Stakeholder engagement and the diffusion of childbirth knowledge: experiences of the COST project

Joanna White, Maria Schouten Marie Berg, Claudia Meier Magistretti

Seminars were organized between 2011 and 2013 as an offshoot of COST Action IS0907, "Childbirth Cultures, Concerns and Consequences: Creating a Dynamic EU Framework for optimal maternity care". The aim of these events was to engage various stakeholders in exchanging research and experiences related to the improvement of maternity practice in each country setting. Different approaches were pursued.
This installation aims to share what took place at the seminars.

We welcome your feedback!

A healthy start in life. Salutogenesis and health orientation in maternity and early childhood care

COST Switzerland, Lucerne
26 April 2012

Participants: 50. Midwives from clinical, private and birth centre practice, obstetricians, academics, early childhood health care staff, psychologists, doulas, students, mothers, journalists.

Objectives

- To demonstrate the importance of salutogenesis in maternity and early childhood care
- To stimulate discussion about the influences of maternity care on lifelong individual and family health
- To introduce the COST Action and COST-action related projects in Switzerland
- To foster networking among early childhood healthcare professionals and encourage the building of regional communities of practice.

Format: Presentations, panel discussion, plenary.

HOCHSCHULE LUZERN

Fachtagung

Ein gesunder Start ins Leben

Salutogenese und Gesundheit rund um Geburt und frühe Mutterschaft

Donnerstag, 26. April 2012
Hochschule Luzern – Soziale Arbeit, Luzern
www.hslu.ch/fachtagung-cost

Die Fachtagung basiert auf der europäischen COST-Aktion und wird in Kooperation mit der COST Schweiz durchgeführt.

Highlights

- **Presentation on "Salutogenesis at the start of life". Initial results of the systematic review about salutogenesis in maternity care conducted by COST Action members, was presented.**
- **Talk, "Health opportunities in the first part of life", in which the relevance of pre-, peri- and postnatal health for health and wellbeing of individuals and societies was explained.**
- **Panel discussion including COST Action leader Professor Soo Downe, the Swiss COST Delegates and a counsellor for postnatal and infant care, on the insights provided by the COST Action in Switzerland.**
- **Discussion revealed that while salutogenic thinking is widespread in maternity care practice, it is not yet valued and discussed in a broader sense.**

Follow-on

10 Swiss organizations which participated signed up to communities of practice planned for Switzerland.
Contact among participants continued by e-mail, including sharing of news about the continuing work of the Swiss members of COST Action.

Towards optimal maternity care in Sweden and Gothenburg

COST Sweden, Gothenburg
23 May 2012

Participants: 50. Midwives in a range of roles/position of responsibility in different hospitals (Sweden and Norway); parents (fathers and mothers), researchers in the field; the "Födelsehuset" (the "birth house") association.

Objectives

- To identify ways of improving care in labour and birth in Sweden, specifically in the western region.

Format: Presentations, buzz groups.

Towards optimal maternity care in Sweden and Gothenburg

23 May 2012 9.00–12.40

Medicinargatan 16, room: Karl Isaksson

COST Sweden Conference
Action IS0907: Childbirth Cultures, concerns and consequences (www.research4birth.eu)

Programme

09.00 Welcome and introduction
Ingela Lundgren Assistant Professor, PhD, Head of the Institute
Marie Berg, Professor, PhD, Head of Midwifery program
The Institute of Health Care Sciences, Sahlgrenska Academy

09.05 Improving maternity care provision and outcomes for mothers, babies and families by understanding, identifying and learning
Soo Downe Professor, PhD, University of Central Lancashire, Preston, Head of COST SO907.

09.25 A midwifery model of care in childbirth
Marie Berg & Ingela Lundgren

09.35 Maternity care at SU, Gothenburg
Ida Lyckestam, RN, RM, MSc., main supervisor midwifery students

09.45 A mother's experiences of giving birth twice at Sahlgrenska Univ hosp./SU

09.55 Alternative midwifery care at Födelsehuset (The Birth House)
Maria Hogenäs & Eva-Maria Wassberg
RN, RM, Midwives at the Birth House; Födelsehusets Barnmorskor

10.05 Sofie Reinholdsson: a mother's experiences of giving birth at SU and at home

10.15 Robin Edberg: a father's experiences of childbirth at SU and at home

10.25 Parents' interest in alternative models of care. Swedish Research findings
Ingegerd Hildingsson, RN, RM, PhD, Mid Sweden University, Uppsala University, Karolinska Institute

10.40 What alternatives of maternity care are allowed in Sweden?

10.45 Coffee and Tea break

11.00 What does function and what could be better in maternity care?
Buzz groups

11.20 How could we improve care in labour and birth?
Collective work based on buzz groups, ending in an action plan

The Sahlgrenska Academy

Highlights

- Keynote speech: Improving maternity care provision and outcomes for mothers, babies and families by understanding, identifying and learning
- Experiences of maternity care at the Sahlgrenska University hospital (SU) shared from the point of view of a midwife, two mothers and one father
- Presentation of a research-based midwifery model of care in ready for implementation at SU
- Sharing of alternative care at the "FödelsehusetBuzz groups to discuss and present what functions well and what could be improved in maternity care?
- Inspiring day - a unique meeting between health care professionals (mainly midwives), doulas and parents.

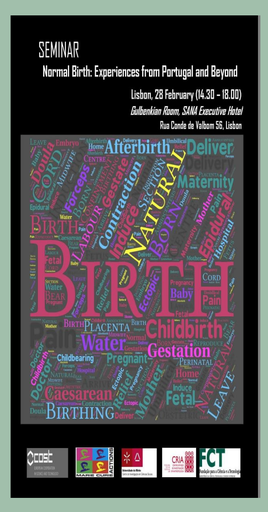
Follow-on

A research intervention focused on a midwifery model of woman-centered intrapartum care has been approved at the highest level. Submission for ethical approval and a detailed research plan are now underway.

Normal Birth: Experiences from Portugal and Beyond

COST Portugal, Lisbon
28 February 2013

Participants: >60. Academics, maternity care staff, private midwives and doulas, civil society activists, mothers.



Objectives

- To facilitate the exchange of research and experiences related to normal birth internationally
- To stimulate discussion about opportunities for promoting normal birth practices in Portugal.
- To draw on and share the knowledge of the COST IS0907 project with a wider Portuguese audience.

Format: Presentations, videos, plenary discussion.

Highlights

The event was over-subscribed, which reveals the level of interest in Portugal concerning issues related to normal birth.
Keynote presentation by the Leader of COST IS0907 on normal birth initiatives in the UK, Ecuador and Brazil and recent scientific research on the possible long-term effects on children of caesarian section.
Lively discussions on the situation in Portugal included debates on the high incidence of C-sections, the phenomenon of homebirth (government maternity services currently do not support homebirth), and the status of midwives and doulas.
Tensions between representatives of civil society movement for "humanized birth" and the doula movement and state maternity service providers contributed to a varied debate.

Follow-on

Seminar proceedings are being circulated in both Portuguese and English. https://sites.google.com/site/seminarnormalbirth/
Cross-over network between academics and practitioners is in its early stages.
A follow-on seminar is planned for Winter 2014.

WHAT (AND WHERE) NEXT?
Three countries, three different events and a lot of interest…

Please also take time to watch the videos and slideshows presented below related our events and respond o the following questions:

What is an important issue related to childbirth in your country?

Who would you like to bring together to have a "conversation" about this? How would you do this?

What do you think are the best ways of reaching different stakeholders to promote normal and salutogenic childbirth?