

Abstract

Video Counseling and a Safety Planning App to Support Pregnant Women Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence in Denmark and Spain During COVID-19

Karen Andreasen^{1,2}, MSc; Ditte S Linde^{1,2}, PhD; Antonella Ludmilla Zapata-Calvente³, PhD; Stella Martín-de-las-Heras^{4,5}, BDS, MD, PhD; Jesús López Megías^{3,6}, PhD; Vibeke Rasch^{1,2}, MD, PhD

¹Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics, Odense University Hospital, Odense, Denmark

²Department of Clinical Research, University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark

³Brain and Behavior Research Center (CIMCYC), University of Granada, Granada, Spain

⁴Department of Forensic Medicine, University of Málaga, Málaga, Spain

⁵Instituto de Investigación Biomédica de Málaga (IBIMA), Universidad de Málaga, Málaga, Spain

⁶Departamento de Psicología Experimental, Facultad de Psicología, University of Granada, Granada, Spain

Corresponding Author:

Karen Andreasen, MSc

Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics

Odense University Hospital

Sdr.Boulevard 20

Odense, 5000

Denmark

Phone: 45 20962973

Email: ostrupvej@gmail.com

Abstract

Background: Isolation was a consequence of the COVID-19 lockdowns, which led to increased incidence of intimate partner violence (IPV). During antenatal care, it is possible to screen pregnant women for IPV; this offers a unique opportunity for early intervention. During the pandemic, we designed and implemented a digital IPV intervention tailored to pregnant women in Denmark and Spain.

Objective: This study aimed to identify pregnant women exposed to IPV through digital screening and offer video counseling as well as a safety planning app to those who screened positive.

Methods: Pregnant women attending antenatal care were screened for IPV through a digital questionnaire. Women who screened positive were offered 6 video consultations with an IPV counselor and provided with access to a dedicated safety planning app. In-depth interviews inspired by the Model for Assessment of Telemedicine Applications were conducted with counselors and participants. The intervention was cocreated with women who have been exposed to IPV, nongovernmental organizations, and health care providers.

Results: Despite the COVID-19 shutdowns, more than 15,000 pregnant women have been screened for IPV since January 2021. Qualitative interviews with women who completed the intervention as well as IPV counselors show broad acceptance of the video counseling, particularly the ability to participate from a safe environment and talk to a stranger about sensitive and stigmatizing issues. Preliminary findings show that both women and counselors find the video counseling highly supportive, empowering, and aligned with the needs for safety. The majority indicate improved well-being after the intervention, and neither counselors nor participants see video counseling as a barrier toward talking about sensitive topics such as IPV. The safety app was not perceived as effective.

Conclusions: The preliminary results show that video counseling conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic supports pregnant women exposed to IPV and is highly feasible and accepted in both Denmark and Spain.

Conflicts of Interest: None declared.

(*iproc* 2023;9:e41611) doi: [10.2196/41611](https://doi.org/10.2196/41611)

KEYWORDS

intimate partner violence; IPV; pregnancy; eHealth; intervention

Edited by B Dinesen; this is a non-peer-reviewed article. Submitted 02.08.22; accepted 27.03.23; published 03.04.23.

Please cite as:

Andreasen K, Linde DS, Zapata-Calvente AL, Martín-de-las-Heras S, Megías JL, Rasch V

Video Counseling and a Safety Planning App to Support Pregnant Women Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence in Denmark and Spain During COVID-19

iproc 2023;9:e41611

URL: <https://www.iproc.org/2023/1/e41611>

doi: [10.2196/41611](https://doi.org/10.2196/41611)

PMID:

©Karen Andreasen, Ditte S Linde, Antonella Ludmilla Zapata-Calvente, Stella Martín-de-las-Heras, Jesús López Megías, Vibeke Rasch. Originally published in Iproceedings (<https://www.iproc.org>), 03.04.2023. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work, first published in Iproceedings, is properly cited. The complete bibliographic information, a link to the original publication on <https://www.iproc.org/>, as well as this copyright and license information must be included.