

Communication Barriers in Midwifery Students in the Field of Perinatal Palliative Care

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Abstract : Perinatal palliative care is a relatively young and developing field that includes the care of a fetus or newborn with a life-threatening or limiting defect and his family. However, the training of midwives in perinatal palliative care is insufficient and midwives do not feel prepared for this aspect of their work. This fact can affect the barriers to communication with the mother or family of the endangered child. The main aim was to analyze the awareness of midwifery students on the issue of perinatal palliative care in the Czech Republic. Based on the analysis, draw attention to possible communication barriers that may be caused by insufficient information. The research was carried out using a qualitative method, the method of data collection was a semi-structured interview. Eleven female students took part in the research, and the respondents were selected using the Snowballing method. Some methods of grounded theory (open coding and category creation) were used to analyze the data. Based on the results of the research, questions were set in a questionnaire focused on communication barriers between mothers (family) and health care professionals in the care of newborns with life-threatening or limiting disabilities. Based on the analysis of data, categories 1 were determined. Knowledge of perinatal palliative care 2. Education 3. Practical experience 4. Readiness and concerns in the provision of perinatal palliative care 6. Supervision. The questions in the questionnaire were then derived taking into account the data obtained, and the operationalization of health literacy in the field of perinatal palliative care was performed. The analysis of the interviews revealed that the education of midwives in the Czech Republic in the issue of perinatal palliative care is not uniform. The research confirmed the insufficient knowledge and skills of midwifery students preparing to provide perinatal palliative care. Respondents reported feelings of unpreparedness in the areas of communication with a woman after perinatal loss, psychological support for a woman and her family, the care of a stillborn or dying child, or self-coping with death. The questions in the questionnaire then develop these areas. We assumed that by analyzing and interpreting the data obtained from our research, we will help to better understand the concerns and motivations of students in providing holistic perinatal palliative care. We came to the conclusion that it would be appropriate to set up a unified and comprehensive education on this issue in the Czech Republic. Healthcare professionals are in a unique position that can positively or negatively affect the intensity of perinatal loss. Already properly set up education of health professionals leads to overcoming barriers in communication between health professionals and the family, experiencing perinatal loss.

Keywords : midwife, perinatal loss, perinatal palliative care, communication, barriers, mothers, family

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