

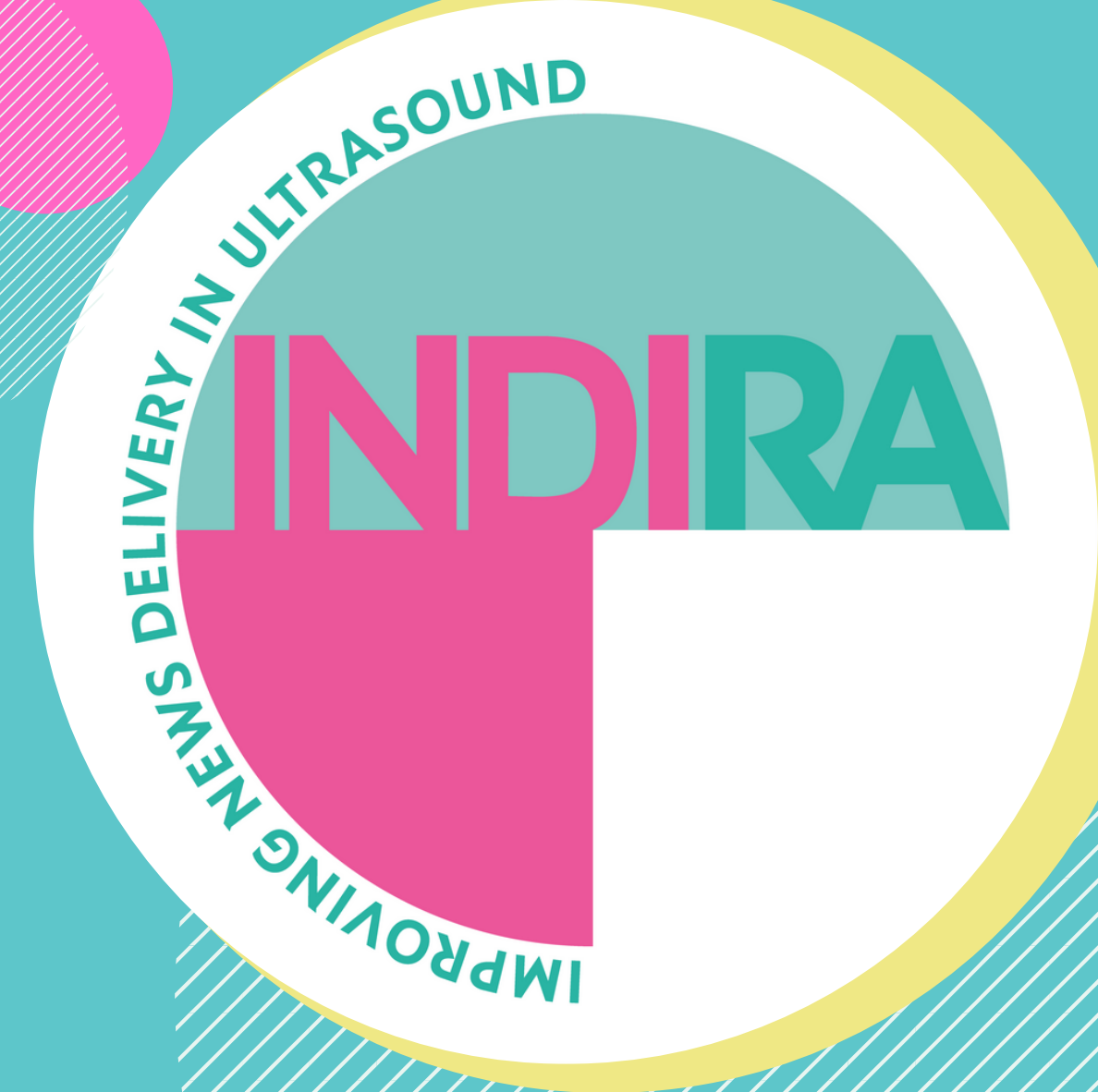
# DELIVERING UNEXPECTED NEWS IN OBSTETRIC ULTRASOUND

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# TODAY'S TALK



Two reasons why I love researching news delivery in ultrasound

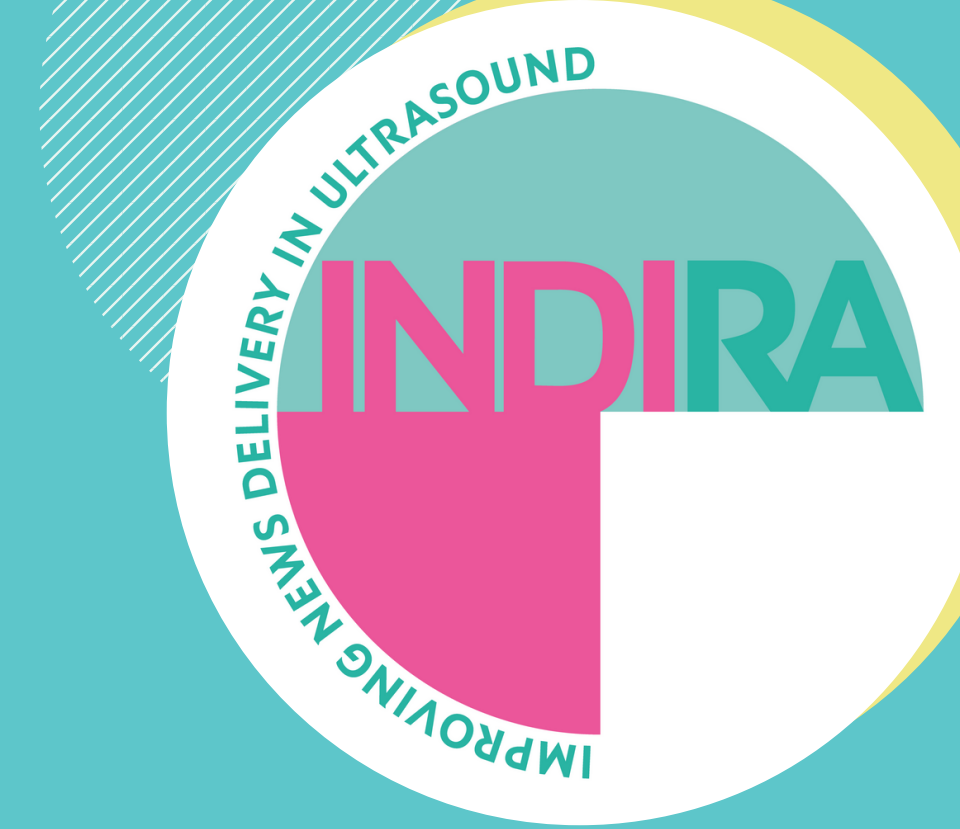
Overview of the INDIRA guidelines

INDIRA Coach: Current project



# REASON 1: SONOGRAPHERS HAVE NO TIME TO PREPARE

- Existing news delivery frameworks based on the assumption of 'preparation'
- Sonographers have no time; parents watch their face as they conduct the scan
- Uniquely challenging



# REASON 2: GOOD PRACTICE IS CATCHING ON

- In 2020, we published UK consensus guidelines for news delivery; in 2022, ASUM published parent-centred communication guidelines
- Now, for the rest of the world
- Lessons learned in sonography could also be applied in other areas of healthcare

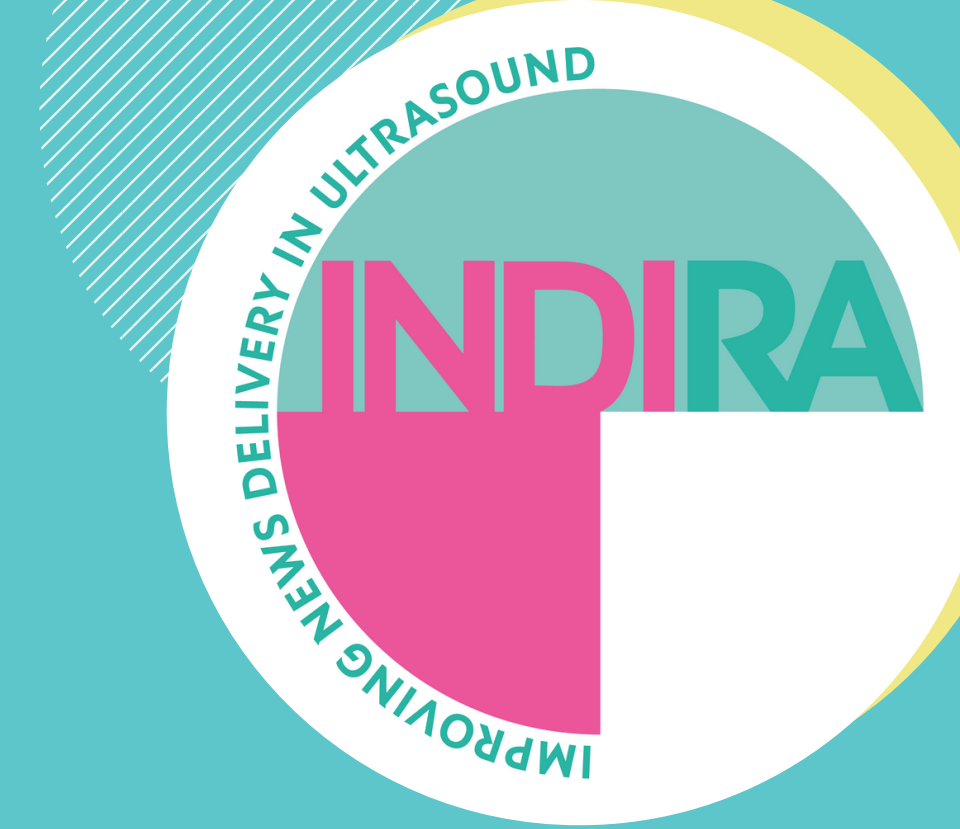


# INDIRA WRITING GROUP

28 people attended a day-long workshop

Healthcare professionals, academics, policy makers, lay experts

Discuss key issues and aimed to reach consensus



# ASCKS

**A:** Avoid assumptions and loaded words

**S:** Set up the scan

**C:** Clear, honest communication

**K:** Kindness

**S:** Self care



# A: AVOID ASSUMPTIONS AND LOADED WORDS

- Swap 'normal' and 'abnormal' for 'expected' and 'unexpected'
- Swap 'disorder' for 'condition'
- Swap all object comparisons for shape descriptors ('narrows/curves')



## S: SET UP THE SCAN

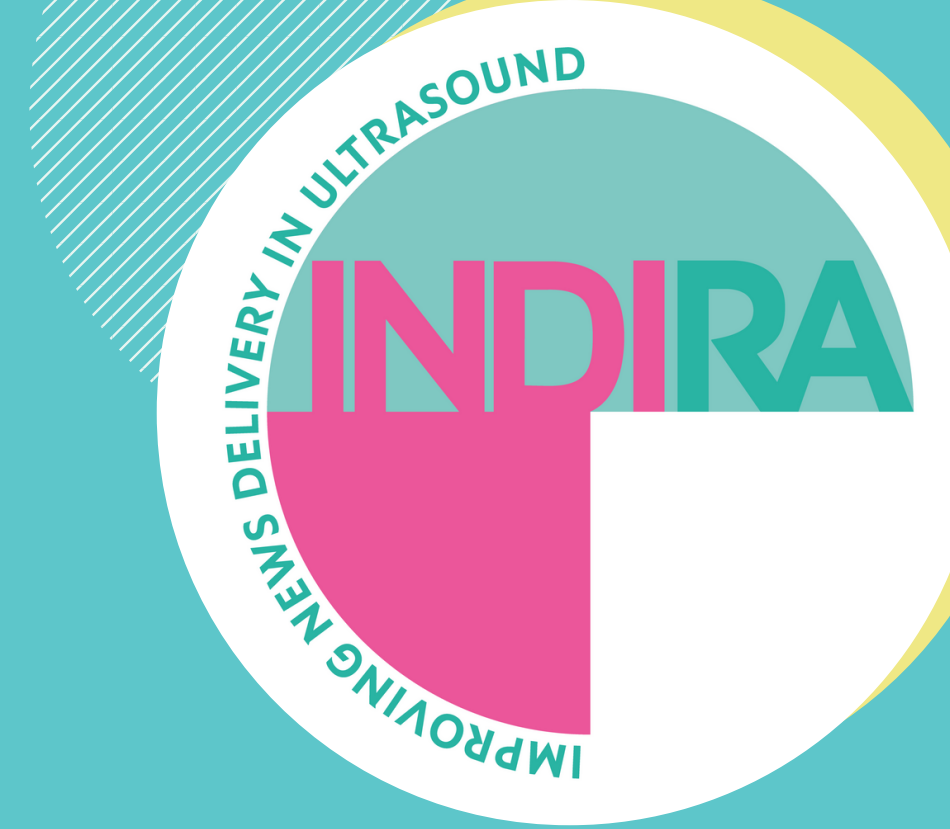
- Ask all the questions at the beginning and outline how things will go
  - 'How many weeks are you?' 'Are you confident of your dates?'
  - 'It is likely we'll need to do an internal scan today'
  - 'I will be silent for a while, and after that, I will offer to show you the screen'





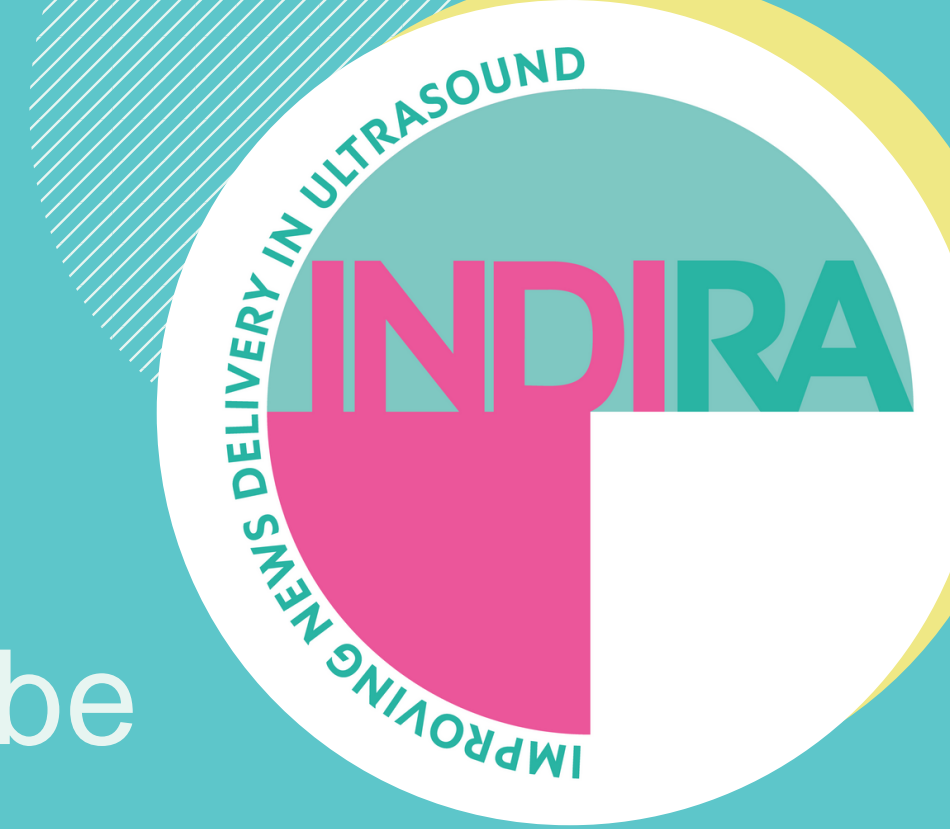
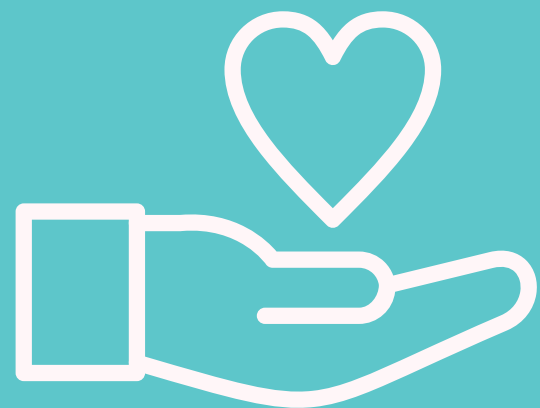
# C: CLEAR, HONEST INFORMATION

- Share your findings simply but gently:
  - 'Unfortunately, I can't see a heartbeat today, and your pregnancy isn't progressing as we'd expect. This means you have had a miscarriage, but your body hasn't yet recognised what has happened'
- Use technical terms, but translate them.
  - '.... gestation sac, this is the place where the baby grows'



# K: KINDNESS

- Name the emotions women seem to be experiencing and use wish statements
  - 'This must be really **upsetting** news, I **wish things were different**'
- Use the word 'baby'
- Express regret

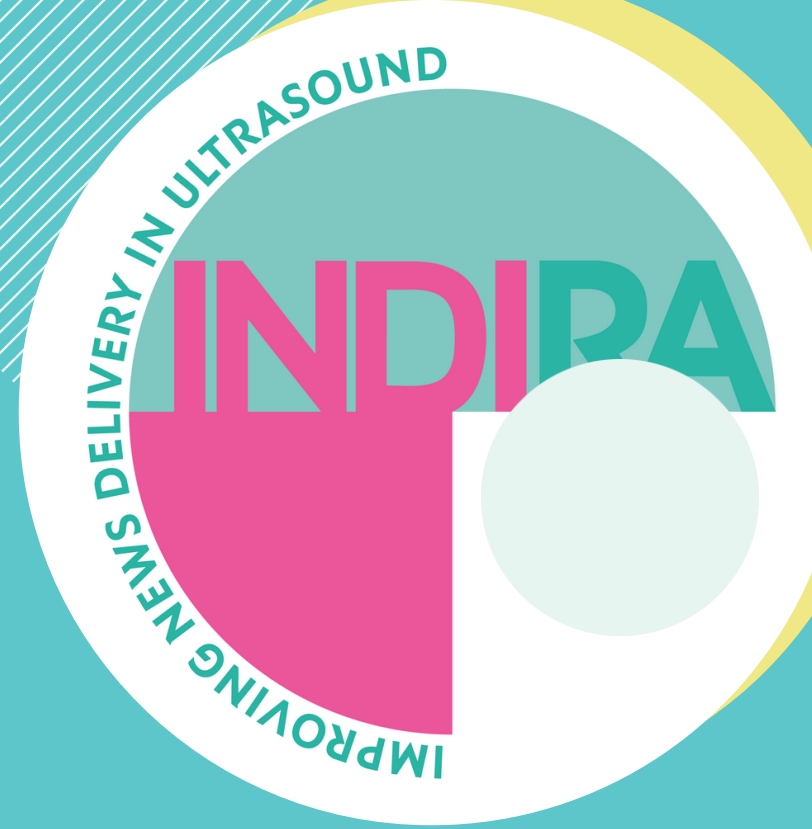


## S: SELF CARE

- Being a sonographer is a challenging job
- Delivering unexpected news is emotional labour
- Be kind to yourself, forgive yourself when the words come out wrong



# Communication Coaching for Sonographers (CCS)

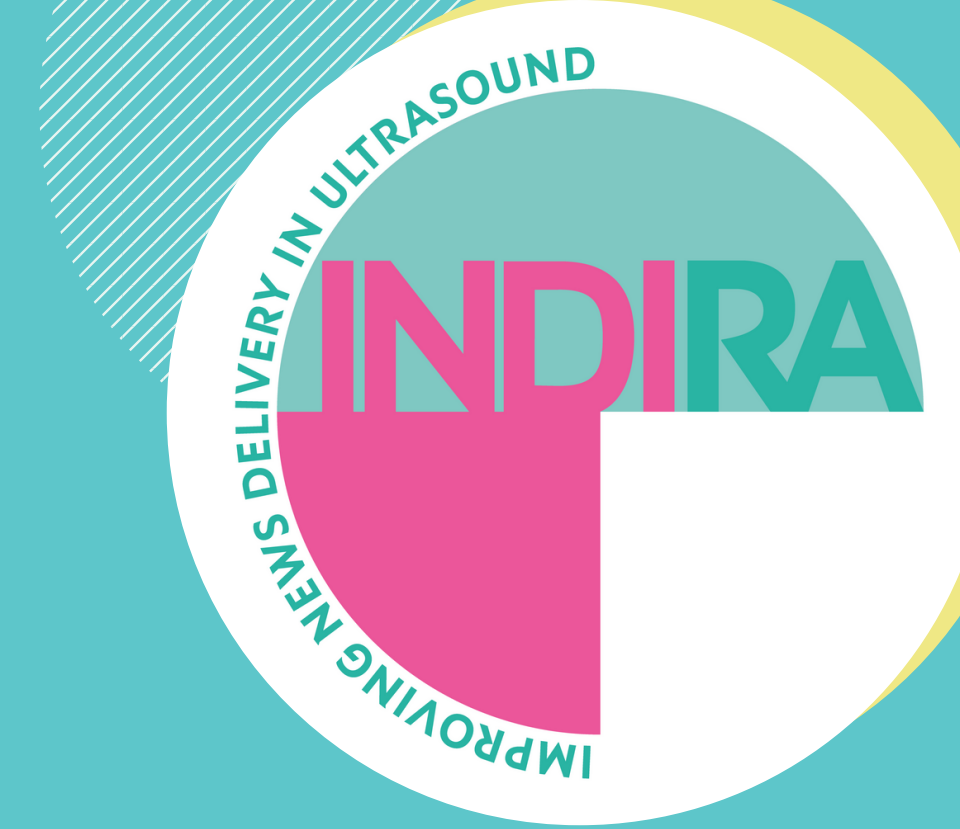


- Coaching programme to support sonographers with delivering unexpected news
- Designed with sonographers, for sonographers
- Aims to boost sonographer confidence

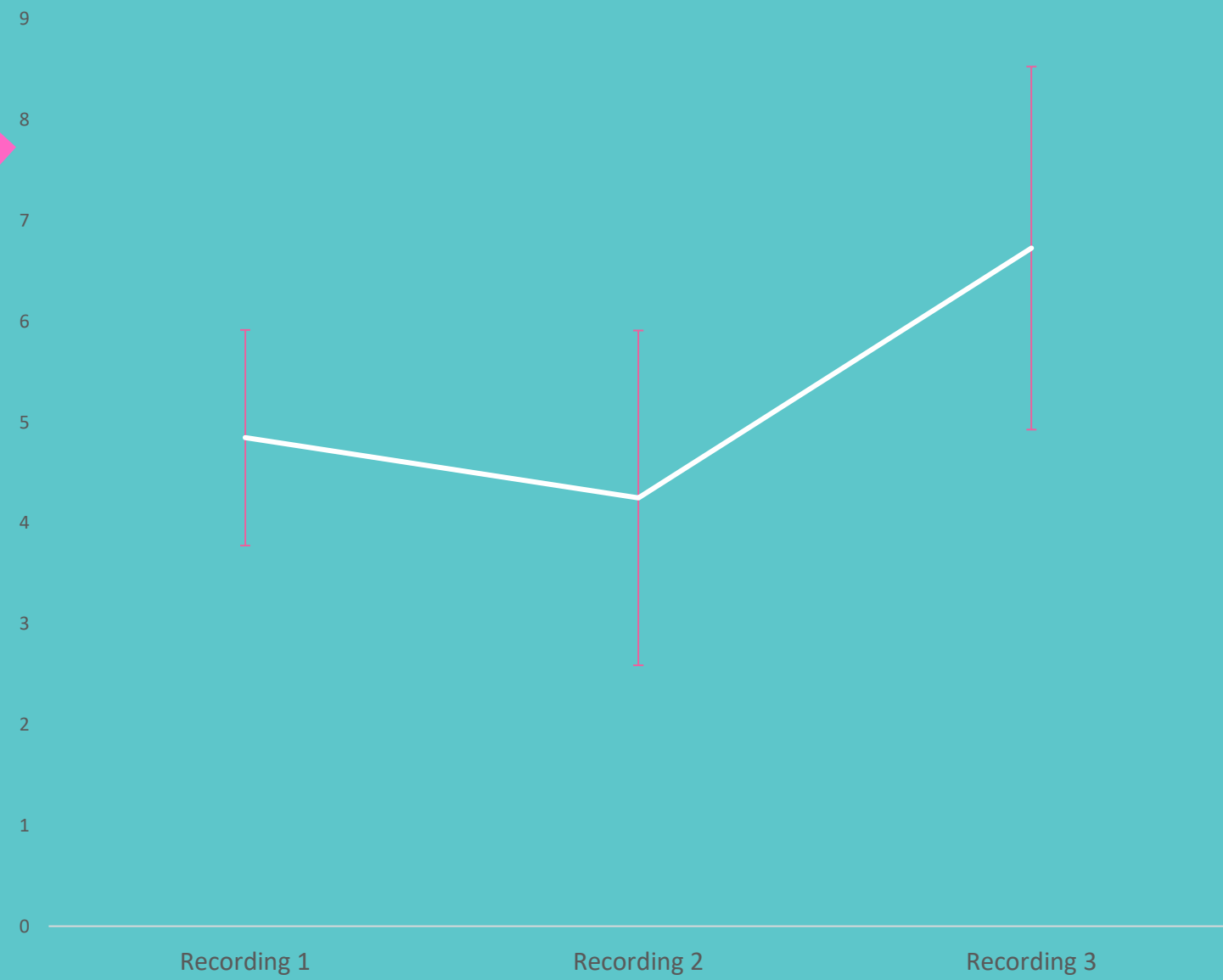


# CCS: results

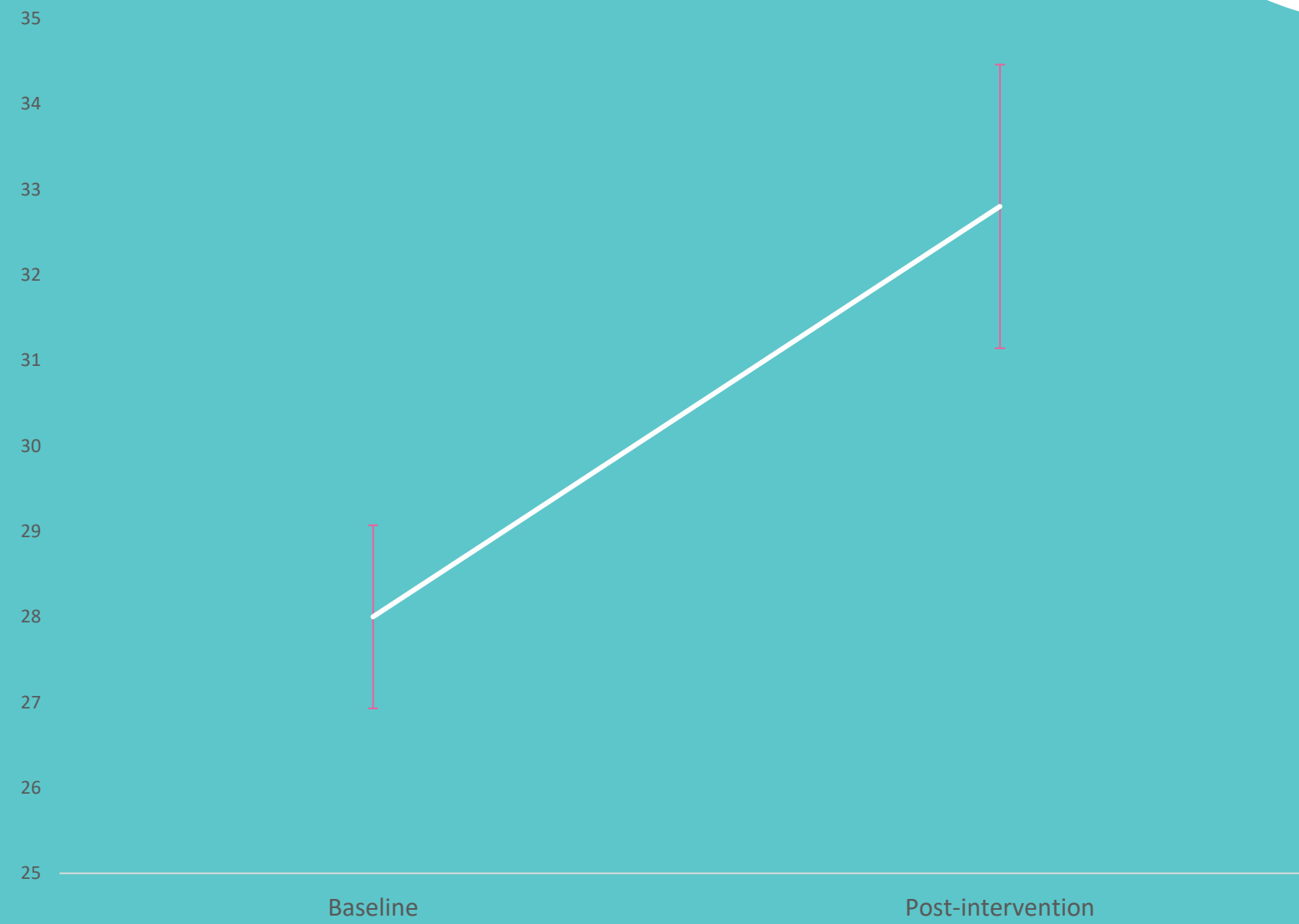
- 10 sonographers completed the intervention
- Significant increases in:
  - **Communication skills** (R1 m=4.85, SD=1.07; R3 m=6.73, SD=1.80, p=0.003)
  - **Communication confidence** (T1 m=28.00, SD=6.27; T2 m=32.80, SD=6.05, p=0.005)
- All respondents said they would recommend the intervention
- Most strongly agreed it was engaging (n=8; 89%) and imparted useful skills (n=8; 89%).



# CCS: results



Overall communication skills



Confidence in communicating

