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Preventing excess weight gain in pregnancy with Fit for Delivery

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Statement of the Problem: Pregnancy is an important time of fetal growth and development. Excess weight gain in pregnancy is a health care issue that not only affects the pregnant women but also the developing fetus. Research has identified recommendations for weight gain in pregnancy based on pre-pregnancy BMI. There are a variety of interventions that address preventing weight gain in pregnancy but no uniform consensus. Fit for Delivery is a behavioral intervention that has the potential to prevent excess weight gain in pregnancy and provide an alternative to the traditional counseling by providers during prenatal visits.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: Healthcare delivery has slowly shifted from identification and treatment of disease to an emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention. Dr. Nora J. Pender's theory of falls in line with this recent shift. The Promoting Action on Research Implementation in Health Services Framework (PARIHS) model was utilized for this change project.

Findings: Weight and BMI was the focus of this change project. All participants stayed within the Institute of Medicine (IOM) weight recommendations for pregnancy and no one showed evidence excess gestational weight gain at project completion.

Conclusion & Significance: The intent of this project was to highlight the problem of excess weight gain in pregnancy and identify an intervention to prevent it. The Fit for Delivery program is an evidence-based intervention that incorporated in-person nutritional counseling, telephone support, group fitness, and self-tracking to manage weight gain in pregnancy. Final results showed no participants experiencing excess weight gain. The Fit for Delivery program has the potential to be an excellent resource to help patients and providers accomplish the goal of healthy weight management in pregnancy. The results of this project showed that proper weight management in pregnancy can be achieved with an effective evidence-based behavioral intervention.

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