

How to Support the Referral Towards Group Antenatal Care in Belgian Primary Healthcare Organization: A Qualitative Study [Response to Letter]

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Dear editor

We have read the letter of Andi M Multazam written in response to our paper “How to Support the Referral Towards Group Antenatal Care in Belgian Primary Healthcare Organizations: A Qualitative Study.”

Firstly, we wish to thank the author for his interest in our paper and his suggestion. The author suggests an alternative method of care providing, namely Internet-based Centering Pregnancy.

The Group Antenatal Care (GANC) model implemented in our study is based on the CenteringPregnancy[®] model and aims to offer an integral prenatal follow-up.^{1,2} It includes the medical assessment. The model serves as a substitute and not as a complement to prenatal care. Participants actively participate in their care, including measuring their own blood pressure and weight. This encourages self-reliance and empowerment. Internet-based Centering Pregnancy does not include this medical component. Therefore, although we believe in the added value of such a model in a specific context, it does not offer an alternative for our study.

Besides this medical component, interactive learning and the reinforcement of the social network are two important pillars in the GANC model. Regarding interactive learning, the sharing of information and experiences among group members is encouraged. GANC facilitators encourage this interaction using specific materials and activities. A social network is established by creating space and time for informal contact before, during, and after the sessions. These elements are not transferable as such in an internet-based approach.

In conclusion, we can say that Internet-based Centering Pregnancy can complement traditional one-to-one follow-up, when GANC is not an option due to, for example, the COVID pandemic. However, our aim was to examine the implementation of the GANC model as an integral prenatal follow-up including medical follow-up and therefore cannot be replaced by Internet-based Centering Pregnancy.

Disclosure

The authors report no conflicts of interest in this communication.

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