

TITLE: Continuum of education: How prenatal and postnatal education and support is improving maternal health

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STUDENT SUBMISSION: Yes

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Community health workers, nurses, educators, population health program supporters,

ABSTRACT: Maternal health in the United States is a complex and dynamic aspect of healthcare. It includes the medical care of women during pregnancy, labor, and postpartum periods, including avenues of family planning, conception treatments, and prenatal/postnatal care. Increased investment into maternal health across the country would help improve rates of maternal morbidity and mortality, which the United States has a high prevalence of. For industrialized countries, the U.S. rates second-highest for maternal mortality with a rate of 22 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births [1]. This may seem like a small ratio, but it becomes more impactful based on data from the CDC which states that in 2017 there were 3,853,472 live births in the United States [2], which equates to approximately 848 maternal deaths for the year 2017. Several factors impact maternal health in the U.S.; and the purpose of the current paper is to discuss how prenatal care, postpartum education, and lactation education/support can improve maternal health. Findings from this research dictate how maternal health education can be improved, such as by supporting prenatal education and increasing funding for home-visiting programs for new mothers; and in conclusion, support for a shift towards focusing on preventative strategies to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality.

OBJECTIVE(S): Define maternal mortality and morbidity in relation to the experience of mothers in the United States. List risks for maternal mortality and morbidity. Describe how public health clinics and programs can benefit new mothers. Discuss the importance of prenatal and postpartum education. Explain who can benefit from home-visiting programs. Identify groups at risk of experiencing postpartum complications. Demonstrate understanding of the creation of maternal education programs. Differentiate between "baby blues" and postpartum depression. Compare the emphasis of prenatal and postnatal education. Design a health promotion program plan that is directed towards improving maternal health. Formulate ways to incorporate maternal health education into existing public health programs. Evaluate the need for a maternal education and support program in your community. Assess positive and negative aspects of home-visiting programs. Name the state-wide home-visiting program for new mothers in Oregon for families on OHP. Analyze an existing education or visiting program you are familiar with as to how it relates to maternal health outcomes.
