

Maternal Mental Health

Session Plan

Session	Maternal Mental Health
Background Information	Up to 1 in 5 women and 1 in 10 men are affected by mental health problems during pregnancy and the first years after birth. Unfortunately, only 50% of these are diagnosed. Without appropriate treatment, the negative impact of mental health problems during the perinatal period is enormous and can have long-lasting consequences on not only women, but their partners and children too. However, this is not inevitable. When problems are diagnosed early and treatment and support offered promptly, these effects can be mitigated ¹ .
Aim	To raise awareness of maternal mental health
Learning Outcomes	<p>Participants will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dispel some of the myths around maternal mental health 2. Describe what maternal mental health is 3. Discuss potential signs and symptoms of maternal mental health 4. Discuss how poor maternal mental health can impact on mother, partners and families 5. Explore resources to support mother and families
Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.5 hours
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT • Quiz • Presentation • Flipchart/pens • Session handouts • Evaluation

¹ <http://www.rcgp.org.uk/clinical-and-research/toolkits/perinatal-mental-health-toolkit.aspx>

Learning outcomes	Participant Activity	Resources	Time
1. Dispel some of the myths around maternal mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myth buster 	Quiz	10 min
2. Describe what maternal mental health is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is maternal mental health? 	Flipchart/Pens Slide	10 min
3. Discuss potential signs and symptoms of maternal mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What to look out for 	Flipchart/Pens Slide	15 min
4. Discuss how poor maternal mental health can impact on mother, partners and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family activity 	Flipchart/Pens Slide	20 min
5. Explore resources to support mother and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports 	Flipchart/Pens Slide	15 min
6. Looking after our own mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-care activity 	Slide	5 min
7. Evaluation and session close	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation 	Evaluation	5 min

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Facilitator notes

Slide	Notes	Time	Resources
1	Welcome participants and introduce yourself before offering an overview of the session. Have the title slide up whilst doing this.	5 min	Slides
2	<p>Put up the session overview slide and read out what will be covered today.</p> <p>Keeping safe Reinforce this is a basic awareness session and does not allow for detailed discussion. If you are concerned about a participant's mental health and wellbeing and feel they may be in distress, their Doctor should be their first point of contact. If you feel the person's life is in immediate danger please call 999 for assistance.</p> <p>Online delivery Please refer to the Healthy Minds Online Guidance if you are facilitating a session online.</p>		
Activity	<p>Dispelling the myths: Quiz</p> <p>Individual or Group Activity</p> <p>Let's start with exploring some of the myths that surround maternal mental health</p> <p>Distribute the quiz to participants. This can be done on an individual basis or as a group. Ask participants to complete the quiz, true or false. This is a good starting point and gives an insight into the participant's knowledge and attitudes on maternal mental health.</p> <p>Once completed, go through each of the questions of the quiz to generate discussion. Use the supporting statements to provide the correct answers and information.</p> <p>Discussion point: Were there any surprises? Share the activity is a good starting point to help challenge some of the myths associated with maternal mental health.</p>	<p>10 min</p> <p>(5 min activity, 5 min feedback)</p>	Quiz
Activity & 3	<p>What is maternal mental health?</p> <p>Group Activity</p>	5 min	Slide Flipchart Pens

	<p>Divide the participants into groups, provide flipchart and pens. Now we are going to explore what we mean by maternal mental health. How would you describe/define it, what is your understanding of maternal mental health?</p> <p>Invite the groups to discuss what their understanding of maternal mental health is, what words do they associate with it. Ask them to write down the key points from their discussions. Take feedback from the groups.</p> <p>Put up the slide what is maternal mental health up and read out the information, make reference to any similarities the groups have identified.</p> <p>Discussion point: how did they find this exercise? Often maternal mental health is described as 'baby blues' and for many women this will be the case where they are feeling down a few days after the birth; however if there is a prolonged bout feeling low or anxiety and depression then this is not 'baby blues'. Many think that maternal mental health or post-natal depression only occurs after the baby is born however there are women who experience low mood, depression and anxiety during pregnancy.</p>		
4	<p>Statistics</p> <p>The purpose of the statistic section is to help build a picture of the prevalence of maternal mental health.</p> <p>Inform the participants we are going to look at some statistics relating to maternal mental health. Read the information off the slide.</p> <p>Discussion point: once you have read off the information, ask the participants what their thoughts and views are on the statistics, are they alarmed by them, or did they expect worse? Again highlight that the statistics provide a snapshot of the scale of maternal mental health problems.</p>	15min (5 min activity, 10 min feedback)	Slide
Activity & 5	<p>What to look out for</p> <p>Group Activity</p>	10 min	Slide

	<p>Divide the participants into groups, provide flipchart. Remind them we have looked at what maternal mental health is and now we are going to explore what to look out for, what signs would prompt us to be concerned about a woman's mental health during pregnancy and the first year after birth?</p> <p>Invite the groups to write down possible signs and symptoms on the flipchart. Take feedback from the groups one/two examples from each.</p> <p>Put up the slide. Inform participants this list is not exhaustive and there may be other signs that go unnoticed.</p> <p>Remind participants of the safety notice if they are concerned for an individual's mental wellbeing.</p>		
<p>Activity & 6</p>	<p>Impact of maternal mental health on mothers, partners and families</p> <p>Group Activity</p> <p>Keep the participants in their groups. Now we are going to look at how maternal mental health can affect the mother and family's mental health and wellbeing?</p> <p>Give each group a flipchart and allocate each of them with a family member – i.e. mother, father or partner (including same sex partner), other children within the family.</p> <p>Ask them to consider the impact of pregnancy or the new addition to the family has on each of these family members when the mother or father/ partner have been affected by maternal mental health issues.</p> <p>Take feedback from each of the groups. It is expected that participants will have included stress, anxiety and depression, strained relationships as examples of how maternal mental health can impact on wellbeing.</p> <p>Mothers – some issues may include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inadequacy • anger, frustration and loss at the absence 	<p>15 min (8min activity, 7 min feedback)</p>	<p>Slide Flipchart Pens</p>

	<p>of hoped for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • happiness and fulfilment • shame and stigma • guilt <p>Fathers/Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can find coping with their partner's depression overwhelming, frustrating, and isolating (Davey et al 2006). • Increased risk of depression (Huang & Warner 2005). • May overwork, drink more • Relationship strain • Guilt <p>Baby and siblings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression undermines a mother's ability to interact with her baby responsively, so that the baby is significantly less likely to form a secure attachment (Martins & Gaffen 2002). • Children (especially boys) of mothers who have been postnatally depressed are at increased risk of cognitive delay (Murray & Cooper 1997, Sharp et al 1995) and behavioural problems by school age (Sinclair & Murray 2001; Hay et al 2003). • Moderate to severe depression in mothers and fathers increases children's risk of experiencing depression themselves, particularly in early adulthood (Weissman et al 2006). • Untreated psychosis is associated with preterm birth and low birthweight (Nordentoft et al 1997; Howard 2001). <p>Put up the slide and share the examples, acknowledge similarities that participants have highlighted. Remind participants this is not an exhaustive list.</p> <p>Acknowledge that this exercise demonstrates how poor maternal mental health can significantly impact on a family's wellbeing. However, with the right support in place there can be positive outcomes.</p>		
<p>Activity & 7</p>	<p>Supports</p> <p>Group Activity</p>	<p>15 min</p> <p>(5min activity, 5</p>	<p>Slide</p> <p>Flipchart</p> <p>Pens</p>

	<p>This part of the session will highlight some resources that can support maternal mental health.</p> <p>We have looked at what maternal mental health is, what signs to look out for and the impact on mothers, fathers, partners and their families. We mentioned with the right support in place outcomes can be positive.</p> <p>Put participants into groups and invite them to discuss what supports are available for maternal mental health. Once completed take feedback from each group, one/two examples from each. Once all groups have fed back, bring the slide up.</p> <p>Circulate the maternal mental health resources document, highlight this is not an exhaustive list.</p> <p>Facilitators can adapt the resources handout to include locality resources and supports.</p>	min feedback)	
Activity & 8	Remind the participants of the importance of looking after their own mental health and provide a self-care activity.	5 min	Slide
Session Close	Thank the participants for their time and ask them to complete an evaluation.	5 min	Evaluation