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The profile of women has impact on preconception evaluation - a case-control study

Nádia Correia, A Relvas, AC Rodrigues, A Margarida Pinho, C Silva, JP Águeda, M Lopes, S Almeida, T Dias

USF Famílias, ACES Feira/Arouca, Lourosa, Santa Maria da Feira, Portugal

Corresponding author: Dr Nádia Correia, USF Famílias - ACES Entre Douro E Vouga I., Ovar, Portugal. E-mail: nadiacorreia.24@gmail.com

Background and Aim: Prenatal care measures have contributed to the maintenance of low infant mortality rates, but unplanned pregnancies still occur. The main objective of this study is to determine whether the profile of women is associated with the fulfillment of preconception consultation at a Primary Care Center (PCC); this profile includes characteristics such as sociodemographic, chronic disease, surveillance in family planning consultation, among others.

Method: This is a case-control study, conducted between October 2014 and October 2015. The population consisted of the patients enrolled in the PCC with at least one episode, in the years 2010-2013, encoded as W78, W79, W80, W82, W83 or W84 (ICPC-2), which corresponded to a total of 378 women. The case group consists of women who had preconception evaluation and the control group is composed of those who had not; the first has 113 patients and the second group 265. The data were collected from the electronic medical database. It was adopted a level of statistical significance of 0.05.

Results: The mean age of women in both groups was 30 years. 37.2% of the women who wanted to get pregnant had preconception evaluation. There were 36% of unplanned pregnancies.

Statistically significant differences were found between both groups in the following variables: education ($p = 0.025$), profession ($p = 0.010$), follow up in previous surveillance consultations ($p = 0.000$) and surveillance of the pregnancy ($p = 0.000$).

Discussion: Some of the results are consistent with the ones of the studies consulted, especially with regard to the differences between the education level of women who did or did not perform preconception surveillance. The total number of unplanned pregnancies is similar to the one in other studies conducted in Portugal.

Work limitations are present, such as the bias of information and registration, inherent to this type of study.