Births before arrival to hospital
– specialist ambulance nurses experiences

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ABSTRACT:

Introduction: To work as ambulance, nurse means to interact with and care patients in need of
different emergency medical- and other conditions, such as births before arrival to the hospital.
Even though most deliveries are uneventful, they are a clinical challenge in the pre-hospital
setting. They are rare but increasing due to the centralization of maternity wards, especially
among women living in remote areas.

Aim: The aim was to describe specialist ambulance nurses experiences of assisting birth before
arrival to hospital.

Method: We conducted a qualitative approach and interviewed nine specialist ambulance nurses
who had assisted with one or more prehospital births. Data were analysed with thematic content
analysis.

Findings: The analysis revealed a theme; Feeling fright and exhilaration and three categories. The
findings showed that births before arrival to hospital causes feelings of anxiety and stress. The
experience is also associated with joy and relief when the baby is born. Childbirth is a situation for
which specialist ambulance nurses feel less prepared. They experience a lack of knowledge, and
wish for more education.

Conclusion: Specialist ambulance nurses face challenges in the pre-hospital care environment
during births before arrival to hospital, with long distances, a lack of equipment aboard the
ambulance, and no assistance from midwives. To feel secure in the complex role that is required
when assisting mothers during delivery, specialist ambulance nurses should have opportunity to
receive scenario training.