



Rapid Review Learning Briefing

Rapid Review No.9



A rapid review learning event took place in February 2021



Professionals from 12 teams/ organisations took part in the review



The rapid review highlighted some of the challenges of working with parents with borderline personality disorder who are presenting as well during the perinatal period. The review highlighted the importance of talking to parents and other professionals about personal 'red flags' i.e., indicators that a parents mental health may be worsening which can be built into safety plans.

Mental ill health can have a very sudden onset and deteriorate rapidly in the perinatal period and any red flags should lead to urgent reassessment of the parent's mental health. These may include:

- Recent significant change in mental state or emergence of new symptoms
- New thoughts or acts of violent self-harm
- New and persistent expressions of incompetency as a mother or estrangement from the infant
- Severe swings in mood with wide fluctuations in intensity of symptoms (rapidly changing from presenting as well to unwell over anything from minutes to hours)

The rapid changes and swings in mental ill health can mean that women present as well by the time they are seen or speak to a professional. Therefore, responding quickly to concerns of partners, family members and the individual is key.

[Click here for the KBSP multi-agency perinatal protocol](#)



Differences between services

The review found that there was a lack of clarity about the services available during the perinatal period. The KBSP multi-agency perinatal protocol should be used by professionals in these circumstances.



Community perinatal mental health team

The Community Perinatal Mental Health Team can provide advice and guidance to any professional if you have concerns in the perinatal period and any time in the antenatal period up to 12 months after birth. Even if the parent does not meet the threshold for secondary/specialist mental health services. Contact the team by email awp.perinatalmentalhealthservice@nhs.net or telephone 0117 919 5826.

Targeted perinatal mental health midwifery services

There are targeted perinatal mental health midwifery services for women who have increased vulnerability to perinatal mental ill health. In North Bristol NHS Trust (i.e. Southmead Hospital) this is called the Cedar Team and in University Hospitals Bristol & Weston NHS Trust (i.e. St Michaels) they are known as Specialist Mental Health Midwives. These teams provide specialist midwifery support but do not provide a secondary mental health assessment and service. There should be close coordination and triage between the Midwifery Teams and the Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Teams for parents with significant mental health history but who are presenting as well during the birth.

Further services, advice and support



[Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust](#) have information about their perinatal services on their website

[Mothers for Mothers](#) is a perinatal health support charity that offers peer-peer support

[Bluebell](#) provide support to help families manage their mental health and wellbeing during pregnancy and after birth

[Dads in Mind](#) is part of Bluebell Trust and provides support and advice to new dads experiencing mental health difficulties