

# Neighborhoods, Networks, and Delivery Methods\*

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## Abstract

We investigate potential mechanisms of information transmission among patients when explaining territorial variations in the use of cesarean sections. Defining networks as mothers living in the same Italian municipality (average size approximately 10,000 residents), we show that a one standard deviation increase of the incidence of cesarean sections for the 12 months before the delivery date in the future mother's municipality of residence increases the probability of her receiving the treatment by 3%. This result captures mainly network effects for Italian mothers, while it captures both network and neighborhood effects for foreign mothers. Both groups adjust for the transmission of complementary information, such as the incidence of complications due to cesarean sections. The selection of mothers across hospitals does not uniquely explain our results, which are robust to alternative sample selections.

*JEL Classification:* I1, I12

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