pre-eclampsia*</td>
<td>ADMIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If onset $\leq 36$ completed weeks:</td>
<td>Abnormal blood and/or Doppler results*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Umbilical artery Doppler</td>
<td>PCR $&lt; 30$ or no significant proteinuria and normal blood and Doppler results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New proteinuria without hypertension; no clinical suspicion of fetal compromise; no symptoms</td>
<td>1+ on dipstick</td>
<td>Urinary PCR or 24 hour urine collection</td>
<td>PCR $\geq 30$ or significant proteinuria*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrange medical review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PCR $&lt; 30$ or no significant proteinuria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2+ or more on dipstick</td>
<td>Blood tests relating to pre-eclampsia*</td>
<td>Abnormal blood tests and/or Doppler or significant proteinuria*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrange 24 hour urine collection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If onset $\leq 36$ completed weeks:</td>
<td>Normal blood/ Doppler results; no significant proteinuria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Umbilical artery Doppler</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*Blood tests and thresholds for medical review: platelet count < 150x10^9/l; AST or ALT (mean for gestational age + 2SD); serum creatinine > 90 micromol/l; serum urate (mean for gestational age + 2SD); significant proteinuria ≥ 300mg/24 hours

**PCR: urinary protein creatinine ratio
CONTENT

PRE-ECLAMPSIA DAY ASSESSMENT UNIT GUIDELINE: SUMMARY CHART

INTRODUCTION
How we developed the guideline
Remit
Facilities
How women are involved in effective antenatal care: checklist for the DAU
Associated guidelines and information
Definitions used in the PRECOG documentation
Acronyms used in the PRECOG documentation
Grading of recommendations and evidence

THE GUIDELINE
RECOMMENDATION 9: step 1 assessments
Blood pressure recordings
Dipstick test for proteinuria
Clinical assessment of maternal symptoms relating to pre-eclampsia
Clinical assessment of fetal size and wellbeing relating to pre-eclampsia

RECOMMENDATION 10: actions by DAU midwife following Step 1 assessments
Footnotes
Blood tests relating to pre-eclampsia
Laboratory tests for proteinuria
Umbilical artery Doppler
Medical review
Allocate to a named consultant
Monitor at least weekly from the community or Day Assessment Unit
Contact community lead to schedule next community pre-eclampsia assessment within one week

BOX 11: CHECKLIST FOR EFFECTIVE ANTENATAL CARE IN THE DAU ASSESSMENT

PRECOG DEVELOPMENT GROUP MEMBERS

INDEPENDENT REVIEWERS

NATIONAL AUDIT AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

FLOWCHARTS (RECOMMENDATION 10)

EVIDENCE USED TO DEVELOP THE GUIDELINE

EVIDENCE TABLES

(Guideline: precog DAU version for publication 2009)
INTRODUCTION

How we developed the guideline
This is a follow-on guideline to the Pre-eclampsia Community Guideline published in 2005 under the auspices of Action on Pre-eclampsia (APEC) using the same guideline development process and group (see p3 of the Pre-eclampsia Community Guideline (www.apec.org.uk). The recommendations have been developed by a multi-disciplinary working group (see page y for names) and graded according to the levels of evidence on which they were based. The evidence is summarised in the Evidence Documents and Evidence Tables; grading of the recommendations and evidence is given below. A record of the five PRECOG development group meetings at which this section of the PRECOG guideline were discussed are available from the APEC offices; the fourth meeting focused solely on these DAU recommendations. Under the process of independent review an abstract of the guideline and evidence was accepted as an oral presentation at the International Society for the Study of Hypertension in Pregnancy (ISSHP) meeting 2006 and a poster presentation at the Royal College of Midwives meeting, 2006. The guideline has been independently reviewed (see page 13 for names) submitted for endorsement by the RCM, RCOG, NCT and submitted for peer-review publication. A final meeting was held on November 2008.

Remit
These recommendations are for a midwifery assessment in a Day Assessment Unit or similar hospital-based facility, for pregnant women of 20 weeks gestation or more, with suspected signs and symptoms of the onset of pre-eclampsia. Women may have been referred from the community (see Pre-eclampsia Community Guideline Box 5 for criteria), from ante-natal clinics or by self-referral.

The guideline does not include recommendations on any subsequent midwifery-led or medical monitoring, as this will be determined on an individual basis and is dependent on local circumstances, policies and practice. However, good practice points for any subsequent midwifery-led management are included in the footnotes to the recommendation.

It does not give guidance on the assessment or management of a suspected small for gestational age or growth restricted fetus and excludes these women from the guideline (see RCOG guideline “Investigation and management of the small for gestational age fetus” for evidence-based recommendations (www.rcog.org.uk).

The management of post-partum hypertension is the subject of a follow on guideline (see www.apec.org.uk).

Facilities
The recommendations apply to a facility that can provide rapid assessment, investigation, referral and in-patient treatment.

The PRECOG group recommend the following minimum standards for the consultant-led hospital-based maternity Day Assessment units.

- A dedicated area
- Midwifery staff specifically trained to work in and manage the Day Assessment Unit
- Easy access, (either within the unit or close-by), to umbilical artery Doppler facilities
- A system where laboratory test results are available within 24 hours of the women attending, and the same day where practically possible, with a mechanism to review the tests and talk to the women concerned, also within 24 hours.
- Access by the Day Unit staff to SPR or above
- A named consultant to be part of the multidisciplinary team involved in the guidelines, protocols and organisational running of the Day Unit
• The management and facilities within the Day Unit should be integrated with a larger package of care for the management of hypertension in pregnancy (incorporating the PRECOG community based guideline and the RCOG pre-eclampsia management guideline).

How women are involved in effective antenatal care; checklist for the DAU
The PRECOG community guideline (p6) explains how parents have a full and equal right to determine and be involved in their antenatal care. Women can only do this if they are given the opportunity to have an understanding of the relevance, to themselves and their babies, of any changes to their antenatal care plan. The initial DAU assessment is a key and timely opportunity to do this. Women should be offered information so they may understand the content and purpose of the DAU assessment and their role in effective antenatal care.

Before a pregnant woman leaves her initial DAU assessment she should have:

- information to understand the signs and symptoms of fulminating pre-eclampsia, the rate at which it may develop and the potential seriousness of her situation.
- A mechanism to report and act on any new symptoms that she may notice herself. Encourage her to self monitor.
- hand held notes or a DAU summary from her assessment
- a follow up appointment
- allocation to a named consultant
- an agreed mechanism by which she will be informed of her test results and discuss any change to her antenatal care plan within 24 hours.
- An understanding that she can be proactive in following up any results and arranging a follow up appointment if the contact arrangements do not work

Associated guidelines and information
These recommendations are part of a framework for antenatal care in which a pregnant woman with pre-eclampsia receives specialist care at the appropriate time for best outcome for her and her baby.

They can be used in conjunction with:

- Pre-eclampsia Community Guideline recommendations 1-8 (www.apec.org.uk for guideline, evidence document and tables, link to BMJ publications and implementation support) for the community screening and detection of possible pre-eclampsia
- RCOG guideline no 10A “The management of severe pre-eclampsia/eclampsia” (www.rcog.org.uk)

Other relevant guidelines include
- RCOG guideline “Investigation and management of the small for gestational age fetus” provides evidence-based recommendations (www.rcog.org.uk)
- NICE Antenatal Care guideline (routine care for the healthy pregnant woman)(www.nice.org.uk)

Definitions used in the PRECOG documentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition used in the guideline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FETAL COMPROMISE (Clinical suspicion)</td>
<td>Reduced fetal movements, small for gestational age infant (clinically assessed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HYPERTENSION</td>
<td>A diastolic blood pressure of 90 mmHg or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW HYPERTENSION</td>
<td>Hypertension at or after 20 weeks gestation in a woman with a diastolic blood pressure of less than 90mmHg before 20 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRE-EXISTING HYPERTENSION</td>
<td>A diastolic blood pressure pre-pregnancy or at booking (before 20 weeks) of 90mmHg or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW PROTEINURIA</td>
<td>The presence of proteinuria as shown by 1+ (0.3g/l) or more on proteinuria dipstick testing, a protein/creatinine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guideline: precog DAU version for publication 2009
SIGNIFICANT PROTEINURIA

Urine protein excretion ≥ 300mg per 24 hr

PRE-ECLAMPSIA

New hypertension and significant proteinuria at or after 20 weeks of pregnancy, confirmed if it resolves after delivery

SUPERIMPOSED PRE-ECLAMPSIA

The development of features of pre-eclampsia in the context of pre-existing hypertension, pre-existing proteinuria or both

Note that we do not use the terms pregnancy induced hypertension, gestational hypertension or severe pre-eclampsia because the definition of these terms vary. The terms are only used in the guideline when referring to a study definition, which is given in parentheses and/or in the Evidence Tables.

Acronyms used in the PRECOG guideline documentation

- ALT: Alanine aminotransferase
- AST: Aspartate aminotransferase
- APEC: Action on Pre-eclampsia
- BMI: Body Mass Index
- BP: Blood pressure
- CTG: Cardiotocograph(y)
- DAU: maternity Day Assessment Unit
- DIC: Disseminated intravascular coagulopathy (other than HELLP)
- FGR: Fetal growth restriction
- HELLP syndrome: haemolysis, elevated liver enzymes and low platelet count
- LGA: Large for gestational age
- MAP: Mean arterial pressure
- NICE: National Institute for Clinical Excellence
- NICU: Neonatal intensive care unit
- OR: Odds Ratio
- PCR: Urinary protein creatinine ratio
- PRECOG: Pre-eclampsia Community Guideline
- RR: Relative risk
- SGA: Small for gestational age
- UTI: Urinary tract infection

Grading of recommendations

Grade A*:
Directly based on category I evidence

Grade B:
Directly based on category II evidence or extrapolated recommendation from category I evidence

Grade C:
Directly based on category III evidence or extrapolated recommendation from category I or II evidence

Grade D:
Directly based on category IV evidence or extrapolated recommendation from category I, II or III evidence

Good practice point (GPP): the view of the guideline development group.

(Note the grading of recommendations follows that adopted in the NICE guideline and differs from recent RCOG recommendations: see “Evidence used to develop the PRECOG guideline” at www.apec.org.uk for further details).

*The highest grade

Grading of evidence
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ia*</td>
<td>Evidence obtained from meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ib</td>
<td>Evidence obtained from at least one randomised controlled trial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIa</td>
<td>Evidence obtained from at least one well-designed controlled study without randomisation. Includes cohort studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIb</td>
<td>Evidence obtained from at least one other type of well-designed quasi-experimental study. Includes case control studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Evidence obtained from well-designed non-experimental descriptive studies, such as comparative studies, correlation studies and case studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Evidence obtained from expert committee reports or opinions and/or clinical experience of respected authorities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The highest level of evidence
THE GUIDELINE

PRECOG RECOMMENDATION 9. Carry out Step 1 assessments as detailed in Box 9 [Grade B/C]

BOX 9: Step 1 midwifery assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEP 1 ASSESSMENTS</th>
<th>NOTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blood pressure recordings[1]</td>
<td>Mean blood pressure (diastolic and systolic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dipstick test for proteinuria[2]</td>
<td>Dipstick proteinuria (none, trace, 1+, 2+, &gt;2+ protein)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical assessment of maternal symptoms relating to pre-eclampsia[3]</td>
<td>Headache and/or visual disturbance Epigastric pain, nausea and/or vomiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical assessment of fetal size and wellbeing relating to pre-eclampsia[4]</td>
<td>Reduced fetal movements or small for gestational age fetus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of current obstetric history</td>
<td>Note most recent community dipstick test result and date; gestational age; booking blood pressure; booking dipstick protein results; PRECOG booking risk factors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[1] **Blood pressure recordings in Day Assessment Unit**

- Take three blood pressure recordings at least 10 minutes apart. If the first two readings are both less than 140mmHg systolic and 90mmHg diastolic the third reading can be omitted. From these multiple readings, calculate the average systolic and diastolic reading.

- Follow PRECOG recommendation 6 for reducing errors in blood pressure measurement. These are appropriate for the community and hospital setting. Thigh cuffs must be used for women with an arm circumference of 41cm or more (only 27% of Day Assessment Units had thigh cuffs available ref: APEC survey, 2006, p.13).

- Use equipment that is accurate in measuring hypertensive individuals; automated devices that are accurate in pregnancy, can under-read by clinically significant amounts in women with pre-eclampsia. The following types of device are recommended:
  - The most accurate is the standard mercury sphygmomanometry
  - Auscultation can also be used with alternative pressure gauges. Aneroid devices are acceptable but should be calibrated at least every 12 months (note this has been revised from the PRECOG recommendation 6 which states 6 months).
  - An automated device that has been assessed by protocol for accuracy and validated for use in pregnancy, including pre-eclampsia.

[2] **Dipstick test for proteinuria**

- Use protein dipsticks to estimate proteinuria
- Factors which affect the dipstick result include reader error and urine concentration. These can affect both the community and the DAU reading. See PRECOG recommendation 7 for ways to minimise errors. Note both the DAU and most recent community reading.

[3] **Clinical assessment of maternal symptoms relating to pre-eclampsia**

- See PRECOG recommendation 4 and www.apec.org.uk for description of symptoms

[4] **Clinical assessment of fetal size and wellbeing relating to pre-eclampsia**

- Assess the fetus for size and wellbeing according to local protocols. This generally includes measurement of symphyseal-fundal height and clinical enquiry about fetal movements.
**PRECOG RECOMMENDATION 10**: act according to Box 10 using results from step 1 assessments

Women with maternal symptoms relating to pre-eclampsia and/or any clinical suspicion of fetal compromise are not included in Recommendation 10. For evidence-based guidance, see the RCOG guidelines “The investigation and management of the small for Gestational Age Fetus.

**BOX 10**: Action by *DAU* midwife using diagnosis from Step 1 assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description from Step 1</th>
<th>Definition from Step 1 assessment</th>
<th>Action by <em>DAU</em> midwife: Step 2</th>
<th>Action by <em>DAU</em> midwife: Step 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New hypertension without proteinuria; no clinical suspicion of fetal compromise, no maternal symptoms</td>
<td>Diastolic BP ≥ 110mmHg or Systolic BP ≥ 170 mmHg</td>
<td>ADMIT</td>
<td>Abnormal blood test and/or Doppler results Arranged medical review to consider admission*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New hypertension without proteinuria; no clinical suspicion of fetal compromise, no maternal symptoms</td>
<td>Diastolic BP 100 - 109mmHg or Systolic BP 160-169 mmHg</td>
<td>Blood tests relating to pre-eclampsia. Serum urate not required ¹</td>
<td>Normal blood tests and Doppler results Allocate to named consultant. Monitor at least weekly from <em>DAU</em> ⁶ Do not routinely repeat blood tests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New hypertension without proteinuria; no clinical suspicion of fetal compromise, no maternal symptoms</td>
<td>Diastolic BP 90-99mmHg</td>
<td>If onset ≤ 36 completed weeks: Umbilical artery Doppler ³</td>
<td>Abnormal blood test and/or Doppler results Arrange medical review ⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New hypertension without proteinuria; no clinical suspicion of fetal compromise, no maternal symptoms</td>
<td>Diastolic BP 90 - 99mmHg and 1+ proteinuria (use higher of community or <em>DAU</em> dipstick results)</td>
<td>Urinary PCR ² or 24 hour urine collection as out-patient (if no maternal symptoms or clinical suspicion of fetal compromise) Blood tests relating to pre-eclampsia ¹</td>
<td>PCR ≥ 30 or significant proteinuria (with hypertension) ADMIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New hypertension without proteinuria; no clinical suspicion of fetal compromise, no maternal symptoms</td>
<td>Diastolic BP 100-109mmHg with new proteinuria of 1+</td>
<td>Arrange medical review ⁴ to consider admission</td>
<td>Abnormal blood and/or Doppler results ¹³ Arrange medical review ²⁴ PCR &lt; 30 or no significant proteinuria and normal blood and Doppler results Allocate to named consultant⁸. Monitor at least weekly from <em>DAU</em> ⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diastolic BP ≥ 110mmHg with new proteinuria of 1+</td>
<td></td>
<td>ADMIT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guideline: precog DAU version for publication 2009
New proteinuria without hypertension; no clinical suspicion of fetal compromise, no maternal symptoms

| 1+ on dipstick | Urinary PCR ≥ 3 or 24 hour urine collection | PCR ≥30 or significant proteinuria
Arrange medical review
PCR <30 or no significant proteinuria
Follow local protocols to exclude infection. Contact community lead to arrange next pre-eclampsia assessment in the community within one week

| 2+ or more on dipstick | Blood tests relating to pre-eclampsia
Arrange 24 hour urine collection | Abnormal blood tests
and/or Doppler or significant proteinuria
Arrange medical review

| 36 completed weeks or less at onset | Umbilical artery Doppler | Normal blood and/or Doppler and no significant proteinuria
Allocate to named consultant
Monitor at least weekly from DAU

No hypertension, no proteinuria, no significant symptoms, no clinical suspicion of fetal compromise

| Diastolic < 90mmHg, no proteinuria on dipstick in DAU | Contact community lead to arrange next pre-eclampsia assessment in the community within one week |

Footnotes (1-7) to Box 10

1 Blood tests relating to pre-eclampsia

- The blood tests relating to pre-eclampsia are platelet count, transaminases (AST or ALT as per local availability), serum urate and serum creatinine [III/IV]. Request a full blood count. Serum urate is not required if there is no proteinuria
- Use pregnancy-specific normal ranges for platelets, transaminases and creatinine, and gestational age dependent ranges for serum urate, as shown below [Grade C]

Liver function tests: gestation specific 95% reference ranges (2.5th centile – 97.5th centile) in normal population (Girling 1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non pregnancy</th>
<th>1st trimester</th>
<th>2nd trimester</th>
<th>3rd trimester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AST (iu/L)</td>
<td>7-40</td>
<td>10-28</td>
<td>11-29</td>
<td>11-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT (iu/L)</td>
<td>0-40</td>
<td>6-32</td>
<td>6-32</td>
<td>6-32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Platelet count < 150 x 10^9/L
- Creatinine ≥ 90 micromol/L

Serum uric acid by gestational age (micromol/l): mean + 2 standard deviations (SD)(Lind et al)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>week</th>
<th>Non-preg</th>
<th>4w</th>
<th>8w</th>
<th>12w</th>
<th>16w</th>
<th>24w</th>
<th>32w</th>
<th>36w</th>
<th>38w</th>
<th>Post-partum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mean+2SD</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Laboratory test results should be available within no more than 24 hours of the woman attending, and the same day where practically possible, with a mechanism to review the tests and talk to the woman concerned, also within that 24 hours [GPP]

- If any of the blood tests results are outside the normal range, arrange a medical review, then contact the woman concerned to discuss the results and revised antenatal care plan.
- If the blood tests are within the normal range, contact the pregnant woman and arrange/confirm appointment in DAU to repeat Step 1 assessments in one week (see footnote 6).

2 Laboratory tests for proteinuria
- Test to exclude or confirm significant proteinuria in women with 1+ dipstick proteinuria. If trace result in Day Assessment Unit and 1+ in community, use community result.
  - A laboratory urinary protein creatinine (PCR) ratio from a random sample of less than 30mg/mmol excludes significant proteinuria. A PCR > 30mg/mmol does not reliably confirm or quantify proteinuria. [Grade C]
  - A 24 hour urine collection of ≥ 300mg/24 hr both confirms and quantifies proteinuria [Grade C]
- For women with new hypertension between 90-99mmHg and 1+ proteinuria in this guideline the decision to admit has been deferred until the results of the PCR are known. This is appropriate only when there are no maternal symptoms or clinical suspicion of fetal compromise. Arrange an umbilical artery Doppler (if 36 weeks or less) and blood tests (any gestation) while waiting for the result of the PCR.

3 Umbilical artery Doppler
- The PRECOG group recommend umbilical artery Dopplers as the best test for predicting an at-risk fetus relating to pre-eclampsia in a women with pre-term new hypertension and no clinical suspicion of fetal compromise [Grade B]. This assessment can be carried out in the unit by a midwife who is an accredited scanner. Use it to scan women of gestational age of 36 completed weeks or less as per Box 10 [GPP]
- Follow local management protocols in response to Doppler results. Abnormal umbilical artery Doppler thresholds include:
  - Umbilical artery PI > 2SD
  - Absent or reverse end diastolic flow
- The assessment of women with clinical suspicion of a SGA fetus is outwith this guideline.

4 Medical Review
- Arrange a medical review within the Day Unit by an experienced medical person of at least SPR or consultant level
- Arrange a medical review if a woman has an abnormal blood test result, an abnormal Doppler or in women with new hypertension (100-109mmHg diastolic or 160-169mmHg systolic) without proteinuria. The outcome is a revised individual antenatal care plan.

5 Allocate to a named consultant
- All women who reach the threshold for a step-up midwifery assessment are at higher risk of pre-eclampsia and poor outcomes associated with it. With the exception of women who after a Step 1 assessment have no hypertension, no proteinuria, no relevant symptoms and a healthy baby, make sure that all women who
have had midwifery step up assessment have been allocated to a named consultant before they leave the DAU. The named consultant will, either directly or indirectly, determine subsequent management.

6 Monitor at least weekly from Day Assessment Unit
- Arrange another Step 1 assessment no longer than 7 days (minimum standard) after the initial assessment and sooner if appropriate. Frequency of assessment should be determined on an individual basis, depending on blood test/Doppler results, gestational age, history etc. and following an antenatal care plan determined by the named consultant in consultation with the pregnant woman.
- For women with new hypertension of 90-99mmHg without proteinuria, with no relevant symptoms, a normal umbilical artery Doppler, and blood tests within the normal range at the first assessment, repeat the Step 1 assessment in one week. If there is no change in signs or symptoms, do not routinely repeat the blood tests. A medical review may be appropriate (according to local protocol) if the hypertension is persistent. Progression, as shown by changing blood parameters, emerging symptomatology, or change in signs, will require medical review and/or admission.
- The criteria for admission and medical review in monitoring assessments are the same as Recommendation 10.

7 Contact community lead to schedule next community pre-eclampsia assessment within one week
- Arrange for a woman to be assessed in the community within a maximum of 7 days of leaving the Day Assessment Unit if she has no hypertension, no new or significant proteinuria, no symptoms and there is no suspicion of fetal compromise. In the subsequent plan of care there should be an interval of no more than 2 weeks between assessments; these women are no longer within the NICE guideline recommendations for routine antenatal care, and all are at higher risk of developing pre-eclampsia.
- Some women will have had transient signs/symptoms that will recur. Offer a Day Unit assessment using PRECOG recommendations 4 and 5 to detect and act on any signs and symptoms. (See the precog Evidence Document for incidence of transient hypertension.)

BOX 11: CHECKLIST FOR EFFECTIVE ANTENATAL CARE IN THE DAU ASSESSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before a pregnant woman leaves her initial DAU assessment she should have:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- information to understand the signs and symptoms of fulminating pre-eclampsia, the rate at which it may develop and the potential seriousness of her situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A mechanism to report and act on any new symptoms that she may notice herself. Encourage her to self monitor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- hand held notes or a DAU summary from her assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- a follow up appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- allocation to a named consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- an agreed mechanism by which she will be informed of her test results and discuss any change to her antenatal care plan within 24 hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An understanding that she can be proactive in following up any results and arranging a follow up appointment if the contact arrangements do not work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**NATIONAL AUDIT AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**
A survey of all Day Assessment Units in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland (Action on Pre-eclampsia, 2006) has provided information on the percentage of DAUs currently conforming to the PRECOG guideline, as shown below and national resource implications for implementation of the guideline. See Evidence Document for more details of the survey.

**National Day Assessment Unit survey results summary (Action on Pre-eclampsia, 2006)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRECOG criterion</th>
<th>Percentage conforming to PRECOG (n=111)</th>
<th>+/- resource and clinical implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A dedicated area for assessment</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>94% shared staff share with antenatal ward, 6% with labour ward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff trained for DAU (permanent)</td>
<td>76% have permanent staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to portable Doppler facilities</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>53%. Purchase and training needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic thresholds for Doppler</td>
<td>24% new hypertension, 14% new proteinuria</td>
<td>The majority only use umbilical artery Doppler when there is a suspicion of a SGA (outwith this guideline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab tests available in 24 hours</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>No resource implications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validated automated devices for measuring blood pressure</td>
<td>70% have automated devices, but only 50% of these are validated</td>
<td>50% of automated devices have not been validated for use in pregnancy (see CEMACH). Equipment maintenance costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aneroid devices for measuring blood pressure calibrated within 12 months</td>
<td>50% have aneroid devices, 44% have been calibrated</td>
<td>56% of aneroid devices have not been calibrated in 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thigh cuffs available (18x36cm) for measuring blood pressure in women with an arm circumference of 41cm or more</td>
<td>27% have thigh cuffs available</td>
<td>73% do not have thigh cuffs available for larger women (giving false positive readings). Implications include incorrect or delayed diagnosis (see CEMACH 2003-5) and inappropriate treatment for hypertension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proteinuria confirmed by 24 hour collection</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>All DAUs confirm significant proteinuria by 24 hour collection or exclude by PCR ratio.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant proteinuria excluded by PCR ratio</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platelet count threshold 150x10^9/l or mean-2SD</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>33% use a lower threshold for action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serum urate threshold mean for gestational age + 2SD</td>
<td>15% (40% use some gestational dependent threshold)</td>
<td>60% do not adjust for gestational age. Serum urate is not necessary in women with new hypertension 90-99mmHg only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AST/ALT pregnancy ranges (mean + 2SD)</td>
<td>37-41%</td>
<td>Incorrect identification of abnormal results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creatinine (mean + 2SD or &gt; 90)</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Which blood tests are requested relating to pre-eclampsia | 98% platelet count  
90% serum urate  
95% AST or ALT  
81% creatinine  
50% clotting screen | 50% conduct a clotting screen (unnecessary unless platelet count < 100x10⁹/l).  
Serum urate is not necessary in women with new hypertension 90-99mmHg only. |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| When blood tests relating to pre-eclampsia are requested. | New hypertension (80%)  
New proteinuria (69%)  
5% consider gestational age  
14% SGA fetus  
41% symptoms only | In certain circumstances (see guideline) blood tests do not need to be repeated. |

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