

Form Approved
OMB No. 0920-0840
Expiration Date: 01/31/2019

Interview Guide for Prenatal Care Providers

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Semi-structured Interview Guide for Prenatal Care Providers

Introductions: Hello, my name is _____ and I work at [UNIVERSITY]. We're partnering with the March of Dimes and CDC to learn how best to support the health and well-being of pregnant women in Kern County/ East Baton Rouge Parish. We want to understand more about your professional practices related to STD prevention and treatment, and where you access information about STD prevention. Please feel free to speak openly. Everything we talk about will be kept confidential. Let me know if you need to stop for any reason. If there are any questions you do not feel comfortable answering, that is okay; we can skip to the next question. You are also free to end this interview at any time. As a thank you for your time, we will send you a \$50 gift card. We would like to record this interview so we can refer back to it later. All tapes will be destroyed after we have finished our analysis. Is it ok for me to record our conversation? [*If participant says no, thank him/her and end conversation*]. Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

Demographics

Indicate informant's gender

I. Work Experience

1. Tell me about your experience providing prenatal care to pregnant women in Kern/ East Baton Rouge Parish.
 - a. Where do you work?
 - b. What are your main daily responsibilities?
 - c. How long have you been providing prenatal care there?
2. Approximately how many pregnant women do you work directly with each week?
3. What percentage of your pregnant patients initiate prenatal care in the second trimester? Third trimester?
 - a. What percentage of your pregnant patients frequently miss their appointments?
 - b. What percentage are homeless or marginally housed?
 - c. Do you care for pregnant patients who smoke, drink alcohol or use drugs? What kinds of drugs are the biggest problem among this population in your area?
 - d. *If not mentioned...*Is alcohol a big problem among this population in your area? Smoking?

As I mentioned in the introduction, we are going to spend some time talking about professional practices related to STD prevention, including syphilis and congenital syphilis. As a reminder, all of the information we collect will be completely confidential and you can be totally honest in your responses. First we're going to talk about any training or guidance you have received on testing and treatment for syphilis and congenital syphilis.

II. Knowledge

3. Have you ever received any formal training or education about testing pregnant women for syphilis?
 - a. If yes, What did the training consist of? *Probe - Classroom training, online certification, continuing education credits?*
 - b. When did you receive your most recent training?

- c. Where did you receive the most recent training? Is this the same place you work now?
- 4. Have you ever received any formal training or education about treating pregnant women for syphilis?
 - a. If yes, what did the training consist of? *Probe – Classroom training, online certification, continuing education credits?*
 - b. When did you receive your most recent training?
 - c. Where did you receive the most recent training? Is this the same place you work now?
- 5. Do you want more information or training related to diagnosis and treatment of syphilis?
 - a. What types of information / training would be most helpful?
 - b. Are there any topics in particular that you'd like more information on? What topics?
- 6. Where do you go for health information when you have questions or are unsure of something? *Probe – colleagues/ co-workers, internet, reference books?*
 - a. Do you ever seek health information online?
 - i. If yes, which websites do you most often visit?
- 7. Do you know of any resources that pregnant women use to get health information? *Probe – Newspapers? Websites? Women's groups? Blogs / names of blogs?*

Now I'm going to ask you a few questions about any guidelines or guidance related to testing and treating women for syphilis during pregnancy. As a reminder, there are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in seeing what sorts of guidelines you use in your daily practice, and whether they are useful to you.

- 8. Are there guidelines/ guidance that you follow, related to testing women for syphilis during pregnancy?
 - a. If yes, what is the guidance / guidelines?
 - b. Who has released those guidelines? *Probe – State/ County health departments? March of Dimes?*
 - c. Are there specific guidelines that are helpful to you when you are seeing pregnant women? Which ones? Why?
 - d. Are there any guidelines that are not helpful to you? Which ones? Why?
- 9. The CDC recently released a phone app with STD treatment guidelines, called "CDC STD TX Guide."
 - a. Have you heard of this app?
 - b. Have you downloaded it?
 - i. If yes, do you find the app useful? Why / why not?
 - ii. If no, why did you not download it?

III. Attitudes about Congenital Syphilis

10. Among the pregnant women you see, about how many women do you think are at high-risk for having or contracting syphilis while pregnant?
 - a. Do you feel that women in your area are at higher risk of syphilis, compared to women throughout the rest of the state? The rest of the United States?
11. When we are talking about a pregnant woman's risk for having or contracting syphilis, what does the phrase "high-risk" mean to you?
 - a. What puts a woman at "high risk" for having or contracting syphilis when pregnant? / When you are seeing a patient, what are the specific things that make you think a woman might be at higher risk for having or contracting syphilis?
12. If you see a woman who is using drugs while pregnant, what are the standard practices that you follow?
 - a. Is drug use common among pregnant women in your area?
13. If you see a woman who you suspect may be involved in sex work, what are the standard practices that you follow?
 - a. Is sex work common among pregnant women in your area?
14. We know that you are very busy at work and some pregnant women have many competing health priorities. In these cases, how do you decide which health priorities to focus on?
 - a. Is there anything that could help you decide which health priorities to focus on? *Probe – Education? Training? Tools? Guidance?*
 - b. When you are talking to women with many competing health priorities, what are the things that rank highest in terms of priorities to address?
 - c. Where does syphilis generally rank on this priority list?

IV. Practices Related to Syphilis

15. As part of your job, do you test women for congenital syphilis, or refer them for testing?
 - a. If yes, what kinds of tests do you perform?
 - i. Are the tests available in house?
 - ii. Do you refer women to off-site labs for testing?
 - b. In which trimester(s) in a woman's pregnancy do you test?
 - c. If a test returns positive, do you treat a woman on the same day that you performed the test?
 - d. Are there drugs available for treatment?
 - i. If yes, are they free or low cost?
 - ii. Are they available on-site or are women required to travel to access them?
 - e. Have you had any challenges with getting reimbursed for syphilis testing and treatment?
 - f. What is your usual procedure/recommendations around partner testing?
 - g. Under what circumstances do you **not** test for syphilis?

16. Do you feel that there is a risk of side effects related to treatment for syphilis?
 - a. What are the side effects? Why would a woman experience them?
17. Are there any procedures or reporting that you follow if a pregnant woman is found to have syphilis?
18. Do you have to refer women to other hospitals/ clinics for any testing or treatment related to syphilis?
 - a. If yes, what types of testing / treatment require referrals to other places?
 - b. Where do you refer them?
 - c. Are locations typically on-site (at the same location as your hospital/ clinic) or off-site (women are required to travel to complete the testing/ treatment)?
 - d. Are there any drawbacks to referring women for testing / treatment?
 - i. Do you feel that women typically complete the testing/ treatment when they are referred?
 - e. If you order a syphilis test and the patient does not complete the test, are there any follow up procedures to ensure that it gets done? (*Ex: Phone call, letter*)
 - f. Do you test all women who deliver a stillborn infant for syphilis?
19. What forms of communication do you mainly use to talk with patients? *Probe: Phone, Email, Hospital messaging system?*
 - a. What are the most effective ways of reaching patients?
20. Are you aware of any programs or organizations that reach out to pregnant women who may be at risk for contracting STIs?
 - a. If yes, which organizations?
 - b. Do you think they are effective at engaging this population?
 - i. If yes, why? If no, why not?
21. We are interested in finding out the best ways to reach out to pregnant women in Kern County/ East Baton Rouge Parish. Our goal is to make pregnant women more aware of the dangers of congenital syphilis and the rise in cases in Kern County/ East Baton Rouge Parish, and to engage more with prenatal care providers. What do you think is the best way to reach out to pregnant women in Kern County/ East Baton Rouge Parish?
22. Do you have any other suggestions or questions before we end?

Conclusion: Thank you so much for your participation! We appreciate the time you took to answer our questions.