Identifying Postpartum Depression in Non-Native Speaking Immigrant Mothers – Experiences from the Swedish Child Health Services

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"To elucidate different aspects that influences the possibility to identify postpartum depression (PPD) in non-Swedish-speaking immigrant mothers in the Child Health Services (CHS)."

- to elucidate CHS nurses’ experiences of identifying signs of PPD in non-Swedish-speaking-immigrant mothers
- to elucidate non-Swedish-speaking immigrant mothers’ experiences of participating in screening for PPD in the CHS
Survey of the research field

• The prevalence of PPD among immigrant mothers is estimated to be as high as 20% (*Falah-Hassani et al*, 2015).

• The recently migrated mothers are found to be a specifically vulnerable group with five times higher risk of developing PPD (*Dennis et al*, 2004).

• Another vulnerable group is immigrant mothers less proficient in the language of their new country (*Bandyopadhyay et al*, 2010).

• Providing effective screening to immigrant mothers is a challenging task for health care professionals (*Teng et al*, 2007; *Tobin et al*, 2015)
Context

• Skåne
• Centre of Excellence for Child Health Services
• 100 000 children 0-6 years, 40 % with an immigrant background
• 17 000 newborns/year
• 146 CHS units
• 350 nurses, 350 doctors, 45 psychologists
• Screening since 1998
• General screening 2010
The chart shows the percentage of individuals offered to participate in screening and the percentage of those who participated in screening from 2011 to 2016.

- 2011: 83% offered to participate, 65% participating
- 2012: 89% offered to participate, 76% participating
- 2013: 92% offered to participate, 82% participating
- 2014: 93% offered to participate, 85% participating
- 2015: 95% offered to participate, 87% participating
- 2016: 95% offered to participate, 87% participating
Screening for PPD, use of interpreter and follow-up distributed after Care Need Index
To elucidate CHS nurses’ experiences of identifying signs of PPD in non-Swedish-speaking-immigrant mothers

- 13 nurses
- 54 years mean age
- 18 years in the CHS
- 59 newborns à year

Skoog M, Hallström I, Berggren V. “There’s something in their eyes’- Child Health Services nurses’ experiences of identifying signs of postpartum depression in non-Swedish-speaking immigrant mothers” Scand J of Caring Sciences, 2017
Results study I

A constant challenge for deepening the transcultural caring relationship

- Establishing a transcultural supportive relationship

- Interpreting the mothers mood using cultural knowledge

- Striving- sometimes in vain-when screening for PPD
Establishing a transcultural supportive relationship

... that they feel that I welcome them as I welcome any fellow human being and that I don’t look down on them or think that they are different, but that we ... I was about to say become friends, but it’s the wrong word ... but that we have a good relationship. That they feel they are liked and that I listen to them. I think that’s the main thing [...] then they trust me [...] that’s how I think it works (no. 6).
Interpreting the mothers mood using cultural knowledge

- It feels as if they distance themselves from both me and the baby. They don’t hold the baby as I would if it was my baby. There’s something in their eyes or rather there’s something missing. Because it doesn’t matter how tired you are or how hard the nights are or how much the baby cries or how unsure you feel as a mother there is still a spark in most [of the mothers’ eyes], and if I don’t see it I feel worried (no. 13).
Striving- sometimes in vain- when screening for PPD

- You can be pretty tired afterwards and feel that you give and you give. Even if you don’t say that much, it still takes a lot of energy because you have to be in here and now and kind of give of yourself all of the time. I think you sometimes feel really exhausted afterwards (no. 10).
Thanks for listening!

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