

Maternity Services

We're here for you from the very start of your pregnancy through to the birth of your baby and beyond.



Perinatal Mental Health Team

We serve the mental health needs of pregnant women booked to deliver at the Whittington Hospital, and see women up to 6 months after they have given birth. We also offer preconception counselling and run a joint psychiatric-obstetric clinic.

What does the team do?

Our aim is to optimise women's mental health in the perinatal period. We provide comprehensive assessments, providing follow-up if required, refer on to relevant services, compose individualised birth plans and liaise closely with our maternity colleagues and other relevant professionals. We are very active with teaching and training to hospital and community staff.

Who we are and where we work

We are a small but dedicated team of specialists comprising a consultant perinatal psychiatrist and perinatal nurse who are both members of the North East London Perinatal Network.

We see women in antenatal clinic and can offer home visits to those living in Islington. We also see women when they are admitted to the maternity wards.

How can I be seen?

We accept referrals from any health professional including midwives, obstetricians, GPs and psychologists where there are concerns about previous mental illness and/or the woman's current mental state.

Referrals are made electronically and we aim to see women within 2 weeks of referral.

Why is my mental health important during pregnancy and after birth?

Between 10 and 20% of women develop a mental illness of some kind during pregnancy or within the first year after the baby's birth. Did you know severe maternal depression can adversely affect the development of the baby and is a risk factor for offspring depression?

Women with severe mental illness like bipolar affective disorder are at significant risk of relapse postnatally - postpartum psychosis is fortunately uncommon (occurs in approximately 1-2/1000 women) but represents a psychiatric emergency normally requiring psychiatric hospitalisation.

Our activity

We see over 300 women per year. Approximately 75% have depression, anxiety or personality disorder, 15% are experiencing an adjustment disorder. The remaining 10% have a psychotic illness or drug/alcohol problems.

For further information or to obtain a referral form:

Office telephone: 020 7561 4142 / Perinatal mobile: 07774 629071

Email: cim-tr.whittperinatal@nhs.net

www.whittington.nhs.uk