

Views on Psychotropics and Lactation Before and After an Educational Intervention

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Objective

The aim of this project was to assess the views among psychiatry residents towards psychotropics and lactation before and after a short education intervention.

Introduction

- Breastfeeding rates have increased worldwide
- In 2021, prevalence of mental illness in women in the United States was 27.2% [1]
- Approximately 1 in 5 women will develop a mental health condition in pregnancy or postpartum [1], which in the US equates to approximately 500,000 pregnancies in women who have or develop psychiatric illness [2]
- Many of these illnesses benefit from psychotropic medications, and oftentimes these medications are compatible with pregnancy and breastfeeding
- Perinatal condition are often not treated or undertreated due to misinformation about the safety profile of psychotropics during lactation, which can have detrimental consequences for the mother-child dyad and the broader family, as well as societal implications
- ACOG recommendations [1]:
 - Treatment for perinatal mood and anxiety disorders be equitably available and accessible to all pregnant and postpartum individuals
 - Do NOT withhold or discontinue medications for mental health conditions due to pregnancy or lactation status alone

Materials and Methods

- Designed a 30 minute lecture for our educational intervention.
- Topics covered: Benefits of breastfeeding; Psychotropic medications and breastfeeding; Resources; Unit/Hospital Policies

Materials and Methods Continued

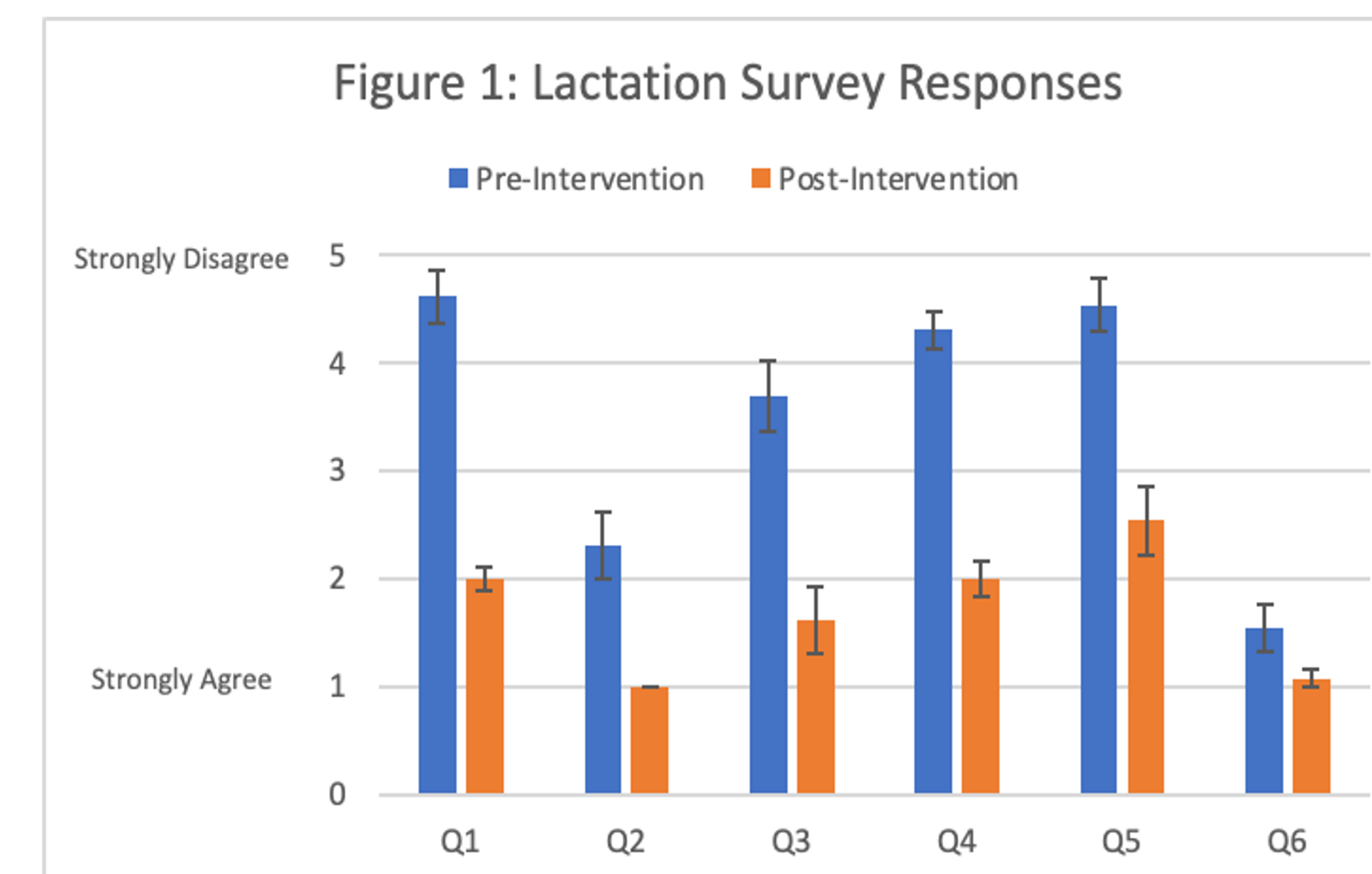
- The presentation was given two consecutive years to psychiatry interns
 - February 2023 to 7 students
 - March 2024 to 6 students
- Interns were asked to complete a 6 question survey before and after the presentation regarding their views on lactation and psychotropics (see below)
- Data was analyzed using paired sample t-tests.

SURVEY QUESTIONS					
Q1. I have received sufficient education on lactation considerations of psychiatric medications	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Q2. I understand the benefits of breastfeeding for parent, baby, and the parent-infant dyad	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Q3. I know what resources to use to learn about a medication's safety in breastfeeding	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Q4. I feel comfortable counseling patients on the lactation considerations of their psychiatric medications	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Q5. I feel comfortable counseling patients on lactation resources (e.g. pumping spaces) available to them while they are hospitalized	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Q6. Understanding breastfeeding is valuable to my practice of psychiatry in general	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Results

- All 13 students completed the pre and post educational intervention questionnaire
- There were statistically significant differences ($p < 0.01$) between pre and post survey ratings for questions 1 through 5
- The responses to these questions indicate significant improvement in interns' comfort and knowledge about the benefits of breastfeeding and considerations for psychotropic medications in this population
- Findings were nearing a statistically significant difference ($p = 0.053$) in question 6 about the value of understanding breastfeeding for psychiatric practice

Results Continued



Conclusion

- Our findings suggest that a short educational intervention on psychotropics and lactation can have a profound positive impact on the comfort psychiatry trainees feel addressing and managing such complex considerations.
- Our findings indicate that psychiatry trainees value an understanding of lactation as it relates to psychiatric practice, and this sense is increased following a short intervention

Future Directions

- Continue yearly presentation for psychiatry interns
- Consider broadening audience to residents outside of psychiatry, notably primary care and obstetrics and gynecology

References

- [1] MS, M., & Kay Roussos-Ross, M. D. (2023). Treatment and Management of Mental Health Conditions During Pregnancy and Postpartum.
- [2] Crawford-Faucher, A. M. Y. (2010). Safety of Psychotropic Medications in Breastfeeding. *American Family Physician*, 81(11), 1369-1370.