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## Family nursing and the lived experiences of male partners of women who have previously been diagnosed with postpartum depression

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Postpartum depression (PPD) is a real complication in the postpartum period. This qualitative phenomenological study was designed to gain a broader perspective regarding the phenomenon of postpartum depression (PPD) and its impact on family structure based on face-to-face audio taped interviews. Seven male participants were recruited through a community hospital. The verbatim transcripts were rigorously analyzed and compared to identify common themes within and between the fathers' individual experiences using a two group analysis and Spiegelberg's (1965, 1975) six step process. The men experienced overarching feelings of being vulnerable when their partners' behavior began to change in such a way that they no longer recognized the person she had become. They initially rationalized the cause for the changes. As things changed within their family's structure, fathers felt an overwhelming need to try to fix things. The second major theme was one of being helpless to know what to do or say; whatever they did was not right or good enough. Given time, the third overall theme of coping emerged in which they were able to identify methods for dealing with the changes that occurred in their lives when their partner was diagnosed with postpartum depression. Suggestions included the need for more one to one education with parents. Also fathers need to be patient and more attuned to the needs of their partner. The foremost clinical implication from the study is the need for healthcare providers to develop better educational methods to relate information about postpartum depression to childbearing couples.

### Biography

Judy Kaye Smith has completed her PhD in 2013 from Texas Woman's University Houston, Texas. She is an Associate Professor at Lamar University, Beaumont, Texas teaching at the graduate level. In 2014 she assumed the role of Graduate Evidence-Based Projects Manager. She has been actively involved in writing and executing several nursing grants, developed several simulation modules and has been both a podium and a poster presentation presenter at several local, regional, state and national conventions.

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