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# St. Mary's Research Centre Seminar Series

Centre intégré  
universitaire de santé  
et de services sociaux  
de l'Ouest-de-  
l'île-de-Montréal

Québec 



**Sandra Peláez, PhD**

**Senior Qualitative researcher,**  
St. Mary's Research Centre  
**Lecturer,** Faculty of Education-Department  
of Education & Counselling Psychology,  
McGill University

## Mental health and pregnancy: Women's experiences in Canada

**When :**  
Tuesday, October 25  
12:00—13:00

**Where :**  
Auditorium  
(Basement)  
St-Mary's Hospital center  
3830 Lacombe Avenue,  
Montreal

A light lunch will be served

**Everyone is welcome !**

### Abstract

Mental health problems before, during and after pregnancy can affect up to 20 -30% of childbearing women, with adverse effects for the mothers, their children and families. Epidemiological studies have contributed to our understanding of the patterns of illness and clinical treatment effects, and an evidence base is emerging for best practice, although there are important gaps related to identification, diagnosis and treatment, and we have limited information about the lived experiences of women from their perspectives. The overall aim of this study is to better understand women's experiences and information needs regarding mental health problems during and around the time of pregnancy. We will create an initial or pilot collection of Canadian women's stories using audio and video recording, including a diverse sample of 10-15 narrative interviews. We will then produce a short 20-30 minute video (a 'trigger film') to stimulate discussion about important issues related to this topic. The results are intended to inform three primary audiences, namely: women experiencing perinatal mental health problems, their family members and friends, and healthcare professionals who care for these women. This is one of two studies about perinatal mental health at St. Mary's funded through a donation from the Royal Bank of Canada and St. Mary's Hospital Foundation.

### About the speaker

Dr Sandra Peláez is a senior qualitative researcher at St. Mary's Research Center and also a Lecturer at McGill University. Dr Peláez's research focuses on the experiences of patients with chronic diseases. Her work cover three main areas, namely: the barriers and facilitators to the treatment prescribed and recommended treatment; the relationship between self-management of the disease, changes in lifestyle and psychosocial factors associated with the health of populations; and the role of social support in the promotion of health. Recently, she became interested in the concept of "expert patient" as a standpoint to develop appropriate interventions to promote healthy lifestyles. As part of her studies, she uses different qualitative research approaches, sometimes combined with mixed methods. The results of Dr Peláez studies were the subject of various dissemination tools, including scientific publications and presentations, and has contributed to the development of randomized controlled trials examining the impact of interventions and policies.

**St. Mary's Research seminar series has a strong commitment towards the education of the hospital's staff, of its patients, and of the neighbouring community. The research center hosts bi-weekly seminars**  
**open to everyone**