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Presentation Abstract

Presentation title:

Integrated Programs for Women with Substance Use Issues and Their Children: A Qualitative Meta-Synthesis of Outcomes and Processes.

Presenter:

Dr. Wendy Sword

Wendy Sword, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor and Assistant Dean (Research) in the School of Nursing, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario. Her program of research focuses on perinatal health and health services, with a particular interest in populations at risk for poor outcomes and service accessibility.

Presentation abstract:

Specialized services for women with substance use issues who are pregnant or parenting in Canada vary considerably, from traditional, separate services to fully integrated services in one setting to meet complex needs. Studies suggest that integrated programs (programs that integrate pregnancy-, parenting-, and child-related services with addiction services) are associated with positive outcomes. The purpose of this meta-synthesis is to summarize the findings of qualitative studies to understand (1) perceived outcomes of integrated programs and (2) psychosocial processes that occur in treatment to contribute to these outcomes. Fifteen studies met defined inclusion criteria and, of these, 13 were deemed to be of adequate quality to include in the meta-synthesis. Through comparison and translation into reconstructed concepts, new insights were developed. Outcomes clustered under two main themes: maternal and child well-being, and parenting. Process themes included: development of a sense of self, development of personal agency, giving and receiving of social support, engagement with program staff, self-disclosure, recognizing destructiveness patterns, goal setting, and the motivating presence of children. This synthesis of qualitative studies highlights important aspects of collaborative integrated services for a population with complex and unique needs. Group discussion will be encouraged and facilitated regarding the implications for program development and implementation.