

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Primary Care

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IHE Consensus Development Conference on

**Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
(FASD) – Across the Lifespan**

October 7 to 9, 2009, The Westin Edmonton, Edmonton, Alberta



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Primary Health Care

- **Primary care** - the provision of integrated, accessible, health **care** services by clinicians that address a large majority of personal health **care** needs, develop partnerships with patients and practice within the context of family and community



Principles of Family Medicine

- Patient - doctor relationship
 - Community Based
 - Resource to the community
 - Clinical Excellence
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- Care for the whole person as situated in their family and community, over time.



Primary Care.

- Prevention of disease
- Early Identification of disease or risk factors
- Treatment of acute disease
- Support over a life time in a personal relationship
- Door opening to secondary and tertiary care
- Rehabilitation



Canadian Recommendations

- The Canadian Task Force on the Periodic Health Exam found that there was fair evidence that case finding, counselling and follow up are effective in managing problem drinking
- Canadian Pediatric Society and 17 co-signees recommends – Prevention efforts should target women before and during their childbearing years, as well as those who influence such women, including their partners, families, and the community. All efforts should be: ***family-centred and culturally sensitive***, to address the pregnant woman as well as her partner and family in the context of their community; and ***comprehensive***, to draw on all services appropriate to the often complex social, economic and emotional needs of these women



Canadian Recommendations- College of Family Physicians of Canada

- The primary care physician is involved in screening for alcohol use in pregnant women, referral for diagnosis, follow-up and linking patients to the community resources.
- The primary care physician is a catalyst for prevention of continued exposure and subsequent affected siblings, referrals for diagnostic assessment, and links to services and resources to improve outcome.



Prevention - TOP guideline Alberta

- Primary Prevention - the goal is to have no fetuses exposed to alcohol, thus eliminating the problems of FAS before they ever develop.
- Secondary Prevention - seeks to reduce the duration and severity of maternal drinking by identification of the person at risk.
- Tertiary Prevention - aimed at reducing the complications, impairments, and disabilities caused by FAS, and includes activities that prevent recurrence of the condition in subsequent children.



Barriers to effective primary screening

Provider Issues

- Lack of training
- Uncertain about how to intervene if problem is found
- Time constraints
- Personal discomfort

System Issues

- shortage of qualified, publicly-funded counselors,
- lack of locally available counseling,

Patient Issues

- stigma attached to diagnosis
- failure to comply with treatment



Primary Care In Canada

- Canada wide – different models
- Responsibility for a population
- Multidisciplinary Teams
- IM/IT
- Choice
- Improving Access



New Model Options

- Shared Care
- Team based care with improved access to Mental health professionals through partnership with a primary care physician
- Co-location
- Population health Perspective
- Partnership outside of the health system – social services, education etc.



Primary Care Role

- Prevention – Anticipatory counseling, early identification, primary, secondary and tertiary
- Treatment – referral to appropriate centralized services or if appropriate bringing the services to the community
- Support of individual and family
- Maintaining integration in the community
- Long term monitoring



Factors that can lead to success

- Shift in focus towards population health
- Maintain Continuity of Relationship
- Maintain Community based focus
- Team based care produces wider range of skills and supports
- Partnerships outside of health care combined with strong partnerships within the larger health care system



Thank You

Questions ?????

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