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## Pelvic Floor Dysfunction: A Prenatal Approach Through an Occupational Therapy Lens

Gaby Hogg

*University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, g.hogg@usa.edu*

Monica Watford Phd, OTR

*University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, mwatford@usa.edu*

Jessica Snow PT, DPT

*jess@genesispwellness.com*

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# Pelvic Floor Dysfunction: A Prenatal Approach Through an Occupational Therapy Lens

Gaby Hogg, OTS; Dr. Monica Watford, PhD, OTR; Dr. Jessica Snow, PT, DPT

## BACKGROUND

Women who are pregnant or post-partum are not well educated on symptoms of pelvic floor disorders (PFD) (Chen et al., 2019). One in three women will experience a PFD in their lifetime (UCLAHealth, n.d.). Despite this prevalence, women are unaware of the symptoms related to PFD and dismiss them as normal (Chen et al., 2019). Women do not know the care provided by a pelvic floor therapist and do not understand when to seek care (Burkhart et al., 2021).

## PROBLEM

Women lack an understanding of the pelvic floor, its function and purpose, thus impacting their participation in occupations. Pregnant women are at a higher risk of experiencing a PFD during pregnancy and post-partum (Boero et al., 2000).

## PURPOSE

To develop a pelvic floor workshop for pregnant women, increasing overall education on pelvic health and pelvic floor dysfunction to better prepare for birth.

### Outcome objectives:

1. Complete a needs assessment at site
2. Develop an educational website/handouts
3. Implement a pelvic floor educational workshop
4. Develop and administer pre/post survey to determine the programs effectiveness

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## METHODS

### Site:

- Genesis PT & Wellness

### Needs Assessment:

- Literature Review
- Observations/Education
- Pelvic floor questionnaire
- 110 responses
- Advertise for workshop
- Create website/educational handouts

### Program Process:

- Implement pelvic floor workshop
- 11 participants (10 females & 1 Male)
- Pre and Post survey via Google Forms
- Analyze surveys

### Theoretical Frameworks:

1. PEO (Person Environment Occupation Performance) (Bass et al., 2017; Baum et al., 2015)
2. Biomechanical Frame of Reference (McMillan, 2011; Radomski & Latham, 2014).



Use QR code to access  
Pelvic Floor Website

**This project involves human subjects but has not been reviewed by the IRB**

## PROGRAM

### WORKSHOP COMPONENTS

#### General Program Goals:

1. Increase participants understanding of the pelvic floor
2. Increase participants knowledge of signs and symptoms of PFD
3. Increase participants awareness of the care a pelvic floor therapist provides
4. Increase participants knowledge regarding pregnancy tips and birthing positions
5. Promote an increased awareness of proper diaphragmatic breathing and connection with the pelvic floor

### Future Directions

- Continued education and awareness of pelvic health information
- Additional pelvic floor workshops
- Continued advocacy of OT practitioners in pelvic health
- Continued revision and updates to pelvic floor website
- Research regarding the benefits of pelvic floor therapy
- Translate information to Spanish

#### Topics Covered:

1. Education of pelvic floor anatomy and functions
2. Education and identification of signs and symptoms of PFD
3. Education of role of OT & PT
4. Education on typical evaluation process and treatment sessions
5. Education of pregnancy tips and birthing positions
6. Education and demonstration of diaphragmatic breathing
7. General Q&A

#### Program Outcomes:

1. Women increased overall knowledge & confidence on pelvic health
2. Women identified common signs & symptoms of PFD, diaphragmatic breathing
3. Women reported the need for more workshops to continue education awareness

## Conclusions

- OT practitioners are uniquely qualified to address the symptoms and problems as a result of PFD
- An educational pelvic floor workshop can positively impact women's education and confidence in pelvic health, identifying signs and symptoms, and general education in pregnancy

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