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EDITORIAL

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Maternal Health and Obstetric Nursing in Focus

This supplementary issue of the *Revista Ibero-Americana de Saúde e Envelhecimento (RIASE)* is dedicated to the publication of work carried out by students as part of two course units in the master's degree in Maternal and Obstetric Health Nursing. This edition not only reflects the interest, rigor, and critical thinking that students devote to research, but also represents an important contribution to the reflection and evolution of specialized professional practice.

The eight topics covered reflect current and relevant concerns in the field of maternal health, contributing to the appreciation of the role of Specialist Nurses in Maternal and Obstetric Health Nursing in promoting women's health, from pregnancy to postpartum.

Pregnancy can be analyzed from two essential perspectives that show how knowledge in this area has evolved. On the one hand, the benefits of physical exercise during pregnancy for natural childbirth are increasingly recognized, with physical preparation being valued as the basis for a more satisfying childbirth experience. This approach helps dispel myths about the need for excessive rest during pregnancy, based on scientific evidence that supports more active and participatory practices.

On the other hand, studies on colostrum extraction before delivery constitute an innovative strategy in preparation for breastfeeding. These pioneering studies reveal how small interventions during pregnancy can positively influence the success of breastfeeding, highlighting the relevance of preventive care in obstetrics.

Obstetric practice inevitably confronts professionals with highly complex situations that require very specific technical and human skills. The article, which addresses the intervention of Specialist Nurses in Maternal and Obstetric Health Nursing in spontaneous abortion, focuses on one of the most difficult experiences in clinical practice, where theoretical and practical knowledge must go hand in hand with emotional support for women and families going through moments of great fragility. The clinical case on medical termination of pregnancy enriches this perspective,

offering an in-depth analysis of the ethical and practical issues inherent in this intervention. Both studies underscore the importance of specialized training that enables professionals to deal with all the human and practical complexity of these situations.

Labor and birth are well represented in the article on the role of Specialist Nurses in Maternal and Obstetric Health Nursing in safe childbirth. This study highlights the central importance of these professionals in providing excellent care during one of the most memorable moments in the lives of families, showing how their specialized expertise is crucial to achieving positive outcomes for both mothers and babies.

Postpartum, which has long been neglected in scientific research, receives due attention in this publication through studies that explore its various dimensions. The review of mental health strategies and interventions in the care of women in the postpartum period is a valuable contribution to understanding this transitional phase, which is often characterized by significant psychological challenges that require specialized support.

Breastfeeding is approached from two complementary perspectives that reveal the complexity of this area of intervention. The study on the interventions of Specialist Nurses in Maternal and Obstetric Health Nursing in promoting successful breastfeeding shows the fundamental role of these professionals in establishing and continuing this essential practice. The review of employer support for breastfeeding women broadens this view, demonstrating that successful breastfeeding depends on factors that go beyond direct health care, requiring a comprehensive strategy involving different sectors of society.

This collection of works reveals the scientific and professional maturity of future Specialist Nurses in Maternal and Obstetric Health Nursing, demonstrating a solid understanding of the particularities of maternal and obstetric health nursing. The variety of topics presented here reflects the breadth of skills required in this specialization, from the most specific technical domain to the ability to act in broader social contexts.

We hope that these contributions will drive the continued development of evidence-based practices, resulting in higher quality care for women and families throughout the reproductive cycle.