Attitudes of pregnant women towards regular gestational weight monitoring

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Method

Study Design & Setting
Cross-sectional survey completed during antenatal clinic attendance at The Royal Women’s Hospital (RWH).

Assessment tool
Attitudes assessed by 10 item Likert-style questionnaire developed, validated (content-validity) and piloted by the research team.

Other data obtained:
• Demographic characteristics
• Pre-pregnancy weight, body mass index (BMI)
• General body image pre-pregnancy
• Frequency of weighing pre-pregnancy
• Knowledge of their own GWG target
• Expectations of being weighed during pregnancy
• Actual GWG for the current pregnancy

Data Analysis
Questionnaire was scored per participant; total possible score range: -20 to 20.

Participants
330 adult, English-speaking women with a singleton pregnancy.

Results

Maternal Age (years) (n=325)
32 18-45

Pre-pregnancy BMI (kg/m²) (n=292)
24.6 16.1-46.9

Gestation (weeks)
27 8-40

Parity (n=330)
Multiparous 148 (44.8)
Primiparous 182 (55.1)

Pre-preg BMI category (n=292)
Obese (≥30kg/m²) 43 (14.7)
Overweight (25.0-29.9kg/m²) 62 (21.2)
Healthy weight (18.5-24.9kg/m²) 175 (59.9)
Underweight (<18.5kg/m²) 12 (4.1)

Expect to be weighed in routine antenatal care (n=328)
No 26 (7.9)
Neutral 54 (16.4)
Yes 248 (75.6)

Attitude score (total of 10 item questionnaire) (n=329)
Very negative (-20/20 to -10/20) 45 (13.7)
Negative (-9/20 to 0/20) 174 (52.9)
Positive (1/20 to 9/20) 110 (33.4)

Significance of findings for allied health
Many pregnant women felt positive towards, and expect, regular weighing, although this was particularly the case for women with a healthy BMI pre-pregnancy.

Allied health staff in maternity healthcare are well placed to provide support to pregnant women to achieve optimal GWG.

Background
The Dept of Health Pregnancy Care Guidelines recommend that all pregnant women are given the opportunity to be weighed at each antenatal clinic attendance.

Assessing women’s views towards antenatal weight management is key to implementing guidelines in clinical practice.

Aim
To increase understanding of the attitudes of pregnant women towards regular gestational weight monitoring.

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