

Support for Victims of Domestic Violence / Support for Families Experiencing Stillbirth

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A: Support for Victims of Domestic Violence

【Goal】

Violence against women by men close to them such as their husbands or lovers (domestic violence, DV) can result in serious health issues for women. The aim of this project is to prepare guidelines based on evidence-based medicine to widen the circle of support to DV victims, and to spread and evaluate these guidelines.

【Plan and Implementation Process】

Step 1: Preparation and disclosure of guidelines: based on accumulated research evidence, we compiled and announced “A Guideline for Supporting Victims of Perinatal Domestic Violence based on EBM: 2004 Version” to indicate the ideal means of early detection intervention, and actual support of perinatal DV in Japan, (Kanehara & Co., Ltd.).

Step 2: We held training seminars for medical staff, and implemented action research for providing support based on the above guidelines at model hospitals. We reported our progress at conferences in an effort to spread the guidelines. For in-hospital training, we adopted e-learning to enable students to access lectures at any time and any place they wanted.

To convey the concept and methods of EBN, we carried out continuing educational activities for nursing professionals at the St. Luke’s College of Nursing Research Center for Development of Nursing Practice and the Japanese Nursing Association, etc. As a continuous education method of EBN, we carried out a randomized controlled trial comparing face-to-face lectures and web-based learning, and presented the results in an overseas journal.

Step 3: Disseminate of guidelines: for medical providers, we announced the guidelines at the Japan Council for Quality Health Care Medical Information Network Distribution Service (MINDS) (<http://minds.jcqh.or.jp>) and overseas, the guidelines were adopted and released by the e-journal of the academic journal “Midwifery.” We also made support handbooks, posters and cards for women and the public, and distributed them.

【Goal Attainment】

1. Research activities

We presented a paper on the process of establishing guidelines using evidence-based medicine, and introduced the significance and uses of the guidelines in nursing practice.

We have been providing actual education using the evidence-based nursing (EBN) method since 2005 in a class for professionals titled “Clinical Research on Finding, Reading, and Using EBN” at the St Luke’s College of Nursing Research Center for Development of Nursing Practice. The class consists of three stages (hop, step, jump) and has been attended by a total of 100 students to date.

We have also held training seminars on the use of EBN in clinical practice at the Kobe Nursing Association (80 clinical staff) and Tokyo Nursing Association (240 clinical staff). We compared face-to-face lectures and web-based learning as the means of acquiring knowledge on EBN, and confirmed that there exists no difference in knowledge acquisition in the final test. Web-based learning is preferable in terms of less frequent dropouts, while the advantage of face-to-face lecture is satisfaction with the over interactions with the lecturer.

We also hold in-hospital training seminars on “cyclical domestic violence support guidelines” at three hospitals. At one model hospital, we have formed a special team to spread the DV guidelines, as well as prepare posters and cards and to carry out victim screening.

In Japan today, the medical and diagnosis guidelines initiated by the Ministry of Health, Welfare, and Labor are mainly used. As for the guidelines placed on the website of the Japan Council for Quality Health Care, the DV support guidelines is the only document selected from the area of nursing. Given that there are only but a few guidelines that take into account victims during the preparation stage, these guidelines are very valuable.

2. Education of novice researchers

We adopted the EBN concept as the pillar of nursing education at our college. There are four studies (Kataoka, Nagaoka, Arimori, and Mori) which focused on randomized controlled design in accordance with dissertation’s research themes and preparation progress, and produced successful results.

Kataoka submitted a dissertation on DV screening. A related paper “Screening of domestic violence against women in the perinatal setting: a systematic review” won the “Nursing Research Commendation Award” from the Society of Private Colleges of Nursing in Japan.

In our master’s and doctorate course curriculum, we held classes in accordance with EBN steps. Out of the submitted reports, outstanding ones were presented in the academic journals “Japan Academy of Midwifery Journal,” and in trade magazines such as “Midwife Journal” and “Perinatal Care.” The paper submitted by one of our PhD research students won the 20th anniversary best paper award of the Japan Academy of Midwifery. We also disseminated information on how to link EBN to nursing practices, not only at our college, but across the country as well.

There were 10 students who earned their doctoral degrees under the supervision of Horiuchi and there are now 3 who are at the candidate stage. (students residing at our college from 2003 to 2007)

- 1) Kataoka Yaeko : Effectiveness of two screening methods in a prenatal setting for identifying women experiencing domestic violence : A randomized controlled trial
- 2) Fujisaki Kaoru : Body image in bronchial asthma patients
- 3) Arimori Naoko : Randomized controlled trials of decision aid for women considering prenatal testing : the effect of the Ottawa personal decision aids
- 4) Mori Akiko : Supporting stress management for women undergoing the early stage of fertility treatment : a cluster-randomized controlled trial
- 5) Nagaoka Yukiko : The effect of an imagery program to promote relaxation in women undergoing in-vitro fertilization : a randomized controlled trial
- 6) Ando Hiroko : The Practice and Assessment of Genetics Nursing for Pregnant Women Receiving Prenatal Counseling
- 7) Katagiri Masumi : Evaluation Self-Management Teams as a Method to Promote Autonomy in Perinatal Care Unit
- 8) Nakagawa Yuka : Palm Pressure Applied by Midwives during Perineal Protection
- 9) Ota Naoko : Candidate; Evaluation of Nursing Education Program that Focuses on Care for Perinatal Loss: Randomized Controlled Trial
- 10) Kobayashi Yasue : Candidate; Facilitating of a Smooth Transition to Motherhood during the First Four Months of Childrearing

- 11) Oguro Michiko : Evaluation of the Development Program for Woman Health Volunteers of Reproductive and Child Health at the Community level
- 12) Tuji Keiko : Candidate; Evaluation of the Development Support Program for Pregnant Women Considering Prenatal Diagnosis
- 13) Doeda Narumi : Development of Breastfeeding Behavior Assessment Tool

3. International collaborative research

We gave presentations at overseas conferences and carried out interchanges with researchers studying the same themes. We also actively submitted papers to English academic journals.

4. Future directions

In the future, in order to further enthusiastically expand our dissemination activities, we are planning to compile “Commentary of Guidelines” for specialists and for the public through the Japan Council for Quality Health Care Information Service Center. We also hope to compare overseas guidelines and introduce screening scales developed in Japan to an overseas audience.

B: Support for Families Experiencing Stillbirth

【Goal】

Stillbirth is a serious health issue causing tremendous sadness for mothers and their families. In this program, we have developed a booklet and Angel Kit to support such “encounters and partings” for families and care providers experiencing stillbirth, and to evaluate their effectiveness.

【Plan and Implementation Process】

Step 1: We started discussions on communal understanding with miscarriage and stillbirth self-help group leaders, midwives and clinical psychologists in the autumn of 2004. Every month, we held the Guardian Angel “Luka No Kai” at the St. Luke’s College of Nursing Research Center for Development of Nursing Practice to provide the venue for providing grief care to families. This gathering has served as the foundation of research activities ever since, as well as a resource at the same time.

Step 2: Referring to overseas care guidelines, we compiled a booklet for families experiencing stillbirth and developed the Angel’s Kit to support encounters and partings with no regret with the child who has died. Based on research evidence, we divided support to families into that during hospitalization and that afterwards when preparing the booklet and kit. “The Living with Grief Booklet” is available to families on the Kango-net website.

Step 3: We are currently carrying out evaluative research of the booklet and kit at model hospitals to determine their effectiveness, as well as collecting comments from families on questionnaires.

We are also trying to promote our ideas on support by placing information enthusiastically in maternal and midwifery related textbooks, as well as articles in journal “Midwifery Journal.” We also give educational lectures at conferences and Japan Academy of Midwifery. We have also developed a continuous educational program for perinatal nursing professionals for graduate school students to collect data for verifying the effects under the randomized controlled design.

【Goal Attainment】

1. Research activities

The activities of Guardian Angel “Luka No Kai” have been reported in newspapers and on radio, receiving extensive interest. Perinatal loss is often not spoken about in public: it is considered a taboo in society. Many families experiencing stillbirth have been hurt by the need to forget the lost baby, without any encouragement from people around them due to the lack of understanding. It is because the mother’s association has pointed out this phenomenon and promoted the support of mothers that is required, that it has attracted so much attention.

So far, the meetings have gathered fathers and families led by a total of 250 mothers. In conjunction with the meetings, events such as Angel Quilt, Color Therapy, and First Step Shoes are also being held. These events serve as an opportunity for families facing the loss to realize and come to terms with changes in their feelings due to the sadness and to the changes in the sadness felt.

The Ceremony Card offered on Kango-net is also popular, being used by many families as new years cards and announcements of birth, etc.

(http://plaza.umin.ac.jp/artemis/rcdnp/tenshi/tenshi_2.html)

As of August 2007, about 850 booklets, that we provide, have been distributed. We received many comments on the questionnaire, which readers are asked to fill in after they have read the booklet, describing the importance and need of this booklet such as: “this booklet helped prove that the feelings experienced are absolutely normal and I feel so relieved”; “I have my ups and downs, I carry this booklet with me all the time and try to convince myself it is alright” and “I hope this booklet will be read by as many medical related personnel as possible”.

This booklet and Angel’s Kit are used experimentally at seven model hospitals in Japan and continuously assessed. We have made 100 sets of the kit, and are planning to distribute most of them. At first, we only distributed the questionnaire to those who had experienced stillbirth for evaluation, however we also received comments from medical personnel using the kit saying “I don’t think I’ll be able to go back to the days without this kit,” indicating that the tool was used as a strong source of encouragement.

We are asking mothers who have been participating for more than one year in the self-help group and who were wanting to contribute in any way to families with similar experiences to make dresses for the angel and stuffed toys. This helps mothers experiencing a stillbirth to feel connected to others through the angel.

We interchanged with lay experts during the international SIDS meeting to form networks on fostering supporters. Currently, we have a system which provides the required resource, gatherings, and support anywhere in Japan through the “Tenshi No Keijiban” bulletin board.

2. Education of novice researchers

In the past five years, the project leader has supervised the thesis progress of two masters students researching themes related to stillbirth, and both students have gone on to do their doctorate degree. A paper presented based on the masters thesis of one of these students. Ms. Ota, won the 20th Anniversary Outstanding Prize of the Japan Academy of Midwifery. (See DV section above for doctoral papers.)

Ota Naoko : Supportive Nursing Care Needs as Identified by Mothers of Stillborn Babies

Hiruta Akiko : Participating in a Self-help Group: The Implications for Women who have Experienced Perinatal Loss

3. International collaborative research

During the 9th SIDS International Conference, the project leader participated as a conference planner and exchanged with many researchers studying similar themes of miscarriage, stillbirth, and death of newborn. The project leader is currently preparing to present a paper in an English academic journal.

4. Future directions

The project leader is planning to make presentations on the results of research on the effectiveness of the booklet and Angel Kit in other countries, as well as work on the theme of Developing lay experts to foster support for others who have also experienced a stillbirth.