

Whose role is it? Primary care and the provision of emotional support for women experiencing miscarriage: a pilot qualitative Australian study

Vellyna Sumarno^A, Meredith J. Temple-Smith^{A,C} and Jade E. Bilardi^{A,B,C,D}

^ADepartment of General Practice, University of Melbourne, 780 Elizabeth Street, Carlton, Vic. 3010, Australia.

^BCentral Clinical School, Monash University, 99 Commercial Road, Melbourne, Vic. 3004, Australia.

^CMelbourne Sexual Health Centre, Alfred Health, 580 Swanston Street, Carlton, Vic. 3053, Australia.

^DCorresponding author. Email: jade.bilardi@monash.edu

Appendix S1. Interview Schedule

General practitioners care of women experiencing miscarriage and the need for further tools and resources to enhance support.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Demographic questions

I would like to start by asking you some basic demographic information about you and your profession.

PART A: YOU AND YOUR OCCUPATION

1. Age: _____ years
2. Gender: Male Female
3. Practice postcode: _____
4. In which country did you obtain your primary medical degree:

5. What is your current level of training? (skip to Q6 if GP registrar)
 GP resident GP registrar GP fellow
6. Which Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) program are you currently under? Or do you have other specialist GP qualifications that are recognized in Australia?

7. How long have you worked in general practice: _____ months _____ years
8. How many sessions do you work in general practice in an average week: _____
9. How many GPs work at your practice? _____
10. Approximately what proportion (%) of your patients are females of reproductive age?

11. Do you have a particular interest in women's health? Yes / No (If No, go to Q.13)
12. If yes, have you undertaken any specialist training in women's health? Yes / No
If yes, please detail:

13. What types of continuing professional development activities have you engaged in previously?

14. What is your preferred format for continuing professional development activities? Why?

15. Approximately how many women experiencing miscarriage have you seen in the past 12 months? _____

16. Are you aware of any specific policies or procedures in your place of employment for the support of women experiencing miscarriage? Y/N If yes, please detail:

PART B: INTERVIEW - MANAGEMENT OF MISCARRIAGE

This interview schedule is a guide only. These areas of interest may be revised as interviewing progresses and reordered to optimise the flow of the interview. New topics/areas of interest that stem from earlier interviews may be added to the schedule.

ROUTINE PRACTICE

- **At what point would you normally have contact with a woman experiencing miscarriage?**
- **What is your normal routine of care when a woman presents experiencing miscarriage?**
 - Explore if they refer to **early pregnancy assessment services** or emergency departments?
 - Are there any situations in which this may differ?
 - Are there any situations in which you normally advise a woman to have a natural (or expectant) miscarriage?

- **What information do you provide women with at this time?**
- e.g. causes of miscarriage, statistics around miscarriage, what to expect etc.
- If partners are present, would you provide any information specifically to them?
e.g. how to support their partner? what their partner might experience physically following a miscarriage? Etc.
- Do you discuss the grieving process that might occur following miscarriage?

FOLLOW-UP CARE

- **Do you routinely receive discharge summaries from early pregnancy assessment services or emergency departments about patients who have experienced miscarriage?**
- **Would you routinely follow up women in your care who have experienced a miscarriage?**

Why/Why not?

- If yes:

1. What would be your normal follow up process?
2. Would you routinely enquire about women's emotional wellbeing at follow up?
Why/Why not? Would you routinely enquire about a partner's wellbeing at follow up, if they were present? Why/why not?
3. Would you refer women and/or their partners to support services or counselling at this time? Where do you refer? i.e. psychologist, SANDS etc.

BARRIERS TO PROVIDING SUPPORT CARE

- **Have you had any prior training specifically in relation to the management of miscarriage?** i.e. medical student training/specialist training?
 - Was there any specific training in relation to the emotional support following miscarriage?
- **How well equipped do you feel you are to provide emotional support to women and partners experiencing miscarriage?**
- **How long do you think it takes for a woman to recover emotionally from miscarriage?**

- **What are the main gaps or barriers to providing emotional support following miscarriage?**
 - Inability to follow-up?
 - Lack of knowledge/ confidence/discomfort discussing miscarriage with women
 - Focus on the physical miscarriage care and not emotional care
 - Time pressures?
 - Lack of policies/training around support care
 - Busyness /limited resources/low priority

FURTHER TOOLS, INFORMATION & RESOURCES

- **What information or services are you aware of that provide support to women and their partners affected by miscarriage?** Please specify.
 - SANDS/ Bears of Hope/Pink Elephants Network/SIDS?
 - Education/Training/policies in how to support women experiencing miscarriage?
- **What would be useful to help you support women and their partners affected by miscarriage?**
 - Written information?
 - Support services list?
 - A diagnostic tool for psychological wellbeing following pregnancy loss
 - Better procedures around the referral/notification of miscarriage from ED/EPAS'?
 - Practice nurses to follow up women?
- **What format would this be most useful in? - Hard copy pack/online/both**
- **We are thinking of developing a training webinar for GPs around miscarriage support.**
 - Have you accessed webinars for CPD before?
 - Would this be useful to you?
 - What sort of information and resources would you like presented in the webinar?