B1-14: Intrapartum Nurse’s Experience of Supporting Women Who Anticipate the Birth of a Preterm Infant

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Abstract:
Introduction: The rate of preterm births has risen 36% since the early 1980s (Hamilton, et al. 2007). In 2006, preterm infants accounted for 12.8% of all deliveries in the United States (National Center for Health Statistics, 2009). Annually, approximately 1,000,000 pregnancies are classified as high risk and, as a result, 700,000 women require hospitalization (Lumley, 2003). There is a paucity of research concerning nursing support of women who anticipate a preterm birth. The purpose of this descriptive phenomenological study is to explore and describe from the nurses’ perspective, the labor support that intrapartum nurses provide to this population of women. The research question is: How do intrapartum nurses perceive the supportive practices they give women who are anticipating the birth of a preterm infant?

Method(s): A Husserlian phenomenological approach is used to obtain a detailed description of participants’ perceptions of their support practices. To identify nurse participants who have experience in supporting these women, a purposive, snowball, sampling design is used. Fifteen intrapartum nurses will be recruited. Data collection includes face-to-face unstructured, open ended interviews, methodological and personal journals, and field notes. The interview question is “Tell me about supporting a mother who is anticipating a preterm birth.” Interviews are audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Data analysis is conducted using Colaizzi’s (1978) methodology. Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) trustworthiness criteria are used to ensure rigor.

Results: Preliminary thematic findings include “learning on the job”, “recreating home” and “supporting as teaching”.
**Discussion & Conclusions:** Knowledge gained from this research can be used by staff nurses, nurse educators, health professionals and hospital policy makers to develop new protocols to support the vulnerable population of women who anticipate a preterm birth.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

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