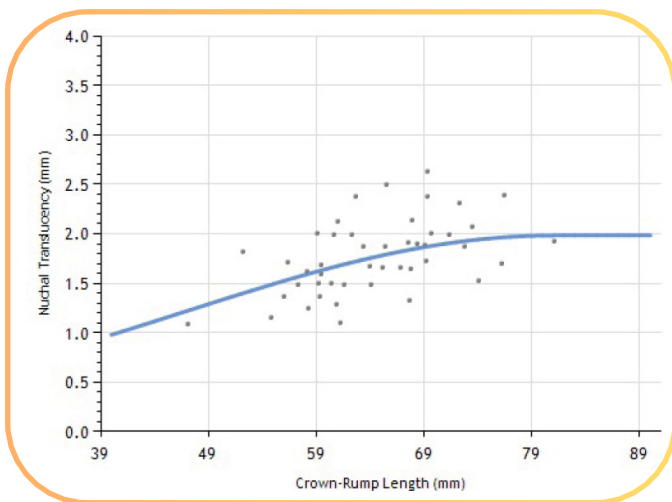


# Flat Trend

Trend refers to the shape of the Nuchal Translucency (NT) and Crown-Rump Length (CRL) data point distribution, relative to the Fetal Medicine Foundation (FMF-UK) reference curve. A flat trend means that the data do not show the expected increase in NT with increasing CRL.

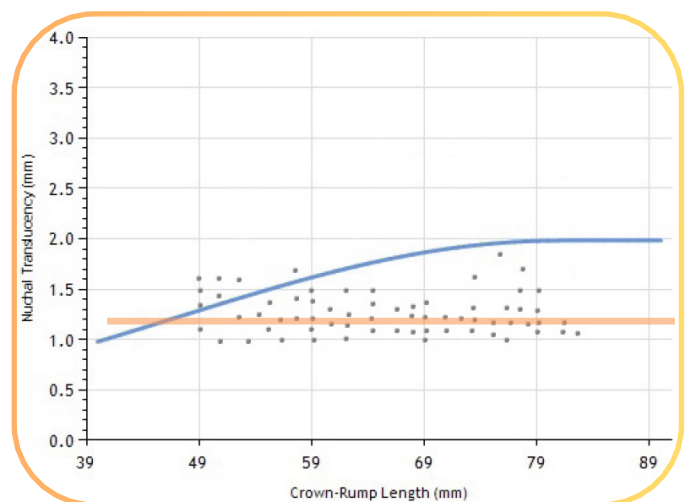
When the sonographer-specific NT performance curve shows a flat trend, it indicates that the operator may be **INACCURATELY MEASURING THE NT OR CRL, ESPECIALLY AT LARGER CRLS.**

## Acceptable trend



The data points follow the shape and slope of the FMF curve, showing the expected increase in NT with increasing CRL.

## Flat Trend



The data points are very similar across all CRLs, creating a horizontal or declining trend line (orange line). The data do not show the expected increase in NT with increasing CRL.

### ⇒ Why does it matter?

A Flat Trend can lead to inaccurate prenatal screening results.

### ⇒ What to do about it?

The next step is to evaluate your scanning practice to determine WHY there are inaccuracies in your measurements.

# Flat Trend

## Common reasons for a Flat Trend

- **Under-measurement of NTs at larger CRLs**  
Under-measurement can occur for a variety of reasons such as:
  - Inadequate zoom
  - Over-gaining
  - Incorrect caliper placement
  - Oblique images (not in true midsagittal plane)
  - Not measuring the widest portion of the NT
- **Inaccurate CRL measurements.** High-quality CRL images are critical to producing accurate prenatal screening results and maintaining the quality of your performance curve. Please review the resource links on this page for reference.
- **Submitting measurements that do not meet the FMF criteria.** You will experience cases where it is impossible to capture CRL and NT images that meet FMF imaging criteria. In these situations, you should NOT submit these measurements for prenatal screening.

## Unable to obtain diagnostic NT Measurement

**If CLR < 84mm**  
Rebook the patient

**If CLR 84mm or greater**  
Refer the patient back to their provider

The patient's physician can refer for other prenatal screening options (e.g. **NIPT, MSS**)

**Remember that it is best NOT to include the NT if you cannot obtain a diagnostic image and measurement.**

## → Resources & recommendations

- Review the FMF Imaging Protocol and re-watch the NT Measurement sections of the [FMF 11-13 weeks scan course](#).
- This video by the [New Zealand Ministry of Health](#) provides excellent tips for imaging and measuring CRLs and NTs.
- For additional feedback on your images and insight into your NT scanning practice, complete an image audit through the FMF-UK.
- Review all images for acceptability before using NT and CRL measurements for eFTS.

## → Summary and next steps

### Step 1: Assess



Critically analyze your own NT and CRL images, to find reasons for your Flat Trend. Seeking feedback from colleagues may also be helpful.

### Step 2: Review & implement



Review the Resources and Recommendations above, and implement changes to your NT and CRL scanning to correct errors contributing to a Flat Trend.

### Step 3: Monitor



In six months, log in to your BORN account to view your NT performance curve, and monitor improvement in your Trend.