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## CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

# Modifying Essential Coaching for Every Mother, a postpartum text message program, for implementation during COVID-19

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### *Introduction*

Essential Coaching for Every Mother is a six-week postpartum text message program that was previously developing in consultation with postpartum mothers and healthcare providers with the goal of improving women's psychosocial outcomes.<sup>1</sup> With the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020 and the readiness of the Essential Coaching for Every Mother program to fill the sudden gap in postpartum support, a decision was made to modify the program to be offered immediately. Given that Essential Coaching for Every Mother was developed prior to COVID-19, some modifications were necessary of existing messages and for the inclusion of coronavirus related content.

### *Aims Objectives Theory or Methods*

To ensure that the revised content of Essential Coaching for Every Mother was appropriate and acceptable, the modified messages were piloted with mothers and postpartum healthcare providers simultaneously. Messages were updated using the Government of Canada and World Health Organization guidelines around mother-infant care and coronavirus<sup>2,3</sup> and followed the Government of Nova Scotia public health guidelines.<sup>4</sup> Ten existing messages were modified and 4 new messages were created. A subset of participants who were involved in the original development were shown the revised messages through screen sharing using video conference software by the first author who conducted all the interviews.

### *Highlights or Results or Key Findings*

Three mothers and seven healthcare providers participated in the modification of the messages. Overall, the mothers and healthcare providers felt the messages were appropriate and relevant related to changes in postpartum care during the coronavirus pandemic. Feedback was related to ensuring that the messages shared information about what mothers could do (e.g., go for walks when safely physically distancing, see their family doctors for vaccinations and follow-ups) and who to contact if they had questions (i.e., call 811). There were also recommendations to provide links to current guidelines in case recommendations changed. Nine messages were modified from the original program to be relevant to COVID-19, of which four messages were collapsed into two,

and five new messages were added to the program. During the first two weeks, messages were sent 2-3x/day a day for the remaining four weeks. In total, Essential Coaching for Every Mother-COVID-19 stream has 56 text messages.

### ***Conclusions***

The modification of Essential Coaching for Every Mother to be applicable during COVID-19 pandemic was achieved relatively efficiently, with a total of 56 messages. We were able to maintain approximately twice a day messages for the first two weeks, except for three days in which three messages were sent.

### ***Implications for applicability/transferability sustainability and limitations***

The Essential Coaching for Every Mother postpartum text message program can offer a way to provide evidence-based, people-centered care during a time of challenges associated with COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. By engaging mothers and healthcare providers in the message modification, it helps ensure that the messages are relevant, appropriate, and desirable.