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**Integrating birth mapping into childbirth education classes for primigravida women**

Many women in Australia have a negative or traumatic birth experience. A poor birth experience is a risk factor for postnatal mental health disorders and can have significant economic and emotional impacts on families. Research has shown that a lack of autonomy or feeling unheard, uninformed, or unsupported in their choices during birth, can lead women to experience childbirth as traumatic.

Birth plans made in collaboration with healthcare providers are associated with women having positive childbirth experiences. A birth map goes beyond a birth plan as it features several possible pathways with a focus on making pre-considered informed decisions. A pilot program is proposed to integrate birth mapping into childbirth education classes for primigravida women receiving standard antenatal care over a 2-year period. In this program, women will attend childbirth education sessions run by specifically trained midwives and be supported to develop an individualised birth map. The purpose of this program is to provide a potential strategy for improving women's birth experiences.

The program will be evaluated through follow-up interviews at 6 weeks postpartum. Women’s birth outcomes, such as rates of intervention, birth satisfaction and experiences of birth trauma will be compared to a similar cohort of women who did not access this program or its contents over the same timeframe.

Women having their first baby often don’t know what they don’t know. This program aims to help women think about the unknown, find the information they need and improve their birth experiences.

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