

What is the gold standard for intrapartum fetal monitoring?

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The health authorities of Stockholm county recently published a Health Technology Assessment report: "Fetal monitoring with computerized STAN analysis during labor - a systematic review" with the aim to ensure that high quality research information on costs, effectiveness and broader impact of health technologies is analysed and presented in the most efficient way for those who use, manage and work in this field. The report claims to analyse available research in relation to STAN and concludes that scientific evidence for advantages of the STAN technology on maternal and fetal outcome was insufficient and that clinical use cannot be recommended and should be restricted to research protocols. The Norwegian reference group for fetal surveillance points out that the report suffers from two insufficiencies: selection bias by not providing a complete collection of the evidence for the clinical performance of the STAN technology and secondly not providing evidence-based alternative methods.