

Prenatal Genetic Counseling and Second Trimester Maternal Serum Screening: Experiences of Genetic Service Providers in India

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Genetic counseling is the profession that aims to deliver complex genetic information in a simplified form and enables the client to make an informed decision regarding the genetic testing. There is no universal distribution of genetic counselors, and there is a dearth of genetic counselors in almost every region, including the United States and India. In order for genetic counseling services to be enhanced, there needs to be extensive awareness of and education regarding genetic counseling. While studies have been done in the US to evaluate these factors, very few studies have been done in India. Our study aims to describe how genetic service providers in India are offering these services and their experiences with respect to utilization and perception for prenatal genetic counseling services. Wide variation was observed in terms of ways of offering MSS and amniocentesis indicating that there is a difference in practice and utilization of genetic counseling services within India itself. Genetic service providers frequently hear from their patients that genetic counseling is a useful service. No effect of different ways of offering MSS and amniocentesis on perceived utility of these services was noted. We hope our study lays a platform for further research in order to improve training as well as the availability and utilization of prenatal genetic counseling services.