

POSTER ABSTRACT

How social workers add value to the perinatal team. Hospital de la santa creu i sant pau.

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Pregnancy and childbirth are much more than biological processes. They are fundamental events in the life of a woman and her family. It is therefore essential to care for pregnant women and their families in a holistic manner, taking their personal, cultural, social, and family constraints into account.

With this concept in mind, in 2000, the Fetal Medicine Unit and the Neonatal Unit at Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau established a Working Group of Perinatal Medicine. When the Working Group was first formed, weekly meetings were held with neonatologists and obstetricians. However, other healthcare professionals soon joined the team. In 2007, a hospital social worker was invited to participate to promote awareness among the members about social difficulties that could interfere with the welfare of a mother and her unborn child.

The aim of this presentation is to show the benefits of including a social worker on the interdisciplinary perinatal team at a tertiary hospital. The Working Group now consists of pediatricians, neonatologists, obstetricians, midwives, prenatal nurses, psychologists, social workers, and other professional specialists if the case requires.

The Group's perinatal team focuses on an early approach to monitoring pregnant women and unborn children who require additional attention due to medical conditions, past and present pregnancy complications or fetal abnormalities, and it provides biopsychosocial care of pregnant women from both disciplines.

The social intervention and assessment are recorded in the patient's clinical history through the ETC (Clinical Work Station). This platform is used by all team members for data collection and clinical history. The social worker now plays an active role in all cases where pregnancy gives rise to social difficulties and in cases that present social risk. Since the team was established we have observed greater fluency in coordination with the institutions of child protection and community resources. We have also observed improvements in communication among professionals, and in agility and optimization when dealing with situations of social risk in pregnant women. The establishment of a multidisciplinary team has facilitated fluid communication among the different health care professionals and enabled an individualised approach to each case.

As a sign of team involvement in these situations of social risk and how the participation of the discipline of Social Work has created a greater awareness of the professionals who care for these pregnant women , the Social Work Unit has conducted a research during 2014 and 2015.

The results of the research, centred on the 107 cases handled by the social worker in these two years, conclude that the interdisciplinary early intervention supposes a minimization of the intervention by agents of child protection and reduction of the need of taking drastic measures in benefit of the empowerment of women as an active part of their process of change and resolution of their conflicts. While the 77.57 % of the treated cases have been referred to primary attention devices, only a 22.43 % have required the intervention of a child protection service.

Keywords: social work; perinatal team; pregnant women; biopsychosocial care; social risk
