



IMPACT WV

Rural Service Coordination Programming for Women Using Substances and Their Families

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Why was this study done?

Rates of neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS), a set of withdrawal symptoms in newborns due to exposure to certain substances in the womb, and substance use disorder (SUD) are rising in West Virginia. This increase highlights the need for better support systems for affected families. This study evaluated the IMPACT WV program, which provides a range of services to women with SUD and their infants. The purpose of the study was to see if IMPACT WV could improve outcomes for families, including the development of their babies, the mental health of mothers, and the level of domestic violence. By doing so, the study aimed to find out if this community-based support could be helpful for families in other rural communities.

What was done?

Three organizations provided services to women and their infants: a birthing hospital, a reunification program, and a home visiting program. During the study, 182 families received help from these programs. The study captured how these services affected infant development, the level of family violence, and the well-being of mothers. Patient navigators provided healthcare, social support, and direct aid (such as assistance with housing, food, and transportation). Families participated in the program for an average of 655 days. The birthing hospital provided services for an average of 514 days, the home visiting program for 664 days, and the reunification program for 804 days. The study found that the program significantly improved infant development and reduced family violence, though it did not result in major changes in maternal depression or substance use.



What was found?

The study showed that families who were enrolled in the IMPACT WV program had better outcomes in terms of infant development ($p < .02$) and less family violence ($p < .001$). There were no major changes in maternal depression or substance use. Mothers were more depressed in the home visiting program, while domestic violence was less common in the reunification program compared to the birthing hospital.

What does this mean?

The IMPACT WV program helped improve infant development and reduce family violence, showing that combining different types of support can be beneficial to families. Since there were no major changes in maternal depression or substance use, more research is needed to enhance the program. Future studies should look at how to better support mothers' mental health and recovery, especially in rural areas, to ensure that families continue to get the support they need.