A study of health service providers' views regarding nutrition and physical activity promotion for socio-demographically disadvantaged pregnant women and new mothers

Author
Hughes, Roger, Baillie, Elizabeth

Published
2007

Conference Title
Nutrition & Dietetics

Copyright Statement
Copyright 2007 DAA. Published by Blackwell Publishing Ltd. This is the author-manuscript version of this paper. Reproduced in accordance with the copyright policy of the publisher. The definitive version is available at www.blackwell-synergy.com

Downloaded from
http://hdl.handle.net/10072/19178

Link to published version
http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/toc/ndi/64/s1
Socio-demographically disadvantaged women who are pregnant or new mothers are a nutritionally vulnerable and important population sub-group for health promotion effort. Health service providers involved in the day-to-day delivery of health services have high exposure to the challenges experienced by this population group, and as such present as an important source of public health intelligence. This study aimed to assess service providers perspectives on the capacity and currency of existing services relating to nutrition and physical activity relevant to this target population, define attributes of the target population and canvass barriers of optimal nutrition and physical activity during the peri-natal period. A mix of purposive and snowball sampling was used to identify local health and community service providers relevant to the target group. Sampling and interviews (n=17) were conducted until saturation of response themes was achieved. A semi-structured interview technique was used to explore a range of questions relating to service clientele, service capacity, strategy and service needs and information sources. Interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim and thematically analysed using a constant comparison technique. Results from thematic analysis of responses suggest that there is variable maternal access of existing services. Strategies suggested tended to focus on limited reach strategies such as education and skills development and enhancing target group awareness (and use) of existing services, which reflected perceived barriers to optimal nutrition and physical activity. This study has highlighted the need for workforce development associated with increasing service provider awareness of broader health promotion strategy options.