Current Intimate Partner Violence Screening Practices of Maternity Nurses in a Hospital Setting

Lina Garrard, College of Nursing, Honors Student
Ann L. Bianchi, PhD, RN

Introduction

• Intimate partner violence (IPV) includes physical violence, sexual violence, stalking, and psychological aggression (including coercive tactics) by a current or former intimate partner. In the U.S., 29 million women have experienced IPV in their lifetime (Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black, & Mahendra, 2015). There are an estimated 324,000 pregnant women who experience this violence (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006).
• Poor health outcomes related to IPV during pregnancy can lead to preterm labor (Silverman, Decker, Reed, & Raj, 2006), placental abruption, maternal death (El Kady, Gilbert, Xing, & Smith, 2005), preterm birth (Shah & Shah, 2010), and low infant birth weight (Coker, Sanderson, & Dong, 2004).

Purpose of this project: To investigate current screening practices in maternity nurses and inquire about their comfort level in screening, what questions they ask, and if IPV screening training would be helpful.

Methodology

• Focus groups/conducted between June 1 – July 8, 2015.
• 31 focus groups/individual meetings were conducted. A total of 54 Mother/Baby Registered Nurses and 25 Labor and Delivery Registered Nurses attended.
• The following questions were asked:
  1. Do you ask specific questions to your patients related to IPV?
  2. If yes: What questions do you ask?
  3. Do you have a list of resources available to offer your patients if they disclose IPV?
  4. Are you comfortable asking the questions on the assessment form related to abuse?
  5. Have you had training related to intimate partner screening?
  6. If yes, what was included in your training?
  7. If yes, do you feel the training was sufficient?
  8. Describe to me how you approach the questions about abuse.
  9. Describe to me your perceived barriers to addressing this topic with your clients.
10. Describe to me what you would like to see in form of training to gain a better understanding of IPV?

Key Findings

1. Do you ask specific questions to your patients related to IPV?
2. If yes: What questions do you ask?
3. Do you have a list of resources available to offer your patients if they disclose IPV?
4. Are you comfortable asking the questions on the assessment form related to abuse?
5. Have you had training related to intimate partner screening?
6. If yes, what was included in your training?
7. If yes, do you feel the training was sufficient?
8. Describe to me how you approach the questions about abuse.
9. Describe to me your perceived barriers to addressing this topic with your clients.
10. Describe to me what you would like to see in form of training to gain a better understanding of IPV?

Conclusions

Overall, most nurses ask about IPV and provide written consults to social services. Most nurses stated they would like training.

Recommendations

Development of a written IPV screening policy, adoption of a validated IPV screening tool, and IPV training sessions for maternity nurses. These recommendations may encourage 100% compliance with IPV screening among maternity nurses.

References