Comprehensive Psychosocial Service Delivery for HIV Positive Pregnant Women: Components, Challenges and Strategies

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Circle of Care Overview

- Founded in 1989 to provide integrated and consumer-centered services responsive to the priorities of individuals infected and affected by HIV/AIDS epidemic

- Designated Ryan White Part D grantee for the Philadelphia area

- In 2009, 2,023 individuals from 800 families consisting of: 614 women, 59 men, 195 exposed infants, 12 infected infants, 87 children and 500 youth. Supportive services were delivered to 556 affected family members during this time period.

- Fifteen years of experience providing intensive service coordination to HIV positive pregnant and postpartum women
  - This program represents a comprehensive response to ensure the reduction of the rate of mother to child transmission (MTCT) of HIV in the Philadelphia area
Perinatal HIV Transmission Prevention Initiative: Components

- Core programmatic components:
  - Provider/consumer education around risk of MTCT of HIV
  - Rapid HIV testing in clinical and community settings to decrease rate of undocumented HIV status in pregnant women and women of childbearing age
  - Enhanced relationships with specialty prenatal care service providers with experience managing HIV disease
  - **Intensive Perinatal Case Management services**
    - Address needs, issues identified by clients that affect their everyday life (housing, unemployment, medical concerns)
  - **Peer Counselors**
    - Support clients in performing behaviors that improve physical and emotional health, with a focus on adherence to medical care
  - Seamless management between prenatal and pediatric care
The Care Team

- Members assure provision of intensive services in high risk prenatal clinics throughout the remaining delivering hospitals of the Philadelphia area.

- Inclusive cohort of specialized service providers with HIV specialization, knowledge of maternal and child health issues, and access to local resources.

- Team members offer multi-faceted approach to the management of the needs of HIV + pregnant and postpartum women.

- Members of the care team often include, but are not limited to: **Obstetricians, Perinatologists, Nurse Practitioners, Registered Nurses, Social Workers/Case Managers, Perinatal Peer Counselors**.
Perinatal HIV Case Managers

- Masters prepared, licensed social worker
- Minimum five years experience servicing high risk populations
- Working knowledge of issues surrounding HIV/AIDS, pregnancy, and reproductive health
- Ability to work in diverse clinical settings, institutions in an off-site capacity
- Certification/training around state, federal social welfare supports
Peer Counselors

- Reflect the demographic characteristics of HIV positive pregnant women residing in Philadelphia, PA
  - Minority women, specifically black and/or ethnically Hispanic
  - Ranging in age from 25 – 45
  - Residing in zip codes where HIV epidemic is most pervasive
- Cross trained in HIV counseling and testing, health issues associated with HIV/AIDS and pregnancy, motivational interviewing, adherence counseling, disclosure counseling, reproductive health, permanency planning
- May be HIV positive but have supported other members of their social network through issues related to HIV/AIDS
Evaluation Outcomes

- Circle of Care’s **Intensive Perinatal Case Management Program** serviced **over 75%** of all HIV positive pregnant and postpartum women throughout the city of Philadelphia (CY 2007-2010).

- Enhanced client level interviews identified the following benefits of case management:
  - Assistance in negotiating the service delivery system
    - Medical Insurance, Mental Health Services, Child Care, Housing, Legal System (Custody, Permanency Planning)
  - Support during challenging phases of identification/acceptance of HIV status and pregnancy
    - Linkage to support groups, psychological counseling,
  - Tool for tracking improving health
    - Regular discussion of adherence to medical appointment and medication regimens (retention to care)
    - Documentation of success: regular interface with providers to ascertain improvement (increasing CD4, decreasing viral load)
**Evaluation Outcomes**

- **Peer Counselors** were found to be *critical* in the maintenance of HIV care and prenatal services for HIV+ pregnant women
  - Form healthy and supportive relationships with HIV+ pregnant women during, after pregnancy
  - Enhance positive health outcomes for HIV positive women
    - Significantly reduce unintended transmission of HIV to intimate partners of HIV positive women (prevention for positives)
      - Education, Disclosure Counseling, Partner Testing
    - Decreased rate of unintended pregnancy due to intensive contraception discussions (reproductive health)
      - Methods discussed, chosen on or before 34th week
  - 75% of all HIV+ women with a Peer Counselor adhered to 100% of their medication regimen
  - 80% of all women with a Peer Counselor maintain relationships with health care providers > 1 yr postpartum (retention to care)
  - 90% of all HIV+ women with a Peer Counselor that become pregnant again contact their Peer within 6 weeks of identification of a new pregnancy, and return to their prenatal care provider in that time frame
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  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

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- Case Management Agencies: ActionAIDS, Chester AIDS Care Group (ACG), Drexel University, Division of HIV/AIDS Medicine, Partnership Comprehensive Care Practice (PCCP/’The Partnership’)

- Pediatric Centers: Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children (St. Chris)