



South West Clinical Networks

NHS England and the South West Maternity Clinical Network recognise the importance of GPs in improving care for those women and families affected by Perinatal Mental Illness (PMI) and the need to better involve GPs across the care pathway. As a result, and building on the Wessex GP champion perinatal mental health pilot project delivered in 2017/18 in partnership with the Royal College of General Practitioners, the South West Maternity Clinical Network has received funding from Health Education England to rollout a programme aimed at improving knowledge and understanding in PMI amongst GPs and their colleagues. The work is also expected to strengthen relationships between health professionals who work together to support and care for those affected.

The model of GP Champions has been successful in other areas such as Dementia, End of Life care and Physical Activity in raising awareness and sharing knowledge in these areas amongst GP colleagues through the enthusiasm and passion for the subject of GPs with a special interest themselves.

We currently have seven GP Champions in the South West for Gloucestershire, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG), Devon and Cornwall, who have received training to deliver educational sessions on Perinatal Mental Health.

By supporting our GP Champions to run these sessions in your practice, you will enable your primary care colleagues to take part in a health training programme that will enable them to be competent and confident in the recognition, treatment and support for women with perinatal mental health problems.

We know that Perinatal mental illness affects up to 20% of women, and covers a wide range of conditions. If left untreated, it can have significant and long-lasting effects on the woman and her family. Perinatal mental health problems can also have long-standing effects on children's emotional, social and cognitive development.

An example of what these educational sessions will cover:

- What is perinatal mental illness and why is it important?
- Current barriers to effective management in primary care
- Case based discussions
- Top tips for your own practice

We strongly encourage you to sign up to these free sessions to help improve outcomes for women and their babies in your community, whilst also supporting the overall ambition for improving access to specialist services and early diagnosis and intervention.

We are expecting these sessions to be popular so please don't hesitate to book your session, to arrange your session please contact Rebecca Vermeer, stating the name of your practice, number of GPs who wish to be attend and your locality. Contact details are:

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