Exploring Nurses' Confidence in Providing Support to Bereaved Families Following Stillbirth Fetal Loss

Silvia Salazar  
*South Miami Hospital*, silviasa@baptisthealth.net

Jill Costley  
*South Miami Hospital*, jillco@baptisthealth.net

Priscilla Kahn  
*South Miami Hospital*, priscillk@baptisthealth.net

Roxana Linares  
*South Miami Hospital*, roxanali@baptisthealth.net

Natalie Bermudez  
*South Miami Hospital*, natalieber@baptisthealth.net

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**Citation**

Salazar, Silvia; Costley, Jill; Kahn, Priscilla; Linares, Roxana; and Bermudez, Natalie, "Exploring Nurses’ Confidence in Providing Support to Bereaved Families Following Stillbirth Fetal Loss" (2022). *All Publications*. 4447.  
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Exploring Nurses' Confidence in Providing Support to Bereaved Families Following Stillbirth Fetal Loss

*Silvia Salazar, BSN, RN | Jill Costley, BSN, RN | Priscilla Kahn, BSN, RN | Roxana Linares, BSN, RN | Natalie Bermudez, PhD, RN

BACKGROUND/SIGNIFICANCE
- Stillbirth (SB) fetal loss is a significant issue in the United States; 24,000 stillbirths reported in 2013
- SB has psychological and emotional repercussions on parents and healthcare providers (HCP)
- Negative effects of experiencing SB may be reduced by HCPs trained to bereavement support
- More studies needed to explore the impact of SB on HCPs and the preparedness of nurses for providing support
- Nurses’ confidence in caring for bereaved parents is influenced by the nurses’ knowledge and skills for providing support for the bereaved, in addition to awareness of the families’ needs and organizational support

PURPOSE
To assess nurses’ confidence when providing care for families experiencing fetal loss related to stillbirth and to explore nurses’ needs for education and training to provide support to bereaved parents

OBJECTIVES
- Assess nurses’ knowledge regarding the care of families experiencing fetal death related to stillbirth
- Assess nurses’ current practices regarding the care of families experiencing fetal death related to stillbirth
- Explore nurses’ educational and training needs for providing support to bereaved parents following stillbirth fetal loss

METHODS
- Design: Cross-sectional quantitative descriptive
- Sample/Setting: Registered nurses (RN) at South Miami Hospital’s Mother-Baby Unit (MBU);
  - Target sample size = 60
- Recruitment: RNs recruited via email, staff meetings, posted flyers, and personal invitation
- Instrument/Survey:
  - Perinatal Bereavement Care Confidence Scale (PBCCS) (reliable and valid)
  - 43 items and 4 subscales
    - Bereavement Support Knowledge (BSK, α = .833)
    - Bereavement Support Skills (BSS, α = .855)
    - Self-Awareness (SA; α = .797)
    - Organizational Support (OS; α = .842)
  - Administered via REDCap; paper available upon request
- IRB Approval: April 15, 2021
- Data Collection: May 2021 through July 2021

RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PBCCS Subscale</th>
<th>Participant Characteristics</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bereavement Support Knowledge</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.386</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>Suggests older RNs reported higher levels of knowledge related to bereavement support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bereavement Support Knowledge</td>
<td>Level of Education</td>
<td>.328</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>Suggests RNs with more education reported higher levels of knowledge related to bereavement support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Awareness</td>
<td>Received Bereavement Education</td>
<td>.311</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>Suggests RNs who received bereavement support education reported higher levels of self-awareness related to bereavement support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistically Significant Differences in Subscale/Overall Score Averages and Participant Characteristics (One-Way ANOVA)

- Older nurses and experienced nurses had higher self-reported knowledge
- Older nurses had higher self-reported overall confidence with providing bereavement support
- Nurses that received prior bereavement support education had higher self-reported levels of overall confidence

DISCUSSION / CONCLUSION
- Nurses lack knowledge and confidence in providing support to bereaved parents
- The results showed nurses scored above average in self-reported levels of BSK and OS
- Alternatively, BSS and SA scores were below average.
- Limitations:
  - Single-center, single-unit from a convenience sample of nurses.
  - Only 10 percent were in the age range of 18 to 29 years of age
- The researchers concluded MBU nurses need further development of bereavement support knowledge and skills
- Future research will be conducted using a pre/post test design that includes a simulated stillbirth bereavement scenario

References available upon request
*Email Correspondence: SilviaSa@BaptistHealth.net