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Should Surrogacy Care be Included in Nursing Educational Programs?

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Introduction

- Nursing programs often expect nurses to be in a position to observe rules, values, ethics, and responsibility.
- It is therefore important for members of the nursing profession to work collaboratively to align their education with the primary care needs of the patients.
- Surrogate mothers play a critical role in aiding reproduction.
- Despite the growth in the use of surrogate mothers both in the U.S. and globally, very few nursing education programs provide adequate education on this topic.
- The inclusion of surrogacy in the nursing education curriculum is a key consideration identified as a necessity to the current generation.
- There is a growing demand for surrogacy services and that in itself provides a need for proper nursing education that encompasses surrogate mothers.

Background

- Surrogacy becomes an ideal way to help address birth defects and complications that may affect women.
- There are two main types of surrogacies: Traditional and gestational surrogacy. The gestational carrier bears no genetic connection with the child; traditional surrogacy framework is that in which the surrogate becomes pregnant with her own eggs and hands over the child after a successful delivery.
- Many persons still consider surrogacy as an unethical means of delivery. Such mindset should not be permitted to influence the medical field.
- A number of the nursing school programs and nursing students have their focus firmly laid on passing exams.
- Members of the nursing faculty should consider the adoption of a curriculum and experiences that target surrogate mothers.

Methods

Review of the Literature

Inclusion Criteria

- Peer-reviewed articles and books
- Published within the past 12 years
- Published between 2006-2018

Databases searched were: CINAHL complete, Medline and
Keywords used: surrogacy, gestational carrier, surrogate mothers, and nursing.
12 sources were used in the analysis.

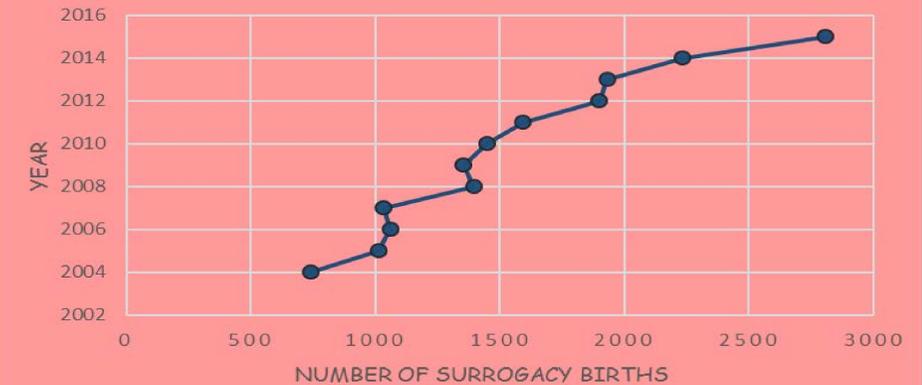
Results

- The American Association of College of Nurses (AACN) curriculum does not contain surrogacy educational requirements despite the steady rise in the practice. A majority of midwifery nursing students have little or no interest concerning the care of surrogate mothers.
- Due to increase of LBTQ relationships, chronic diseases that could impact pregnancy, and the fact that 12% women aged 15 to 44 in the US have issues with carrying a pregnancy to term or getting pregnant, the number of surrogate births are on the rise.
- Surrogate mothers and intended parents both take an emotional risk which further explains the need for a comprehensive educational program to address various issues that may rise during the birthing process.
- In a review of four nursing maternity textbooks, less than one page was focused on care of surrogate mothers.

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THE NUMBER OF BABIES BORN IN THE U.S TO SURROGATE MOTHERS



Source: American Society for Reproductive Medicine

According to the American Society for Reproductive medicine (2015), 2,807 babies were birthed through surrogate mothers as compared to 738 in 2004.



Conclusion

- The need and demand for healthcare services are increasingly divergent.
- The quantitative study reveals gaps and reasons why there is an urgent need to consider inclusion of surrogacy care under the nursing curriculum.
- Historically, nursing education has evolved by adding content affecting society such as geriatrics and end of life care.
- Nursing education should continue to evolve alongside societal changes in order to provide holistic care to our growing and diverse population.

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