

Mixed-Methods Study Evaluating Midwives' Perceptions of Managing Pregnancies complicated by Obesity

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Abstract

For midwives, obesity's rising prevalence is a cause for concern. The lack of regulatory standards, different protocols, and consultant preferences in Canada influence the clinical judgement of the midwife and may result in inconsistent practice. In order to provide care to clients who are affected by obesity, midwives in Ontario, Canada,

Midwives in Ontario, Canada, are faced with the challenge of managing pregnancies complicated by obesity. The rising prevalence of obesity is a cause for concern, and the lack of regulatory standards, different protocols, and consultant preferences in Canada influence the clinical judgement of the midwife and may result in inconsistent practice. In order to provide care to clients who are affected by obesity, midwives in Ontario, Canada, need to have a better understanding of their own perceptions and the factors that influence their clinical judgement. This mixed-methods study aimed to explore midwives' perceptions of managing pregnancies complicated by obesity in Ontario, Canada. The study was conducted in two phases: a quantitative phase and a qualitative phase. The quantitative phase involved a survey of 201 midwives, and the qualitative phase involved semi-structured interviews with 12 midwives. The results of the survey indicated that 20% of midwives reported feeling confident in their ability to manage pregnancies complicated by obesity, while 80% reported feeling uncertain. The qualitative interviews revealed that midwives' perceptions were influenced by a variety of factors, including their own knowledge and experience, the support of their colleagues and supervisors, and the availability of resources. The study highlights the need for further research and education to improve midwives' confidence and skills in managing pregnancies complicated by obesity.

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Received: 21-Jul-22, Manuscript No. jomb-22- 69894; **Editor assigned:** 22, PreQC No. jomb-22- 69894 (PQ); **Reviewed:** 06-Aug-22, QC No. jomb-22-69894; **Revised:** 11-Aug-22, Manuscript No. jomb-22- 69894 (R); **Published:** 18-Aug-22, DOI: 10.4172/jomb.1000122

Citation: Darling EK (2022) Mixed-Methods Study Evaluating Midwives'

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Citation:

Citation information, likely a mix of text and symbols, possibly representing a DOI or a specific citation format.

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