

# Identification, Assessment, and Referrals for Women Experiencing Intimate Partner Violence: An Educational Session for Maternity Nurses

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## Overview

- Intimate partner violence (IPV) affects one in four women each year in the United States. For many abused women, IPV can escalate during pregnancy and abused pregnant women are more likely to experience all forms of violence resulting in poor health outcomes for the woman and her infant.
- Healthcare professionals must be equipped to identify, assess, and refer women who disclose abuse. Failure to adequately screen pregnant women for abuse may be detrimental to their health and the health of her infant and denies them the opportunity for referrals to supportive agencies.
- With improved screening and referral practices, women can be provided the assistance needed to support their health and safety needs.

## Methodology

- Seventy-nine maternity nurses participated in focus groups and identified an interest in learning about referral processes and the role of the social worker.
- An educational session was conducted to better equip these nurses in making referrals for abused women, identify the role of the social worker, and discuss methods to facilitate collaboration between maternity nurses and social workers.
- Eighteen maternity nurses attended the educational session and completed a written evaluation (see Table).

## Conclusions

Overall, all participants who attended the educational session about IPV and how to better refer to the social workers stated what they learned will influence their IPV screening practices, increases their knowledge of resources, and agreed they would recommend this session to other nurses in the future.

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## Key Findings

**Table: Maternity Nurses Evaluations from Educational Session**

Participants (n=18) attending the session completed a written evaluation form that used a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=partially agree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree).

Questions	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Presenter/Method</b>					
i. The program objectives were presented clearly	0	0	0	0	n=18 100%
ii. The presenter was knowledgeable concerning the topics covered	0	0	0	0	n=18 100%
iii. The presenter taught the material in a way that made it seem practical and understanding	0	0	0	0	n=18 100%
iv. The presenter used effective teaching strategies	0	0	0	0	n=18 100%
<b>Program Content</b>					
i. The program content matched the stated objectives	0	0	0	0	n=18 100%
ii. The technology presented will be useful in my professional role	0	0	0	0	n=18 100%
iii. The program content was relevant to my learning needs	0	0	0	0	n=18 100%
<b>Program Setting</b>					
i. The facilities used for this program were satisfactory	0	0	n=1 5.6%	n=2 11.1%	n=15 83.3%
ii. I am satisfied with the greeting and orientation I received upon arrival	0	0	0	n=1 5.6%	n=17 94.4%
<b>Participant Benefits</b>					
i. The quality of my work will be enhanced as a result of participating in this program	0	0	0	n=2 11.1%	n=16 88.9%
ii. I will likely change my thinking and/or actions as a result of participating in this program	0	0	0	n=1 5.6%	n=17 94.4%
iii. The handouts or other materials obtained in the program will be useful to me	0	0	0	n=2 11.1%	n=16 88.9%
<b>Overall</b>					
i. Overall, I was satisfied with the program *	0	0	0	n=2 11.8%	n=15 88.2%
I would recommend this program to a friend/co-worker	0	0	0	0	n=18 100%

\*missing data on 1 participant (n=17)

## Implications to Nursing Practice

- When nurses have identified learning needs, educational sessions can be developed.
- IPV screening education equips nurses to identify women who have been abused, assess their health and safety needs, and make referrals to community support services.
- Interdisciplinary collaboration serves to influence system changes that improve identification of women who experience IPV.
- IPV education influences current nursing practice and may support IPV screening policies that encourage 100% compliance among nurses in screening all women for IPV.

