

## **TOWN AND GOWN PARTNERSHIPS: IMPROVING PREGNANT WOMEN'S SAFETY**

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In an effort to move research related to women and children experiencing violence from the university setting to the field, the DOVE study has been implemented to test the effectiveness of a structured intervention for pregnant women experiencing IPV. Using existing home health professionals, the DOVE program is directed at empowering new mothers in order to prevent their children's exposure to IPV. A town (community) and gown (academic institution) partnership was developed to assist prenatal home visiting nurses to intervene with pregnant women experiencing IPV but barriers to working together were noted.

**Methods and Design:** Quantitative and qualitative data from surveys and focus group discussions were gathered from the home visitors during a two-day workshop.

**Results:** Thirty-five percent of the home visitors had or were experiencing abuse. Correlation results show that HVs reports of self- or friend-experienced IPV was moderately associated with working with more abused women in their career ( $r=.45$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and having attended more professional trainings about IPV ( $r=.47$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Regression analysis was conducted to examine whether HVs practices were predicted by their experiences of IPV. Qualitative data analysis indicates that fear and stress of intervening with women experiencing IPV are the greatest barriers for the HVs intervening in the community.

**Conclusion:** This study suggests some potential barriers for nurses working with women experiencing IPV. A town/gown partnership can facilitate a reciprocal exchange of information and bring evidence based interventions from the gown partners to practice by working with town partners.