

## Implementing Comprehensive Social Work Services for a Maternal/Fetal Care Center Embedded in a Pediatric Healthcare Setting



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## Objectives

- Provide background information and current practices regarding maternal/fetal care
- Explore the process of establishing social work services for a maternal/fetal care center in a pediatric setting
- Discuss considerations for barriers to care and unique patient needs
- Explore social work screening, interventions, and collaboration with other professionals



## When something isn't right

- 3-5% of pregnancies have a genetic or congenital abnormality
- Standard obstetric care offers screening and imaging to detect and abnormalities
- When a concern is noted, a referral to a maternal fetal medicine/fetal center is often the next step



## Maternal/Fetal Care

- Significant advances in care (both from a diagnostic and intervention standpoint) over the past several decades
- Focus on care of the pregnant patient as well as the health of the fetus and postnatal care are considered
- Care offered varies from center to center (i.e. screening and consultation and/or intervention)




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## Fetal Care

- 1981-first fetal surgery in U.S.
- 1988-first fetal laser ablation (Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome)
- 2011-Open fetal surgery for Myelomeningocele (Spina Bfida)
- Centers vary on services and procedures offered




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## The Fetal Center

- Prenatal consultations have been occurring for over 20 years
- Collaboration with local MFM and OB offices
- Nurse coordinator joining with champion physicians in various specialty services




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## The Fetal Center

- February 2021-expansion began to include additional nurse coordinator, MFM, fetal surgeon, sonographer, intake coordinator
- Expansion continued with social worker, nurse practitioner, OB nurse team, additional sonographers, MFM, administrative and leadership staff




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## The Fetal Center

- Outpatient fetal MRI, echocardiogram, and ultrasound
- Multidisciplinary prenatal consultation
- 4 bed inpatient OB unit for fetal interventions and post-partum care
- Active team from The Fetal Center and Neonatology for on-site deliveries
- Simulation and Education




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## Developing the social work role

- Where to begin?
- Considerations for outpatient and inpatient care
- Triage for acuity and need
- Overlap of roles
- Consideration for existing services




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## Comprehensive social work services

- Psychosocial assessments
- Trauma informed care
- Mitigating barriers (insurance, transportation)
- Connecting to resources
- Multidisciplinary consultation
- Anticipatory guidance, inpatient tour
- Collaboration with primary OB/MFM providers
- Coordination of services for delivery and inpatient care
- Warm hand-offs to NICUs, CTICU, Palliative Care




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## Barriers to care

- Navigating the steps for referral
- Transportation
- Communication
- Time commitment
- Options for intervention
  - Relocation
  - Long-term care




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## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- LGBTQIA+
- Language and cultural considerations
- Family Dynamics
- Racial disparities
- Socioeconomic status
- Health Literacy




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## Screening for Safety

- Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale
- IPV and home safety
- Stress and Resiliency screen
- Collaboration with psychology/specialty social work




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## Preparing for postnatal care

- Resources
- Logistical considerations
  - Tour of the inpatient unit
  - Hospital amenities
  - Ronald McDonald House
- Integrating into the medical team
- Outpatient follow-up
- Financial considerations




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## Challenges

- Adult patients in a freestanding pediatric hospital
- Maternal mental health crises
- Adjustment for staff
- Inpatient vs. outpatient goals
- Setting up warm hand-offs




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## Research Opportunities

- Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) (a retrospective study)
  - Prenatal diagnosis of myelomeningocele
  - Evaluating past patients and eligibility for fetal intervention and if common SDOH factors are identified
  - Considerations for future patients




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## Into the Future

- Expansion continues with additional staff
- Consider social work role and possibilities for additional needs
- Continued advancements in possible interventions
- Opportunities for publication, research




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