Support Desired by Women following Termination of Pregnancy for a Fetal Anomaly

Aarti Ramdaney, BS (Advisor: Jennifer Czerwinski, MS, CGC)

With the rapidly evolving field of prenatal testing, there is a growing need to provide support for women pursue a termination of pregnancy following the discovery of a fetal anomaly. Previous studies have documented that women often feel unsupported after termination for a fetal anomaly, but the type of support and resources desired by this population has not yet been determined. We studied the awareness and utilization of support resources and influential factors in 51 women at the time of the procedure, at 6 weeks, and at 3 months following the event. Initially only 50% admitted contemplating their individualized need for support. Anonymity was selected as the most influential factor in their decision to participate in support systems. However, the desire to move on from the pregnancy was the most cited factor that prevented consideration of support resources in the follow-up period. Additionally, many women indicated not coping as expected and experiencing unexpected psychological consequences following the procedure. Our findings indicate that women in these situations may not realize what their long-term support needs will be. Additional support resources need to be developed to meet the unique desires of this population that promote anonymity and a flexible timeframe for uptake.

Advisory Committee:

- Jennifer Czerwinski, MS, CGC Chair
- Rebecca Carter, MS, CGC
- Syed S. Hashmi, MD, MPH, PhD
- Steven Meltzer, MD
- Manju Monga, MD