Preconception Health Care Delivery in Middle-Income Countries: Strategies to Integrate Along the Continuum of Care

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1st Central and Eastern European Summit on Preconception Health and Prevention of Birth Defects
Main Points

- Preconception health – a missing link in the continuum of MCH care
- Overview of preconception health care: Health promotion/patient education is a major strategy
- Program models from the U.S., Europe and developing regions exist:
  - March of Dimes Global Programs preconception health activities
Integrating Preconception Health into the Continuum of MCH Care

- The need: reducing maternal and infant deaths worldwide
- The life-span approach: extending MCH to include pre-pregnancy and interconception care
- Strategies
  - Raising awareness among women of reproductive age and their families
  - Integrating specific interventions into clinical care
  - Population-based programs
Strategies

- Raising awareness among women of reproductive age and their families
  - Nutritional status
  - Environmental exposures
  - Genetic risk factors
  - Age and parity
- Patient education is a major component of preconception care
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- Raising awareness: Adolescent health education
  - India (JN Medical College, Belgaum)
    - Adolescent girls in rural areas
    - Preconception health education, clinical care (check-up, vaccination)
  - Lebanon (National Collaborative Perinatal-Neonatal Network)
    - Adolescents (grades 11-12)
    - NCPNN team visits schools to educate students
    - Target 48 schools throughout the country
Strategies

- Integrating specific interventions into clinical care
  - Chronic medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, hypertension)
  - Infectious diseases (vertically transmitted)
  - Genetic conditions
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Specific interventions: Infectious disease control

- Latin American and Caribbean Region (PAHO)
  - Perinatal infections curriculum for primary care physicians
  - Focus on infections that can be transmitted vertically
  - On-line, region-wide training resource

- Belarus, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan
  - MOD partnership with WHO and UNICEF to support rubella vaccination campaigns
  - Elimination of Congenital Rubella Syndrome
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- Genetic Conditions: Professional education in South Africa (SAIDA)
  - Inter-conception care/newborn care
  - Training licensed practical nurses in rural clinics
  - Diagnose birth defects
  - Inter-conception counseling of high risk women
  - Training expanded to pre-specialty physicians on rotation to rural clinics

- CAPABILITY Network
Strategies

- Population-based programs
  - Micronutrient fortification of foods to improve nutritional status
  - Perinatal and birth defects surveillance systems to identify needs and opportunities for improving care
  - Vaccination campaigns (rubella)
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- Food Fortification to improve micronutrient status
  - Central America (IDB, CDC, PAHO, INCAP, MINSA)
    - Regional initiative to harmonize fortification legislation and practices
    - Folic acid, iron, vitamin B12, iodine
  - Flour Fortification Initiative
    - Worldwide Network www.sph.emory.edu/wheatflour/
    - European Regional Flour Fortification Consultation – 21st – 23rd October, Bucharest, Romania
March of Dimes Projects

- March of Dimes perinatal and birth defects surveillance projects – information for action
  - China (Peking University)
  - Lebanon (NCPPN)
  - Kosovo (Dartmouth Medical School)
Integration along the Continuum of Care: Opportunities in the CEE Region

- Public and patient education
  - Integrating preconception and inter-conception health messages with MCH health messages
- Clinical services (primary care)
  - Couples consultation/pre-pregnancy check-up
  - Opportunities for education/interventions during post-partum, ob/gyn, primary health care visits
- Medical genetics services strengthening
- Population-based program implementation
March of Dimes Preconception Health Resources

- Professional education
  - Genetics & Your Practice
  - Nursing modules
    - Preconception Health Promotion
    - Genetics Issues for Perinatal Nurses
- Information for women/couples planning a pregnancy
  - Booklets and brochures
  - Information sheets on specific topics
- www.marchofdimes.com / conference table
THANK YOU!

Köszönöm figyelmüket!