

## **Title: Social Needs Management in Prenatal Care Clinics**

**Objective:** To understand how prenatal clinics manage unmet social needs, as well as perceive barriers and facilitators to these efforts.

**Methods:** Prenatal care providers were identified/recruited through systematic web search and snowball sampling. Participants completed semi-structured interviews/surveys about their prenatal care practices for determinants of health, including if/how they provide assistance (resources) or adjustments (modifications to make prenatal care more accessible) for patients with unmet social needs. We assessed the services offered across clinic types: Federally Qualified Health Centers, outpatient clinics linked to hospitals, and private practices using basic tests of comparison. Free responses about barriers and facilitators were summarized with qualitative content analysis.

**Results:** In total, 19 clinics representing 8/10 regions participated. 18/19 (94.7%) clinics offered assistance, including resource lists (n=14) and referrals to social work, community-based organizations, and/or case management programs (n=11). Follow-up to confirm that needs were met was completed by 12 clinics. Adjustments were offered at 14/19 (73.6%) clinics including virtual visits (n=8) and flexible visit schedules (n=6). Assistance and adjustment offerings did not differ between clinic type. Reported barriers included lack of staff, funding, and transportation, institutional resistance to change, and limited patient access to technology. Facilitators included dedicated personnel, adequate technology, and training for all employees.

**Conclusion:** Social determinants of health account for over 80% of health outcomes. While many prenatal clinics are able to offer assistance and/or adjustments, the breadth of their services depends on institutional and community resources. Improving the health of birthing people and families requires increased capacity for systematically addressing unmet social needs for all patients.

**Table 1. Assistance Offerings by Clinic Type**

| <b>Clinic Type</b>                                  | <b>Offers Assistance</b> |           | <b>p value*</b> |
|---|--------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
|   | <b>Yes</b>               | <b>No</b> |                 |
| <b>Federally Qualified Health Center (n = 9)</b>    | 9                        | 0         | p = 0.405       |
| <b>Outpatient Clinic linked to Hospital (n = 7)</b> | 6                        | 1         |                 |
| <b>Private Practice (n = 3)</b>                     | 3                        | 0         |                 |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>18</b>                | <b>1</b>  |                 |

\*Tests of comparison completed using chi-square analysis

**Table 2. Adjustment Offerings by Clinic Type**

| <b>Clinic Type</b>                                  | <b>Offers Adjustment</b> |           | <b>p value*</b> |
|---|--------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
|   | <b>Yes</b>               | <b>No</b> |                 |
| <b>Federally Qualified Health Center (n = 9)</b>    | 7                        | 2         | p = 0.917       |
| <b>Outpatient Clinic linked to Hospital (n = 7)</b> | 5                        | 2         |                 |
| <b>Private Practice (n = 3)</b>                     | 2                        | 1         |                 |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>14</b>                | <b>5</b>  |                 |

\*Tests of comparison completed using chi-square analysis