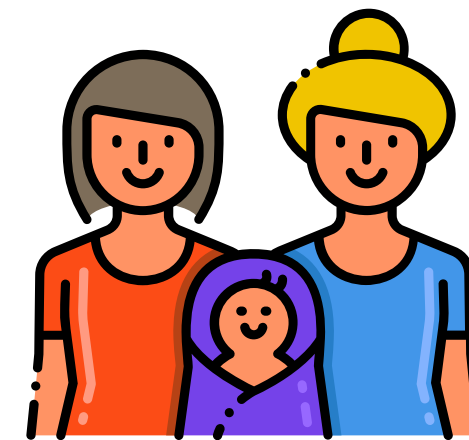


Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Good Practice Guide



INTRODUCTION

Perinatal Mental Health refers to mental health during pregnancy and up to one year after the baby is born. During this period new and expectant parents (mums, dads, co-parents, partners') can experience issues with their mental health. This includes mental illness existing before pregnancy, as well as illnesses that develop for the first time, or are greatly exacerbated in the perinatal period. These illnesses can be mild, moderate or severe, requiring different kinds of care or treatment. The stigma and fear associated with perinatal mental health can leave those affected feeling inadequate as a parent, isolated and vulnerable and can impede or delay getting help, treatment and recovery.

Infant Mental Health is the development of a healthy mind in the infant. It describes the social and emotional wellbeing and development of children in the earliest years of life. It reflects whether children have the secure, responsive relationships that they need to thrive. It is often an overlooked and misunderstood subject.

Whilst the perinatal period can be a vulnerable time for all women and their families, research highlights that those with protected characteristics including women of colour, LGBTQ+ and young parents are at greater risk of developing mental health problems. Their vulnerability is further exacerbated due to additional factors of culture and ethnicity, stigma attached to mental health, language barriers, poverty, discrimination, lack of awareness of supports available and many more.

It is crucial that families are supported to have positive mental health and wellbeing during the perinatal period. Untreated perinatal mental health problems present a major public health concern and can have long-term impacts on the physical and mental health outcomes of mothers, babies, partners, and families.

This resource is intended to support Health Care Workers, Third Sector partners and any community organisations in contact with families during the perinatal period. The guide takes cognisance of the nine **protected characteristics** as set out in the **Equality Act (2010)** and gives suggestions as to what organisations might do to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by new and expectant and parents and their infants due to their protected characteristics.
- Take steps to meet the needs of new and expectant parents and their infants from protected groups where are different from the needs of other people.
- Encourage new and expectant parents from protected groups to participate in activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Although **poverty** itself is not a protected characteristic, it is an issue that affects all groups, cutting across protected characteristics. A section on poverty has been included within this guide to recognise the impact poverty and financial challenges can have on mental health during the perinatal period.

For more information on Equalities and Human Rights visit: [NHSGGC - Equalities in Health](#)

A supporting Training Appendix is included which offers suggested learning opportunities for staff wishing to develop and increase their knowledge and understanding of Perinatal and Infant Mental Health.



Getting it Right for New and Expectant Parents Mental Health



Protected Characteristic	Good Practice	Supporting Resources	Purpose
<p>Pregnancy & Maternity</p>	<p>Learning and Training</p> <p>Staff access formal Maternal Mental Health, Infant and Early years training opportunities relevant to their role.</p> <p>Staff participate in a Healthy Minds Maternal Mental Health (MMH) awareness session. This can be delivered in house by senior management or identified staff. Session can also be delivered to new and expectant parents.</p> <p>Participate in a Healthy Minds Mental Health Stigma and Discrimination awareness session using case study for new and expectant parents to support the session. This can be delivered in house by senior management or identified staff. Session can also be delivered to new and expectant parents.</p> <p>Staff participate in suicide prevention self-harm training appropriate to their role and responsibilities.</p>	<p>See Supporting Training Appendix</p> <p>Download MMH session (no 9) from Mental Health Improvement Team website</p> <p>Download MH Stigma and Discrimination (no 15) from Mental Health Improvement Team website</p> <p>A range of learning opportunities and resources to support staff across the public sector and beyond to develop the knowledge and skills needed to promote good mental health and wellbeing across the whole population and to prevent mental ill health, self-harm or suicide. Staff will need to register with TURAS Learn to access, but anyone with an email address, no matter what their location or role is, can register free of charge. Mental health improvement, and prevention of self-harm and suicide Turas Learn (nhs.scot)</p>	<p>Promoting insight and understanding of MMH.</p> <p>Enhancing knowledge and practice around stigma and discrimination experienced by new and expectant parents.</p> <p>Support the infants' emotional health and development and relationship with primary care giver.</p> <p>Support parents' who disclose they are self-harming and/or who are suicidal.</p>

Protected Characteristic	Good Practice	Supporting Resources	Purpose
<p>Pregnancy & Maternity</p>	<p>Staff have access to a range of resources that can help support their practice.</p> <p>New and expectant parents have access to information and resources to support their own and infant's mental health.</p>	<p><u>Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Third Sector Service Directory - Inspiring Scotland</u>: signpost new and expectant parents who may require support for their mental health that you are unable to provide eg counselling provision.</p> <p><u>KIDS - Kids Independently Developing Skills NHS GGC</u>: provides a single point of immediate access to information, advice, strategies and self-help support from NHS staff.</p> <p><u>Mood Disorders during pregnancy and after the birth of your baby</u>: a booklet for women and their families.</p> <p><u>Maternal Mental Health Pledge poster</u></p> <p><u>Implementation Toolkit - Parent-Infant Foundation (parentinfantfoundation.org.uk)</u>: a toolkit for commissioners and providers who want to set up, improve or expand parent-infant relationship teams in the UK.</p> <p><u>Resources for Professionals - Parent-Infant Foundation (parentinfantfoundation.org.uk)</u>: resources specifically for professionals working in Infant Mental Health.</p>	<p>Promoting insight and understanding of different resources to help support mental health during the perinatal period.</p> <p>Support the infants' emotional health and development and relationship with primary care giver.</p>

Protected Characteristic	Good Practice	Supporting Resources	Purpose
<p>Pregnancy & Maternity</p>	<p>Staff have access to a range of resources that can help support their practice.</p> <p>New and expectant parents have access to information and resources to support their own and infant's mental health.</p>	<p><u>Perinatal Positivity Video</u>: audio and translations available. Voices and experiences of women and men who have had mental wellbeing difficulties around the time of pregnancy, childbirth and beyond.</p> <p><u>Ready Steady Baby! (nhsinform.scot)</u>: a guide to pregnancy, labour and birth and early parenthood up to 8 weeks.</p> <p><u>Shaping Us (centreforearlychildhood.org)</u>: campaign to raise awareness of why early childhood matters to everyone.</p> <p><u>NHSGGC Perinatal Mental Health Guide - NHSGGC</u>: a staff guide to help have conversations PNIMH and signposting to resources/supports. Download from Mental Health Improvement Team website. Copies can be ordered from <u>HPAC (durham.gov.uk)</u></p> <p><u>Key Messages for Best Practice: 2 - Voice of the Infant: best practice guidelines and infant pledge - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)</u>: provides direction on how to take account of infants' views and rights in all encounters.</p> <p><u>Wellbeing for wee ones Parent Club</u>: information about baby development, attachment, building connections. This guide provides a greater understanding of how important parent to child connection is.</p>	<p>Promoting insight and understanding of different resources to help support mental health during the perinatal period.</p> <p>Support the infants' emotional health and development and relationship with primary care giver.</p>

Protected Characteristic	Good Practice	Supporting Resources	Purpose
Pregnancy & Maternity	<p>Abortion</p> <p>Provide information on abortion support services if required.</p>	<p><u>Abortion (sandyford.scot)</u></p> <p><u>Antenatal Results and Choices (ARC) Support for Parents and Professionals (arc-uk.org)</u>: offer support for parents who have made the decision to end a wanted pregnancy because of a problems detected with the baby.</p>	Promoting insight and understanding of issues that can impact on mental health during the perinatal period.
	<p>Addictions</p> <p>Share information and available supports on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).</p> <p>Promote information and awareness of Alcohol before, during and after pregnancy resources.</p> <p>Promote services that offer support to those with alcohol issues.</p>	<p><u>Alcohol Focus Scotland</u>: provides useful information for staff. The FASD Hub Scotland provides help to families living with FASD through its helpline 0300 666 0006 (option 2) Tues-Thurs, 10am-2.30pm.</p> <p>Alcohol and Pregnancy resources can be ordered from <u>HPAC (durham.gov.uk)</u></p>	
	<p>Baby Loss</p> <p>Promote services offering support around baby loss including, miscarriage, stillbirth and cot death</p>	<p><u>Baby Loss Retreat Supporting Bereaved Families Scotland</u>: offer counselling and support to families who have suffered any baby loss resulting in miscarriage, stillborn, neonatal death and IVF.</p> <p><u>(miscarriagesupport.org.uk)</u>: providing counselling for women and couples in Scotland who have suffered miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal loss.</p> <p><u>NHS Bereavement Support for Parents and Siblings</u></p> <p><u>Home - Scottish Cot Death Trust</u>: offer support to anyone in Scotland affected by the sudden unexpected death of a baby or young child.</p> <p><u>Still Birth and Neonatal Death (SANDS)</u>: offer support for as long as they need it, to anyone affected by the death of a baby.</p>	

Protected Characteristic	Good Practice	Supporting Resources	Purpose
Pregnancy & Maternity	<p>Birth Trauma</p> <p>Staff have an awareness of birth trauma and its impact on new and expectant parents' mental health</p>	<p><u>Home - Birth Trauma Association</u></p>	<p>Promoting insight and understanding of issues that can impact on mental health during the perinatal period.</p> <p>Promote understanding of the importance of early life experiences and the impact on life-long health and development.</p>
	<p>Breastfeeding</p> <p>Promotion and support for breastfeeding parents.</p> <p>Promotion and availability of local breastfeeding support groups.</p>	<p><u>Breastfeeding resources - Baby Friendly Initiative (unicef.org.uk)</u>: resources that cover a range of issues around establishing and continuing successful breastfeeding.</p> <p>Breastfeeding Information/Literature can be ordered from <u>HPAC durham.gov.uk</u></p>	
	<p>Care Experienced</p> <p>Promote information for care experienced new and expectant parents to help them have their voice heard.</p>	<p><u>Care experienced people - The Promise</u></p> <p><u>Home - Who Cares? Scotland (whocaresscotland.org)</u></p>	
	<p>Common Illnesses and Conditions</p> <p>Promote information on common illnesses and conditions which could occur in pregnancy and childbirth.</p>	<p><u>NHS Inform Scotland Pregnancy and Childbirth</u></p>	
	<p>Eating Disorders</p> <p>Staff have an awareness of eating disorders in Pregnancy.</p>	<p><u>Eating Disorders in the Perinatal Period: A Course for Midwives and He – Wednesday's Child (wednesdayschild.co.uk)</u>: a module for anybody working with expectant or new mothers.</p>	

Protected Characteristic	Good Practice	Supporting Resources	Purpose
Pregnancy & Maternity	<p>Imprisonment</p> <p>Signpost to help and resources for families affected by imprisonment.</p>	<p><u>Help, information, and support for families of prisoners Families Outside</u></p>	<p>Promoting insight and understanding of issues that can impact on mental health during the perinatal period.</p>
	<p>Peer Support</p> <p>Provide peer support for new and expectant parents or signpost to peer support opportunities within your local community.</p>	<p><u>Perinatal Peer Support principles and poster</u></p> <p><u>Let's do Peer Support: Bump, Birth & Beyond - Scottish Recovery Network</u></p>	<p>Enhancing knowledge and practice around stigma and discrimination experienced by new and expectant parents.</p>
	<p>Prematurity</p> <p>Staff have an awareness of Prematurity and information and supports available.</p>	<p><u>Prematurity NHS GGC</u></p>	
	<p>Stigma</p> <p>Staff have an awareness of stigma and discrimination experienced and ways to help address these.</p>	<p><u>See Me Perinatal and infant mental health stigma (seemescotland.org)</u>: a suite of resources to support practitioners, commissioners and service providers with a framework to improve services and support, and remove the barriers which stigma presents.</p>	

Protected Characteristic	Good Practice	Supporting Resources	Purpose
Sex	<p>Campaigns</p> <p>Participate in campaigns that raise awareness of Maternal, Paternal, Partner and Infant Mental Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBT+ Month (Feb) • Maternal Mental health awareness week (May). • Men's Mental Health Week (June) • Infant Mental Health Week (June) • Suicide Prevention Week (September) • Black Maternal Mental Health Week (Oct) 	<p>LGBT+ History Month (lgbtplushistorymonth.co.uk)</p> <p>Perinatal Mental Health Partnership</p> <p>Men's Health Forum</p> <p>NHS GGC Infant Mental Health Service Wee Minds Matter - NHSGGC</p> <p>United to Prevent Suicide</p> <p>The Motherhood Group - Supporting the Black Maternal Experience</p>	<p>Promoting insight and understanding of maternal, paternal and infant mental health.</p> <p>Promoting insight and understanding of issues that can impact on mental health during the perinatal period.</p>
	<p>Contraception and Sexual Health</p> <p>Promote sexual health services information on your organisations digital platforms and promotional materials.</p>	<p>Sandyford Sexual Health Services</p> <p>Post-natal Contraception Animation explains why it is beneficial for expectant parents to consider post-natal contraception as part of their routine birth plan. Available in other languages.</p>	
	<p>Gender Based Violence</p> <p>Staff have an awareness of Gender Based Violence (GBV).</p> <p>Display information on your website, leaflets and other promotional material to promote supports available to those who have/or are still experiencing GBV.</p>	<p>Home - Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline (sdafmh.org.uk): helpline available and information for professionals.</p> <p>LGBT Domestic Abuse Scotland: provide support and advice to LGBT people and professionals.</p>	

Protected Characteristic	Good Practice	Supporting Resources	Purpose
<p>Sex</p>	<p>Dads and co-parents</p> <p>Is your service inclusive of dads and co-parents?</p> <p>Do you mention dads and co-parents as well as mums to be and new mums?</p> <p>Are dads and co-parents visible on your website, leaflets and in policies?</p> <p>How do you make your services known to dads and co-parents?</p> <p>Have you considered a support group for dads and co-parents?</p>	<p><u>Dad's Rock</u>: provide support to Dads and families.</p> <p><u>Facts for Fathers to be</u>: a downloadable leaflet available in different languages.</p> <p><u>Fathers Network Scotland</u>: works to increase fathers' involvement in the life of their children.</p> <p><u>Same Sex Parenting</u>: information on parenting in same sex relations.</p> <p><u>New Family Social</u>: support for LGBT+ families with adoption and fostering.</p>	<p>Promoting insight and understanding of paternal and partner mental health.</p>
<p>Marriage & Civil Partnership</p>	<p>Relationships</p> <p>Raise awareness of the impact that pregnancy and becoming new parents can have on relationships and provide information on supports and resources available.</p>	<p><u>Counselling and relationship support in Scotland The Spark</u></p> <p><u>Relationships and wellbeing in pregnancy Ready Steady Baby! (nhsinform.scot)</u></p>	<p>Promoting insight and understanding of Marriage, Civil Partnership and impact on mental health during the perinatal period.</p>

Protected Characteristic	Good Practice	Supporting Resources	Purpose
<p>Age</p>	<p>Is your organisation inclusive of young parents?</p> <p>Do you include information for young parents?</p> <p>Are young parents visible on your website, leaflets and in policies?</p> <p>How do you make your services known to young parents?</p> <p>Do you have links with your local Family Nurse Partnership team?</p>	<p><u>Young parents Childline</u>: provide information for young parents including advice on going back to school.</p> <p><u>Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood</u> (RSHP): resource can be used in community based learning.</p> <p><u>One Parent Families Scotland</u>: offer a range of supports to single parent families in Scotland.</p> <p><u>GGCFamilyNursePartnership@ggc.scot.nhs.uk</u></p> <p><u>Becoming the Mum I Want to Be</u>: A young mother involved in the Family Nurse Partnership programme in NHS Tayside talks about how the Partnership helped her become the mum she wanted to be.</p>	<p>Promoting insight and understanding of PNMH in different age ranges of parents.</p> <p>Enhancing knowledge and practice around working with young and older parents in the perinatal period.</p>
	<p>Staff consider and are aware of the risks in Pregnancy and Birth for Older Women.</p>	<p><u>Pregnancy and birth for women over 35 NCT</u></p>	

Protected Characteristic	Good Practice	Supporting Resources	Purpose
<p>Sexual Orientation & Gender Reassignment</p>	<p>Is your service inclusive of LGBT+ families?</p> <p>Do you include information for LGBT+ parent families?</p> <p>Are LGBT+ parent families visible on your website, leaflets and in policies?</p> <p>How do you make your services known to LGBT+ people in your area?</p> <p>Have you considered a support group/peer supporters for LGBT+ parent families?</p> <p>Do you promote/participate in LGBT+ History Month and/or local LGBT+ Pride events?</p>	<p>Stonewall: download easy read definitions of lesbian, gay bi and trans.</p> <p>NHS Inform: LGBT Paths to Parenthood.</p> <p>Stonewall Parenting Rights</p> <p>Rainbow Families: Events, information and support for LGBTQI families.</p> <p>Queer Families: Support and advice for LGBTQ parents.</p> <p>Queer Families: Hints and Tips for Services working with LGBTQ+ families.</p> <p>Pride and Joy: a selection of podcasts on queers having kids.</p> <p>Association of Breastfeeding Mothers: tips for supporting LGBTQ families.</p>	<p>Promoting insight and understanding of same sex parenting relationships and transgender parents.</p> <p>Enhancing knowledge and practice around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.</p> <p>Understanding the importance of inclusive language including using the correct pronouns/titles for LGBT+ parents.</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>Is your organisation inclusive of parents who have a disability and/or have a baby with a disability?</p> <p>Do you include information for parents or babies affected by disability?</p> <p>Is disability visible on your website, leaflets and in policies?</p> <p>How do you make your services known to parents with a disability and/or with babies with a disability?</p> <p>Have you considered a support group/peer supporters for parents with disabilities and/or with babies with a disability?</p>	<p>Down's Syndrome Association: provides a range of information on pregnancy and new parents. Helpline 0333 1212 300 offers info, support/advice to people with Down's syndrome, their families and the people that support them.</p> <p>Deaf Parenting UK: information for Deaf parents and professionals working with Deaf parents.</p> <p>National Autistic Society: a guide for partners of autistic people.</p> <p>The British Dyslexia: provides information on dyslexia friendly style guide.</p>	<p>Promoting insight and understanding of Disability and impact on mental health during perinatal period.</p> <p>Enhancing knowledge and practice around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.</p>

Protected Characteristic	Good Practice	Supporting Resources	Purpose
<p>Race & Ethnicity</p>	<p>Is your organisation inclusive of Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority parents?</p> <p>Do you include information for BAME parents?</p> <p>Is BAME visible on your website, leaflets and in policies?</p> <p>Do you make you services known to BAME parents?</p> <p>Do you interpret key information in various languages?</p>	<p><u>Communicating with Diverse Communities: Tips Cards</u></p> <p><u>Translations (nhsinform.scot)</u>: Health information in different languages and formats - including BSL, Easy Read and translations.</p> <p><u>Films - Perinatal Positivity</u>: available in different languages</p> <p><u>Glasgow Wellbeing Services NHS (wellbeing-glasgow.org.uk)</u>: a range of downloadable mental health information in different languages</p> <p>Postnatal depression information available in Arabic <u>اكتئاب ما بعد الولادة Translations Mental Health Royal College of Psychiatrists (rcpsych.ac.uk)</u></p> <p><u>Ready Steady Baby Translations (healthscotland.com)</u></p> <p><u>The Motherhood Group - Supporting the Black Maternal Experience</u></p>	<p>Promoting insight and understanding of Race and Ethnicity and PNIMH.</p> <p>Enhancing knowledge and practice around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.</p>
<p>Religion & Beliefs</p>	<p>Have an awareness of the different faiths and implications for new and expectant parents.</p>	<p><u>Interfaith Scotland</u>: a guide to faith communities in Scotland.</p>	<p>Promoting insight and understanding of religion and beliefs and considers for mental health during the perinatal period.</p>

Protected Characteristic	Good Practice	Supporting Resources	Purpose
<p>Poverty</p>	<p>Staff have an awareness of financial support available to new and expectant parents.</p>	<p><u>Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods - mygov.scot</u>: are payments that help towards the costs of being pregnant or looking after a child.</p> <p><u>Claim Child Benefit for one or more children - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</u></p> <p><u>Child Disability Payment - mygov.scot</u></p> <p>Emergency Maternity Grant: A pregnant women/person or carer is eligible for this grant if; they are experiencing any immediate or emergency need relating to attending a Maternity clinic appointment within a NHSGGC Hospital site (i.e. travel costs, food, clothing etc.); experiencing money difficulties. To arrange a referral the staff member should contact the Support & Information Service on 0141 532 7378 or email sis@ggc.scot.nhs.uk. If they are closed, please call 0141 452 4012 and leave a message, someone will get back to you.</p> <p><u>Maternity Allowance claim form - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</u></p> <p><u>Maternity pay and leave: Pay - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</u></p> <p><u>Money Worries - NHSGGC</u></p> <p>National Debt Helpline: Call 0808 808 4000 , Monday to Friday 9am-8pm and Saturday 9:30am - 1pm</p> <p><u>Scottish Child Payment - mygov.scot</u></p> <p><u>Support and Information Services</u>: non-clinical spaces within hospitals. Staff in these Centres can provide information and support on a wide range of health and lifestyle issues, including benefits and money advice.</p> <p><u>Tax-Free Childcare - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</u></p>	<p>Promoting insight and understanding of the impact poverty and financial challenges can have on mental health during the perinatal period.</p>

Training Appendix

Perinatal Mental Health Curricular Framework: a framework for maternal and infant mental health. This framework sets out the different levels of knowledge and skills required by members of the Scottish workforce who have contact with mothers and their babies, to enable them to support mothers, babies and their families to have positive well-being and good mental health during the perinatal period. Click on the image below to download information.

Course: Understanding maternal mental health e-module

Descriptor: Introduces the learner to key facts about mental illnesses that may affect women during their pregnancy and postnatal period, examines the promotion of positive mental health, identifies risk and protective factors for mental ill health and explores current evidence about prescribing in pregnancy and during breastfeeding.

Duration : Completion time is around 1.5 hours

Access: click link [SCORM Player \(scot.nhs.uk\)](https://scot.nhs.uk)

Provider: NHS Education for Scotland

Cost: Free

Additional Information: Module is completed independently by the learner. Certificate of completion is awarded.

Course: Maternal mental health: the woman's journey

Descriptor: This module takes the learner through the woman's journey from pre-conception to the postnatal year. The learner is encouraged to understand their own role in promoting and supporting a woman's mental health in the context of coordinated multi-agency care.

Duration : Represents around 2.5 hours of learning

Access: click link [SCORM Player \(scot.nhs.uk\)](https://scot.nhs.uk)

Provider: NHS Education for Scotland

Cost: Free

Additional Information: Module is completed independently by the learner. Certificate of completion is awarded.

