

Birth plans article review examples

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The article “ Birth Plans: Are They Really Necessary?” discusses the practice of using birth plans in regulating relationships between women and labor and delivery facilities. The two experts in this area, Polly Perez, a Perinatal Nurse Consultant, and Stacy Lepsch, a Clinical Nurse Level II, express opposing opinions on this issue. Lepsch believes that birth plans have little value in the modern obstetric care as they only constraint delivery nurses and often represent unrealistic expectations of the future parents. Moreover, empirical evidence suggests that birth plans do not improve the overall birth experience and may even hamper it. According to Lepsch, a close dialogue between a woman and her care provider during the whole pregnancy as well as the adherence to the best medical practices could easily replace birth plans and ensure positive birth experience. Perez, on the other hand, is convinced that birth plans are an essential tool to facilitate communication between families and caregivers, to empower women and to reduce decision-making pressure on the woman during the childbirth. For Perez it is not a question whether birth plans should be used today, but how they should be most effectively integrated into the healthcare system.

Each author in the article discusses only one side of the story, however together they provide a holistic view on the use of birth plans nowadays. Yet the opinion of Polly Perez seems to be more well-grounded and considers a wider spectrum of implications related to childbirth. Birth plans do not merely express parents’ desires, as argued by Stacy Lepsch, but represent a product of an extensive dialogue between the future family and caregivers. They force both parties to engage in a more profound discussion related to giving birth and reduce uncertainty associated with this event. Furthermore,

birth plans are not binding and allow nurses to use their judgement if there are medical reasons for non-compliance with woman's wishes. Therefore, even if Stacy Lepsch expresses valid concerns regarding the inflexibility that birth plans bring into the labour and delivery care, the use of birth plans seems to be generally beneficial for all stakeholders, including future parents and caregiving institutions.

References

Capitulo, K. L. (2005). Second opinion: Birth plans. *The American Journal of Maternal/Child Nursing*, 30(5), 288-289.