Enhancing postpartum emotional care: evaluation of an education program for midwives

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Midwives are expected to provide holistic women-centred care (Australian College of Midwives Inc, 2004) yet birthing women consistently report inadequate emotional support. This paper reports on a single group pre-post test pilot study of an educational intervention to enhance the counselling skills of midwives (n = 13). The educational intervention was assessed in regards to attitudes, reported counselling skills and processes as well as knowledge. Participants also evaluated workshop content and processes, quality of facilitation and overall satisfaction. Repeated measures analyses revealed a shift in respondents’ attitudes about working with women who have emotional health problems and disorders. Respondents felt more positive in working with women who have emotional health problems and disorders after attending the workshop in comparison to before. Respondents also reported improved self-perceived competence in the use of treatment techniques (i.e. counselling and relaxation) with women suffering from depression and anxiety. Respondents self-perceived competence in the use of treatment techniques (i.e. counselling and relaxation) with women suffering from depression and anxiety were higher after attending the workshop. The presentation will outline the content of the workshop, substantive results and explore some of the challenges encountered.