

Delivering small babies at term: 5-year progress towards national targets

Emily Butler, Hanna Ellson, Oliver Hugh, Jason Gardosi
Perinatal Institute, UK

Poster
EP.0150

Objective

An essential component of fetal growth surveillance is the timely delivery of pregnancies at risk due to being small for gestational age (SGA).

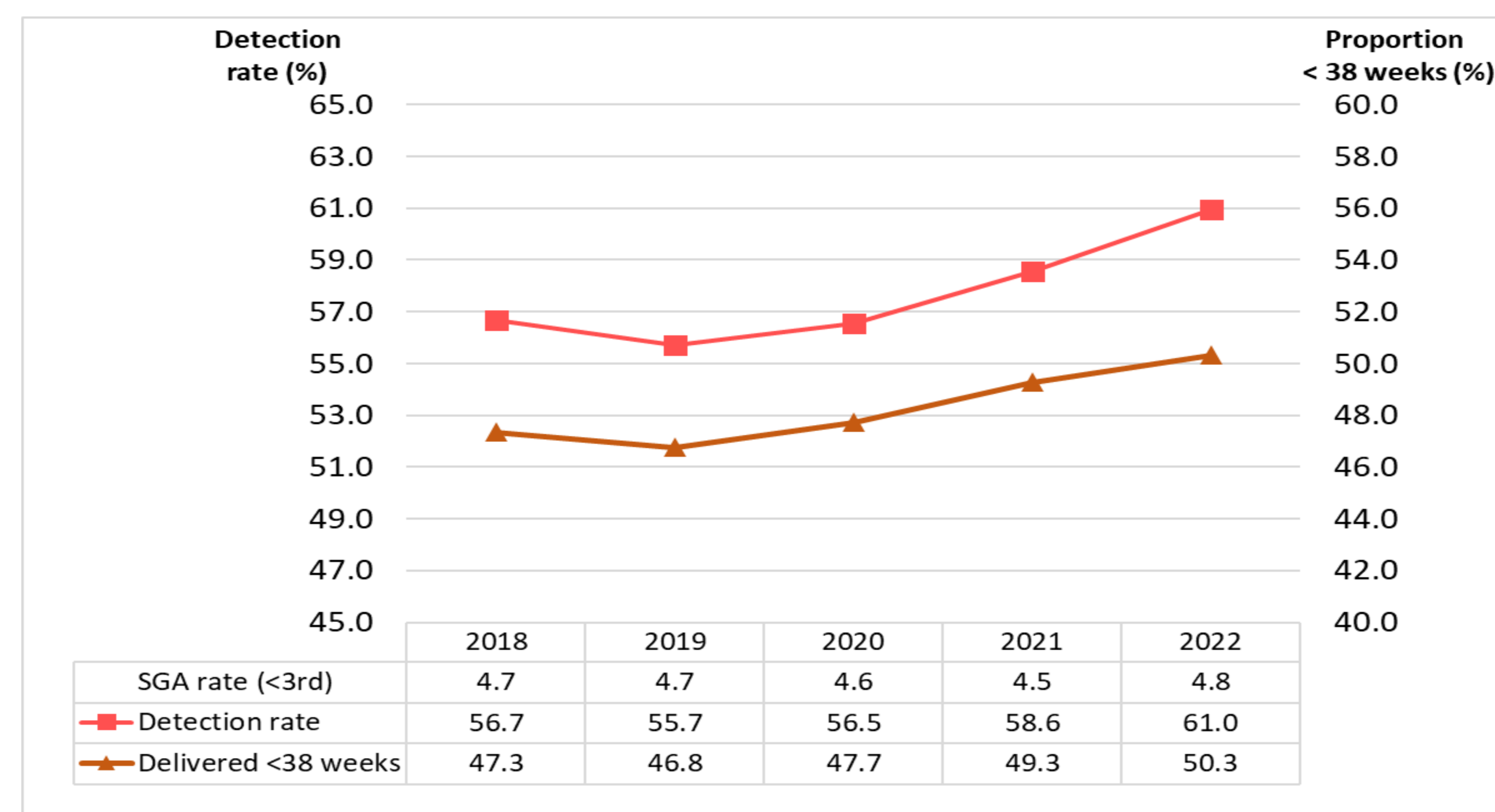
At term, the protocols of the UK GAP program and the NHS England 'Saving Babies Lives' care bundle is for SGA <3 centile babies to be delivered before 38+0 weeks, and for babies <10 centile to be delivered before 40+0 weeks.

We set out to assess the performance of this quality indicator in English hospitals over the last 5 years.

Methods

- Performance is audited by the Power BI functionality of the GROW software in hospitals in the GAP program; clinicians can access their own unit's data 'live'.
- Longitudinal, routinely collected and complete audit data was available from 65 NHS hospitals in England over the 5-year study period (January 2018 to December 2022).
- For each year, we calculated rates of SGA and the proportion of <3 centile babies that were delivered before 38+0 weeks and <10th centile before 40+0 weeks, respectively.
- Significance in trends was tested using χ^2 trend test.

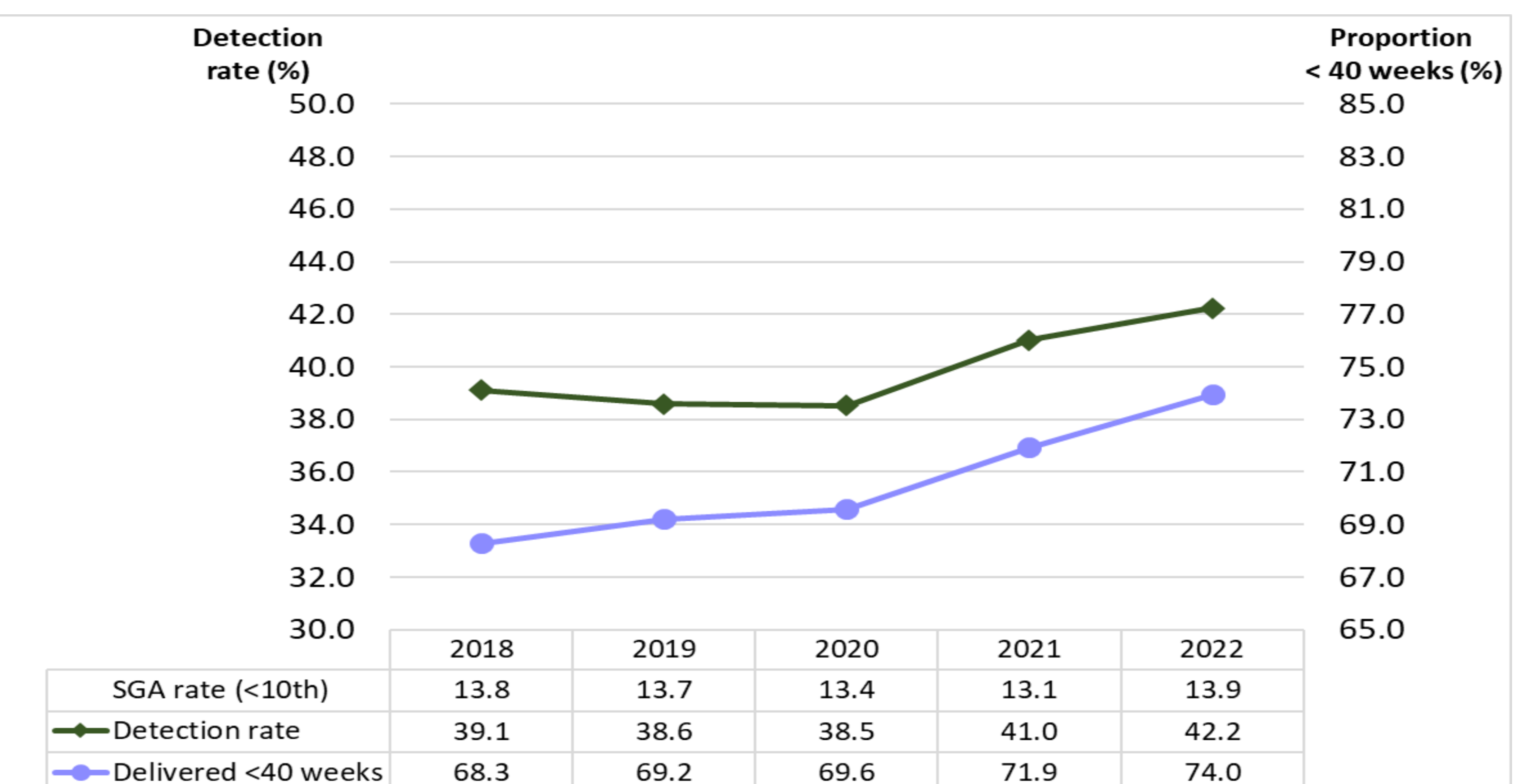
Fig 1 SGA <3 detection and <38+0 weeks delivery rates



Results

- There were in total 1,232,729 deliveries over the 5-year period,
- Average SGA rates were 4.7% (<3rd) and 13.6% (<10th centile)
- SGA detection rates increased from 56.7 to 61.0% for <3 (Fig 1; p<0.01) and 39.1 to 42.2% for <10 centiles (Fig 2; p<0.01).
- The proportion (%) of SGA<3 centile babies delivered by 38+0 weeks increased from 47.3 to 50.3% (Fig 1; p=0.01).
- The proportion of babies <10 centile delivered by 40+0 weeks increased from 68.3 to 74.0% (Fig 2, P<0.01).

Fig 2 SGA <10 detection and <40+0 weeks delivery rates



Conclusion

- There has been a gradual increase in detection and timely delivery of SGA babies which is likely to have contributed to the reduction of stillbirths over the observation period.
- Further improvement is achievable, as the Top Ten GAP units are showing detection rates of 77.0% (SGA <3) and 58.7% (SGA <10)
- Electronic charts with auto-plotting and assessment of growth velocity also help to increase detection rates (➔ Poster EP.0046)
- Rolling audit at unit level and benchmarking of performance will help facilitate further improvements.