

Inadequacies in Nutritional Counseling in the Perinatal Population

Tiffany D. Fry, MSN, APRN-CNP, CCE; Dr. Deana Batross, DNP, APRN-CNP, PMHNP; Dr. Chai Sribanditmongkol, PhD, RN, IBCLC, CNS; Dr. Joy Shoemaker, DNP, APRN, CNP, FNP-BC, CNE

Otterbein University, Westerville, Ohio

Introduction

- Obesity is one of the greatest public health concerns ravaging the health of people globally (Lang et al. 2019).
- Guidelines exist for the prevention and management of obesity, yet little focus is placed on prevention in the perinatal population.
- Singh and DiBari's (2019) research concludes that greater than 20% of women of childbearing age are obese.
- Obesity continues to increase at unprecedented levels and warrants immediate attention at the perinatal level to improve the health of the present and future generations.
- Preconceptional obesity not only negatively impacts the health of the mother, but also places the children at increased risk for obesity during childhood, and most likely for the remainder of their lives (Singh & DiBari, 2019).
- Appropriate education, counseling, and follow-up during the preconception period may curtail or possibly even prevent obesity in future generations.



Figure 1. Perinatal nutritional counseling is crucial to the health of the mother and her unborn child.
Retrieved from: <https://www.scvmc.org/health-care-services/nutrition-therapy>

Problem Statement

- Research reports that inadequate or absent nutritional counseling during the preconceptional and perinatal periods negatively influences the trajectory of obesity in future generations (Anleu et al., 2019; Lang et al., 2019).
- Anleu et al.'s (2019) experimental study support Lang's claim reporting a compelling 51% of women of reproductive age suffer from malnutrition, related to an excess caloric intake.
- Adaptations in the preconceptional period and pregnancy counseling including attaining a healthy weight before pregnancy, regular exercise, and healthy eating, in collaboration with the standard guidelines, provide a strong foundation for the patient to achieve positive outcomes and significantly decrease the risk of childhood obesity (Lang et al., 2019).
- Present and past research studies report health care professionals lack adequate nutritional knowledge and training, therefore the training they provide to the perinatal population is insufficient and not driven by evidenced-based nutritional guidelines (Kumbiley et al., 2021; Nankumbi et al., 2018).
- The overall purpose of the scholarly project is to address any potential healthcare professional knowledge deficits in providing nutritional counseling to pregnant women who are at risk for obesity during the perinatal period.

Significance to the Profession

- Obesity is a multifaceted concern that threatens the nation's economy, health care organizations, and nursing practice in addition to negatively affecting the health of its people.
- Obesity is a modifiable condition, however, according to several systematic reviews, the research suggests being obese as a child is a strong indicator that one will remain obese throughout adulthood (Skelton & Klish, 2021).
- Obesity places a significant financial burden on the nation's economy directly and indirectly.
- According to the Miliken Institute (2018), their research suggests 480.7 billion dollars was the direct cost of health care for conditions related to obesity.
- Registered nurses and advanced practice nurses have an ideal platform to educate and advocate for obese patients to help combat the obesity epidemic.
- Adequate and healthy nutrition during pregnancy is crucial in the growth and development of the unborn child and plays a role in the prevention of future comorbidities as a child and adult (Sulistyowati, 2019).

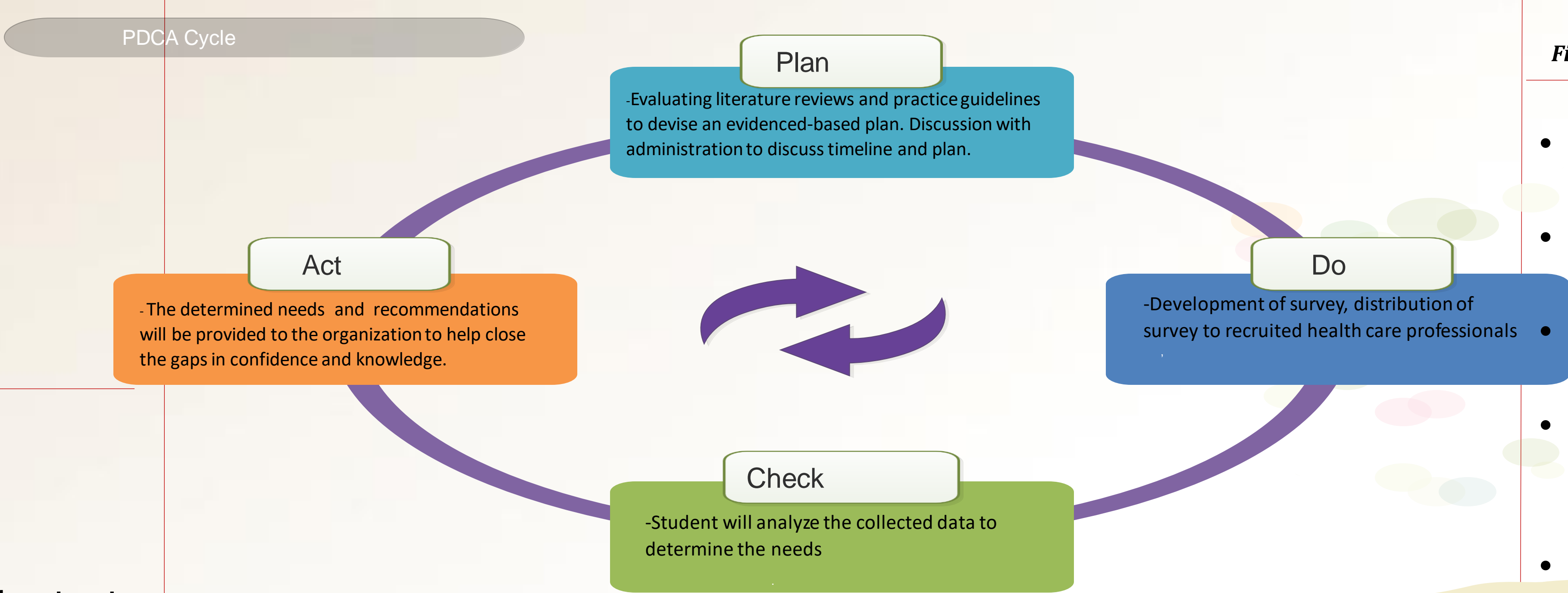


Figure 2. Plan, Do, Check, Act Cycle

Project Description and Design

- The Plan, Do, Check, Act Cycle (PDCA) was used to direct the process.
- A fifteen question needs assessment survey was created by the graduate student to gather data from healthcare professionals in five FQHCs that provide nutritional counseling to the perinatal population.
- The needs assessment will provide the necessary insight for the project team to identify and understand where the gaps in knowledge and confidence exist.
- The survey also evaluates if the health care professionals feel they had adequate perinatal nutritional didactic in school, training at their place of employment, and if they had annual competencies to refresh their knowledge.
- The needs assessment utilized primarily Likert Scale questions and factual questions (correct or incorrect response questions)
- The data utilized to create the knowledge base questions was obtained from the CDC

Outcomes and Evaluation

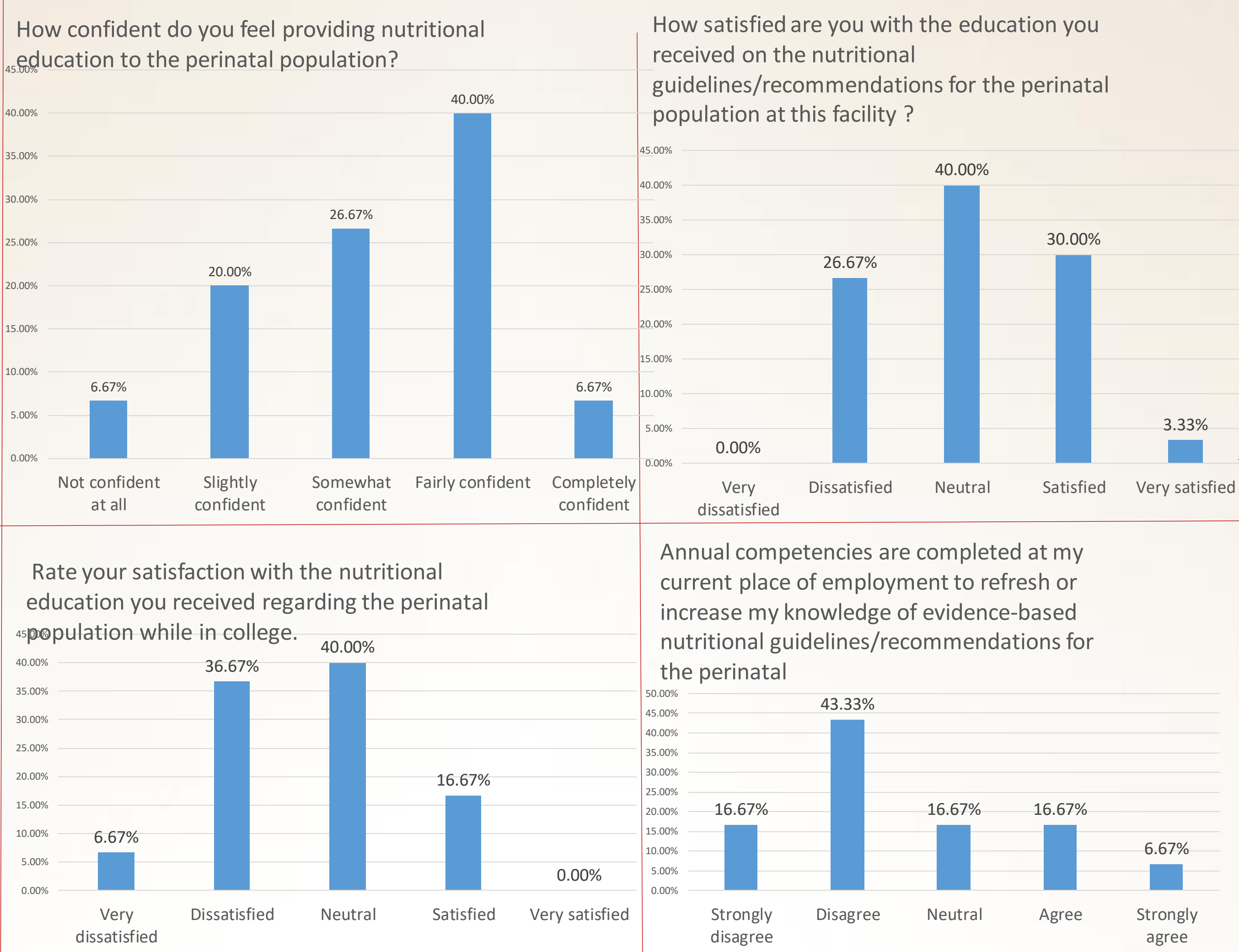


Figure 3. Findings of survey questions 3, 5, 6 and 7

- Less than half of the healthcare professionals reported feeling confident providing nutritional education
- Only 23.34% of respondents knew that zero additional calories should be consumed during the 1st trimester.
- 43.33% identified only 300 additional calories were needed in the second and third trimesters
- 66.66% of the healthcare professionals recognized obesity in pregnancy increases the risk of the unborn child being obese as a child and later in life.
- The participants identified the importance of discussing adequate weight gain at the initial prenatal visit and to discuss appropriate nutrition at every prenatal visit
- 29 of 30 respondents identified the need for increased iron during pregnancy and the importance of taking a daily prenatal vitamin

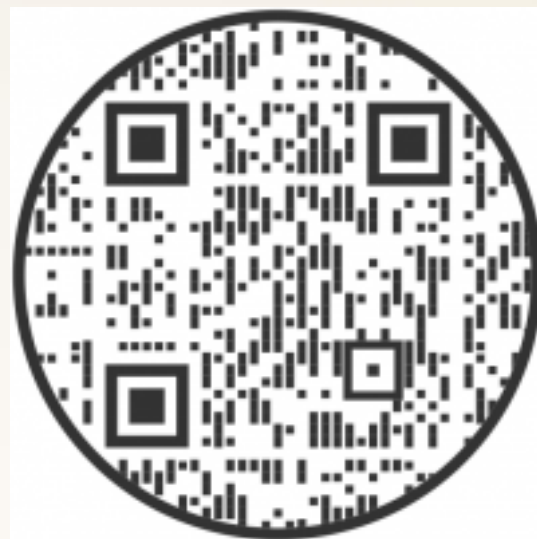
Conclusion

- Afforded the opportunity to gather data to delineate where the inadequacies in knowledge, satisfaction, and confidence
- Data from the survey supports deficiencies exist in confidence, satisfaction and knowledge
- Notable that respondents were knowledgeable regarding importance of discussing recommended weight gain and nutrition, increased need for iron during pregnancy and importance of taking prenatal vitamins
- Limitations included sample size and data only collected from one organization

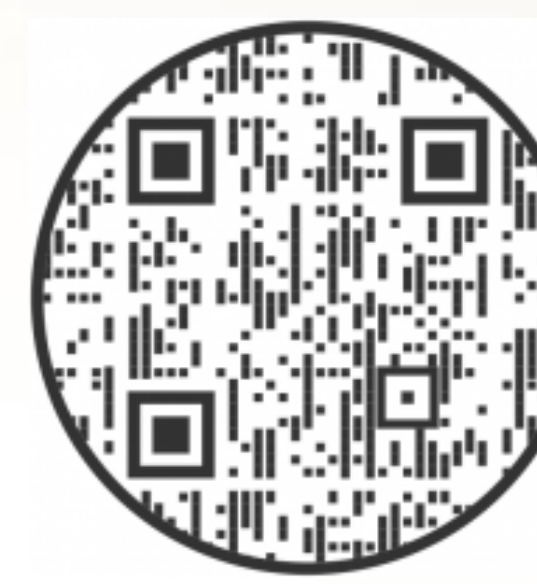
Recommendations

- Provide perinatal nutrition guidelines and education to newly hired healthcare professionals orientation
- Add perinatal nutritional guidelines and review perinatal education annually
- Collect data at more than one organization

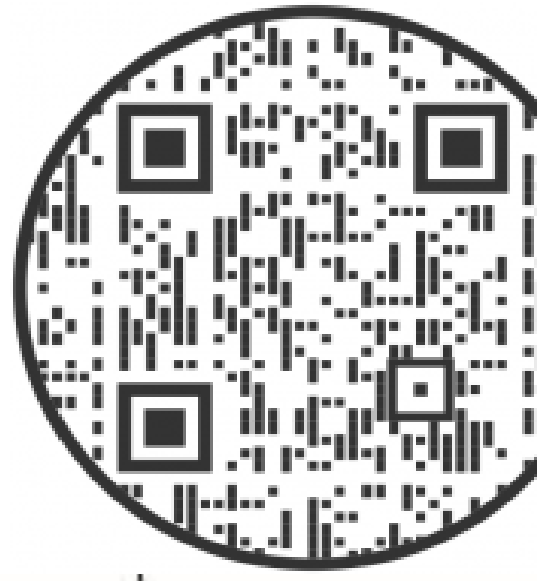
Abstract



Needs Assessment Survey Tool



References



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