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Den kliniske del af dette studie gennemføres på Hvidovre Hospital



A family focused and optimized postpartum programme at the Department of Obstetrics and across sectors for vulnerable families.

Background

It is well documented that the formation of the early relation between parents and infant has a significant impact on the child's mental, social and cognitive development and competencies. Symptoms of mental illness can affect parenting capabilities. Research have found that parental psychopathology may interfere with a healthy interaction with the infant by reducing the ability to be sensitively attuned and responsive to the infant's signal, needs and cues due to the nature of the psychiatric symptoms.

Aim

The aim of this study is to investigate what potential lies within the postpartum stay at the obstetric department and in the transition to the primary health care sector for vulnerable families and to develop an intervention that will help increase the parental sensitivity towards their new born infant to enter a healthy early relationship formation.

Methods

The study is a prospective mixed-method study consisting of three sub-studies.

The first study is a register-based study which aims to investigate how the proportion and the absolute risk of children with predefined adverse developmental outcomes is distributed between families defined as level three or four compared to families defined as level one and two.

The second study aims to qualitatively uncover needs and preferences of the vulnerable families and to investigate the experiences of the health care professionals.

Subsequently an intervention study will be developed, adapted, implemented and evaluated. The intervention will be carried out at the Department of Obstetrics at Hvidovre hospital and in transition to the primary healthcare sector using components from family focused nursing (FFN) and neonatal behavioral observational sessions (NBO) in addition to what have appeared in the two first sub-studies. The intervention aims to facilitate family consciousness of their resources and increase parental sensitivity to foster the best possible prerequisites for a healthy early relationship formation between parent and infant. The study population consists of mothers with anxiety or depression diagnosis giving birth at Hvidovre hospital and enrollment will start spring 2019. Controls: N=55, intervention: N= 55.

Effect from baseline (24-48 hours post-partum) to follow-up (3 months post-partum) will be measured on both the mother, the parents and the infant focusing on depression symptoms (primary outcome), parental stress, parental reflective function, mother-baby interaction, couple relationship satisfaction, infants' self-regulation, family function and breastfeeding.

Perspectives

This PhD study will contribute with a new perspective on the potential of the time immediately after birth and the potential effect of early intervention to improve prerequisites for increased family function and early healthy relationship formation for vulnerable families. The study will provide knowledge and experience about the practical application of FFN and NBO at the obstetric department which have never been done in a Danish context before. It is expected that the study may impact and benefit clinical nursing as well a public health.