



My perinatal emotional wellbeing plan: mental health support and advice for pregnancy and after birth





A guide to emotional wellbeing and support in pregnancy and after birth

Contents

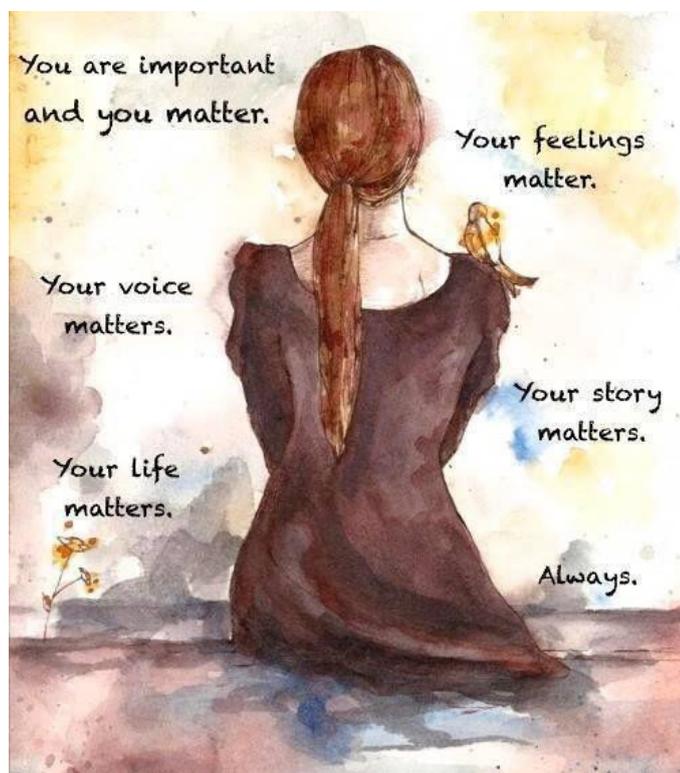
Introduction: Why mental health matters	3
Depression and anxiety	5
Other types of mental health problems.....	7
Getting help	9
More about help	10
Resources	13
My emotional wellbeing plan	20
Contact us	22
Tell us about your experience	22

Introduction: Why mental health matters

Pregnancy and the postnatal period after your baby is born (both known as the perinatal period) are often talked about as the happiest time in a woman's life. This can cause pressure, leading to feeling that you *should* or *ought* to feel 'happy'. But sometimes it doesn't always feel that way! Why is this?

There are lots of changes that come with pregnancy – physical changes, changes in hormones, changes in relationships and social groups – all of which can affect you differently.

Some women might 'breeze through' pregnancy, but others might find the changes in their body difficult to cope with, might suffer from sickness, sometimes even prolonged sickness (hyperemesis), or they or their baby may have other health concerns, and this can make coping with pregnancy harder and can affect how you feel, your emotions, your mood.



There may also be other source of stress or distress due to previous pregnancy losses, or difficult or traumatic previous births and a new pregnancy can trigger some upsetting feelings relating to these experiences. Becoming a parent is one of the biggest challenges we face, and some highs and lows are to be expected. But sometimes these more complicated feelings of fear, anxiety or low mood can interfere with enjoyment of pregnancy or birth.

Emotional wellbeing, or mental health, is just as important as physical health. If you are currently struggling with a low mood or anxiety, have a diagnosis of a mental health difficulty, or have had difficulties in the past, please consider using this leaflet to access more support. At the back is a wellbeing plan that can be used to explore some of the difficulties you may be facing and what kind of support might be helpful to you.

You may be facing other changes and stresses in pregnancy: housing difficulties; money problems; social difficulties; little support from friends, being isolated or having no family support; or other more complicated problems like alcohol dependence or using substances; immigration difficulties or relationship problems.

Sometimes our emotions in response to these challenges can feel a bit overwhelming, you might feel sad, tearful, anxious/worried about the future – and you might well think you are the only one feeling like this.

But you're not alone! In fact, around one out of every 4 to 5 women (that's up to 25%) struggle with their emotions or mental health in pregnancy or postnatally – and recent research shows this number might in fact be even higher.

Why we think it's important

We really encourage you to seek help as soon as you start to become unwell. Pregnancy and parenthood are an important and challenging time, and we want to help you to be as well as you can be during this stage.

It is also important to tackle mental health problems quickly because how you feel impacts on your health in all ways – if you are anxious, low or tearful, you might find you start avoiding seeing people, avoid going out, become isolated and then these feelings can get worse. Depression or anxiety in pregnancy can increase the risk of developing or continuing to have postnatal depression or anxiety. It's also important because how you feel affects your baby too.

During pregnancy, your baby shares the same things you experience – the air you breathe, the food you eat and the emotions you feel. When you feel balanced and okay and calm, your baby will develop in a happy, calm environment. However, if you are feeling stressed, anxious or low/depressed, your body releases certain hormones that can affect your baby's developing body, brain and future wellbeing.

It's really important to know that you can get help and that you don't have to struggle on alone. It's also important to know that you can feel better and that no matter what stage in your perinatal journey, getting help will be good for both you and your baby.

How do I get help?

- Your local **children's and family centre** will have groups, support workers and resources that can help you overcome isolation and difficulties. They can help you with money worries, or link you to services helping with housing problems, relationship difficulties or other challenges
- Your local **National Childbirth Trust (NCT)** group, **Positive Birth** group or other local support services can all help you overcome isolation and connect you with other mums – many of whom will also be going through their own difficulties (**see the 'RESOURCES' sections** for a whole list of resources local to you).
- Your midwife can offer you advice on how to get more support and if your difficulties are complicated and you need more specialist support, they can refer you to our **MAPLE midwifery team**. Your MAPLE midwife can help you access more support and can link you in to specialist services that will help you overcome some of the challenges facing you – for example help with substance/alcohol use, relationship problems, homelessness, debt, asylum/refugee difficulties, mental health problems, teenage pregnancies, social services involvement, experience of being in care yourself.
- At your booking appointment, your midwife may recommend a referral to the Maple team, and/or the **specialist mental health midwife**, or you can ask for a referral if you think it might be helpful for you.

10 myths about parenthood and mental health

- MYTH #1** Pregnancy is a happy time; pregnant women don't get depressed
- MYTH #2** It's just the 'baby blues', I'm fine
- MYTH #3** If I'm diagnosed with a mental health issue, my baby will be taken away from me
- MYTH #4** If I tell anyone about my mental health worries, they will think I'm a failure or a bad parent
- MYTH #5** Mental health problems only affect certain people
- MYTH #6** I will be forced to take medication
- MYTH #7** I'm the only one who feels this way
- MYTH #8** Only mums suffer from mental health issues like postnatal depression
- MYTH #9** There's nothing I can do to help a parent suffering with mental health issues
- MYTH #10** I'm never going to feel better

Read more about maternal mental health myths here: www.nct.org/MMHmyths

© NCT 2015



Sometimes people feel embarrassed or awkward discussing their mental health, or worried that they will be judged or 'concerns' will be raised because of it. In fact, we know that mental health difficulties are very common and we know it can be really hard to be open about this, but the most important thing you can do is talk to someone about it and get support. We are here for you, - we know it's not easy and so we want to help and support you, with a non-judgemental and compassionate approach. There is no risk of your baby 'being taken away from you' just because you are experiencing any kind of emotional difficulties so please feel free to share your worries with us.

Depression and anxiety

Have you been having any of these thoughts or feelings for two weeks or more?

If I say how I'm feeling/what I'm thinking, they might take my baby away

I feel like crying/can't stop crying all the time

I just can't be bothered to do anything/see anyone – everything feels pointless

No one else feels like I do

If I tell anyone how I'm feeling, everyone will think I'm going to be a useless mum

I'm really anxious – I feel really panicky sometimes/all the time

I sometimes have really horrible thoughts, and the more I try not to think them – the more they are there

I should be happy because I'm pregnant/have a baby

I feel really lonely!

How do depression and anxiety affect you?

Here are just some of the symptoms you might experience if you are depressed, anxious (or both). To find out more about mental health and pregnancy, visit: www.tommys.org.uk and look under 'pregnancy information', tab, select 'I'm pregnant' and scroll down to 'mental wellbeing' and 'scroll down again to 'specific mental health conditions'.

Depression

This can include feeling sad or low to hopeless and that there is nothing to look forward to any more in life. You may focus on negative thoughts about yourself/others/the future and have little interest in life and the world around you.

You might find it difficult to talk to people or to go out. You might have mixed feelings or even negative feelings about your baby. You might even feel everyone would be better off without you.

Other symptoms may include:

- Exhaustion
- Lack of concentration
- Loss of or increase in appetite or other physical symptoms (check with your midwife/GP to make sure nothing else could be the cause)
- Feeling irritable or angry all the time/feeling guilty/ashamed/hard on yourself
- Sleeping too much or too little

Anxiety

Anxiety symptoms often involve worry and negative/scary thoughts that you feel you can't stop. You may worry all the time and your thoughts may go around and round in your head, lots of "what if this happens..?" questions which lead to even more worry about the future. You might have a feeling of 'dread' and that something bad/awful is going to happen. You may already have an anxiety disorder

It's also common with anxiety to feel irritable and have a 'short fuse' – finding it hard to cope with the stress and anxiety and so getting snappy or shouting at your partner/children/baby.

Other symptoms may include:

- Panic attacks (when your heart races, clammy hands and/or sweaty, breathing feels out of control, dizzy – like you're going to faint or even feel like you're going to have a heartattack)
- Physical symptoms – tight jaw, clenched teeth, headaches, butterflies in your tummy, needing to go to the loo urgently. Again, it is important to discuss this with your midwife or GP to make sure there is no other cause for these symptoms
- Difficulty concentrating
- Intrusive unpleasant/negative or scary thoughts
- Difficulty sleeping
- Feeling jumpy and on edge

Please don't feel ashamed or embarrassed at how you are feeling. You didn't choose to feel this way. All the above difficulties can be treated, and you can get help – in lots of different ways – continue reading or go to 'RESOURCES' section for help now.



Remember, none of the issues above make us worry about how safe your baby is with you. But, high levels of stress might affect your baby in the womb, or your relationship with your new-born baby if they carry on without being treated. It can be really hard to ask for help – and we know this, which is why this leaflet is a first step to identifying your difficulties and can show you what help and support there is out there for you.

Other types of mental health problems

We often talk about postnatal depression but mental health problems affecting mums are not just postnatal and are not just depression. A range of different problems can affect women (and their partners) both in pregnancy and after birth.

Baby blues

Affects around 8 out of 10 women so it's really common! This usually starts a few days after the baby is born and common reactions are bursting into tears for no obvious reason; feeling anxious, unsure or uncertain and lacking in confidence. In many ways it would be surprising *not* to have some of these reactions when you are tired after giving birth, because you may be physically and emotionally drained and now have a new baby to be responsible for. Baby blues usually passes within a few days to a week at most.

Postnatal depression and/or postnatal anxiety (PND)

Affects around 1 in 10 women and usually starts in the first six months after childbirth but for some it may start later, and for others it may have started as depression or anxiety before or during pregnancy. Untreated PND is unlikely to go away on its own and can have a long-lasting impact on your relationship with your baby; can cause tensions and difficulties in your family life and can be a real challenge to a relationship.

As with all the symptoms of depression or anxiety mentioned above, PND can be successfully treated as discussed below in the '**Getting help**' section.

Trauma following birth

Occasionally women's experience of childbirth can be distressing and upsetting. If the experience of having your baby was very different to what you had imagined, and you feel unsure as to why things happened as they did you may benefit from talking more about it. SASH offer a birth reflections service (just email sash.birth.reflection@nhs.net to find out more) that offers you a meeting with a senior midwife who can take the time going through your labour notes with you to explore what happened, why and answer any questions you may have. If you want, you can ask your midwife to refer you.

For a few, (women and/or their partners) the birth experience can leave you with more serious anxiety and distress and symptoms of a condition called Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). For more information on symptoms of this, go to www.mind.org.uk and search 'birth trauma' or look at our '**RESOURCES**' section; '**Information on specific mental health problems**'.

If a birth reflections appointment does not resolve the problem, there are very effective **talking therapies** such as trauma-focussed cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) or eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing (EMDR) that you can access to help with this. You can refer yourself, or if you prefer, please talk to your midwife, the specialist mental health midwife, health

visitor or GP for a referral. For more information on talking therapies, look in the 'RESOURCES' section at the end of the leaflet under: 'Local mental health services and talking therapies'.

Postpartum psychosis (PP)

This is a severe but treatable form of mental illness and affects around 1-2 women out of every 1,000 and can happen 'out of the blue' for women with no history of mental illness. Some women are at increased risk of developing PP*. The psychosis usually starts within the first few days or weeks after the birth of the baby. This is a very rare illness and can be effectively treated but needs fast and emergency treatment as the condition often worsens rapidly. Treatment usually involves medication and admission to a specialist hospital with your baby called a mother and baby unit where they can treat you and help you manage your baby until you are well enough to go home.

Many of the symptoms are common in postnatal women and don't necessarily mean a PP is developing. Consider risk factors and talk with a health care professional if you or a family member are concerned. Women who have experienced PP have described symptoms including feeling:

- excited, elated or high
- depressed anxious or confused
- excessively irritable or changeable in mood

PP includes one or more of the following:

- Strange beliefs that could not be true (delusions)
- Hearing, seeing, feeling or smelling things that are not there (hallucinations)
- High mood with loss of touch with reality (mania)
- Severe confusion

Women with a diagnosis of bipolar disorder are at increased risk of developing PP and women who have previously had PP are at high risk of developing this again (a 50% or more chance). Even if you have been well, we recommend early contact with either our Specialist Perinatal Mental Health service or our perinatal mental health midwife to discuss this risk and make a plan with you to keep you well and manage any risk you may have. Ask you midwife to refer you. *For more information on PP, visit the Action on Postpartum Psychosis website: www.app-network.org and look for 'Frequently Asked Questions'.

What if you already have a mental health illness or diagnosis?

You may have had mental health problems and perhaps a diagnosis of a mental illness in the past. Maybe you are now well – which is great! – Or you may have difficulties on and off with your mental health or you may be feeling quite unwell right now.

Due to previous or current mental health difficulties, you may be at increased risk of developing mental health problems in pregnancy and after birth, but with the right planning and support, it should be possible to prevent or reduce any illness. So, if you have had, or are having any mental health problems, we recommend that you talk about this with your midwife, the specialist mental health midwife or GP as early as possible to get additional support and/or a plan in place to help reduce the risk.

There are a range of services to support women with mental health difficulties and we can match the service to your needs – whether you already have really good support from a GP, a community mental health team, or are currently receiving psychological support, or you would like more support, we can help ensure that the most appropriate care is set up to help you in pregnancy and the postnatal period once you have had your baby.

A word on medication

If you are currently taking medication for your mood, **please don't just stop** without discussing with your GP or health care professional who prescribed your medication. If you (or even your GP) are unsure about the risks of your medication there are some great information sites listed on the '**RESOURCES**' pages that give evidence-based, up-to-date information on medications and pregnancy and breastfeeding which will help you make an informed choice.

Untreated mental health difficulties can be riskier to your baby than managing your mental health and continuing with your medication. Even if you need to stop or change your medication, it is still not recommended to come off medication suddenly. For this reason, we recommend talking more with us about it. There is more on this subject in the '**More about help**' section.

Getting help

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health and you can't have one without the other! In the same way as having something wrong with you physically – you would go to the doctor or tell a midwife about it - the same is true for any mental health difficulties. Having a mental health difficulty is not your fault, is not a failing in you or a weakness – remember that around 1 in 5 women have mental health difficulties in pregnancy or in the postnatal period. You are not alone, and you can get help and get better.



At the back of this leaflet is a **wellbeing plan** you might wish to start completing – it might help you think about how to talk with your midwife or GP about what's bothering you and you might want to ask a partner/family member/friend who knows you well, to do it with you if that is helpful.

Below are some steps that you may find useful/or your midwife may recommend to you if feel you are struggling with your mental health or at increased risk of mental health problems. You can tick them off once they are done.

- Explore some of the self-help ideas in the '**More about help**' section
- Explore the '**RESOURCES**' section at the back of this leaflet
- Midwife recommends you contact your GP and offers to contact your health visitors for extra support
- Midwife may offer you a referral to the MAPLE team midwives for your antenatal care who are able to offer additional support in pregnancy

- You may want to be referred to a talking therapies service to explore your difficulties and help find solutions (see '**More about help**' section). If you want to refer yourself for talking therapies please look at the '**Local mental health services and talking therapies**' section.
- You may be offered an appointment with the specialist mental health midwife and/or specialist perinatal mental health service if appropriate, to ensure you have all the support and help you need.
- You might want to explore what to do about medication. **Please remember, it may not be the best thing for you or your baby to stop your medication** until you have had a talk with a doctor or the specialist mental health midwife. This will help you make an informed choice on what's best for both of you.

More about help

Getting started - tips for better mental health:

It isn't always easy to know where to start. Are there any friends or family members you can talk with about how you are feeling? Finding out more about mental health in pregnancy or after birth can help link you to other types of support, help you understand more about it and look at what kind of help would suit you best. Everyone is different and so what suits one person, might not suit another.

There is a lot of support though and lots you can do to begin getting the help you want or need. The Maternal Mental Health Alliance has some suggestions in its "Top 10 Tips for mums: Perinatal mental health" – for more details, you can see this online at www.maternalmentalhealthalliance.org and type "top 10 tips" in the search bar.

Be kind to yourself

When people are depressed or anxious, they are also often very hard on themselves, telling themselves they are 'stupid' or 'useless' or that 'everyone else copes, why can't I?' But this is just the depression or anxiety speaking.

Think how you would feel if someone you loved said these things to themselves – how would you react? What would you say to them? Would you be harsh and call them stupid, or would you be kind and supportive? Try using this same, kinder, more compassionate voice on yourself – remember, you haven't chosen to feel this way. Practice this every time you hear that harsh, critical voice – practice having a kind reply ready!

Get to know yourself better

Being pregnant gives you a chance to learn about yourself – think about your strong points, changes you have made, obstacles you have overcome in the past, things you want to achieve, dreams you have. Learning more about yourself and your situation helps you handle difficult situations, helps you feel less fearful, and helps you build confidence. This kind of knowledge and strength is called 'resilience' and helps you manage future difficulties and be less stressed by challenges. It might be helpful to explore some of the '**Self-help**' sites mentioned in the '**RESOURCES**' section.

Exercise and relaxation

It is well known now that exercise can make a big difference to mood and is an effective way of promoting feelings of wellbeing. Gentle exercise is a good place to start and can help you feel better about yourself. This might be a regular evening walk with a partner or friend, a stroll with your pram, a session at the swimming pool or an exercise class. It's also fine to do some reasonably brisk/energetic exercise – even when pregnant.

If you are someone used to exercising and have stopped because you are pregnant – you don't have to! Unless you have some new health complication aside from pregnancy or related to pregnancy you can go for it. Check out your local leisure centre for exercise and relaxation classes, or ask your GP, friends, your midwife, health visitor.

Healthy eating

There is really good evidence that a healthy, balanced diet helps both you and your baby. Whether pregnant or postnatal, eating fresh fruit and vegetables, avoiding too much fast food and eating regularly improves your sense of wellbeing. Children's centres may be able to offer vouchers to help access fresh fruit and vegetables.

Peer support

This means finding out what others in similar situations to you have to say, and what other support might be available. Online webpages, groups, local NCT or positive birth groups and local children's and family's centres which offer some antenatal and postnatal groups are all good introductions to widening your circle. More information is in the '**Self-help**' section of '**RESOURCES**'.

Therapy and on-going support

You can self-refer, or your midwife, GP, health visitor can refer you for talking therapy. Usually the kind of therapy offered is called cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and helps you look at current difficulties and helps you set realistic goals to overcome those difficulties and feel better. There is excellent evidence that CBT is effective treatment for depression and anxiety difficulties. There are other types of talking therapies too if CBT is not for you.

If you don't want to meet someone for face to face therapy, there are online alternatives that are just as effective. Parent-infant specialist health visitors can also offer support; particularly helping you bond with your baby through listening sessions with you and infant massage sessions. For more severe mental health difficulties you can be referred to the **specialist perinatal mental health service** for more intensive support.

Medication

For moderate to severe mental health difficulties your GP or mental health lead practitioner may recommend antidepressants (sometimes referred to as SSRIs) or other mood related medication. It is generally considered that continuing or starting medication while pregnant or even while breastfeeding, for moderate to severe depression or anxiety problems, or other serious mental health difficulties, may be better than not taking them and remaining or becoming more unwell.

Latest evidence shows that most medications carry no or little risk to the baby (either in the womb or breastfeeding). But the risks to an unborn baby of untreated mood disorders can be more. For more information, please discuss this with your midwife, the specialist mental health midwife, your GP, or ask about our specialist perinatal mental health service, and look at the webpages on medication in the **'RESOURCES'** section.

Complementary therapies

Many women find treatments such as aromatherapy, herbal remedies, homeopathy, reflexology, acupuncture and other alternative treatments helpful. It is essential that the person offering the therapy is properly trained and aware of the limits of their therapy type in pregnancy. You may also enjoy doing yoga, relaxation classes or joining a positive birth group. If in doubt, ask your midwife, health visitor or GP.

Partners

We now know that around 10% of partners also experience depression or anxiety around pregnancy or birth. In the postnatal period this can increase- especially if the woman has untreated depression and/or anxiety. Some men may also find it hard to admit to their depression or that they feel overwhelmed and may appear angry and frustrated rather than tearful or sad.



However, both you and your partner are adjusting to pregnancy or to having a new baby and all the changes this means to the relationship. Help is also available to access talking therapies for partners too and they may benefit from some of the same self-help resources explored above. See **'Support for Dads & Partners'** below.

Please have a look through the **'RESOURCES'** on the next few pages. They are organised under headings for quick and easy reference. If you are looking at this leaflet electronically, you can **click the links to webpages**. Or, just **type in the address of the website** to your internet browser and it will take you to the site you are looking for. If you have any questions, please ask your midwife for more information or help.

RESOURCES:

SASH Maternity on Facebook	This page has links to local organisations and national campaigns around wellbeing in pregnancy and postnatally. www.facebook.com/sashmaternity
SASH website	Visit the maternity services page on the SASH website for information about how our team supports you during pregnancy, labour and after you have had your baby. www.surreyandsussex.nhs.uk/maternity

General information on mental health in pregnancy and after birth

NHS: Mental health problems & pregnancy	Perinatal mental health problems - click link below, or type address into internet browser search bar: www.nhs.uk - in 'search' type: ' mental health problems and pregnancy ' for information, advice and signposting to more support
Tommy's Charity: Wellbeing in Pregnancy	For specific information on mental health, click link below, or go to website and click ' pregnancy information ', then select ' I'm pregnant ' and scroll down to ' mental health ' www.tommys.org <u>Also has information for specific mental health difficulties</u> such as borderline personality/emotionally unstable personality disorder, eating disorders, schizophrenia and more.
Best Beginnings: Out of the Blue	Information and support including helpful videos. Click link below, or type the address into search engine and under ' Parents ' tab, click ' mental health '. www.bestbeginnings.org.uk
MIND: Mental Health Charity	Resources for mums and partners on all aspects of any mental health difficulties and signposts to support during pregnancy and postnatally. Click link below, or type into browser and click ' information & support ' then click ' A-Z mental health ' and scroll down to: ' Postnatal and Antenatal Depression ' www.mind.org.uk

Medication in pregnancy and postnatally

BUMPS: Best use of Medicines in Pregnancy	Advice on safety of medications in pregnancy. Click link below, or type into browser and search for the medication in ' Leaflets A-Z ' www.medicinesinpregnancy.org.uk
Breastfeeding Network: Drugs & medication	www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk independent charity offering support and information on infant feeding

<p>Choice and medication: Service advising on medication supported by SASH pharmacy</p>	<p>Patient information about mental health conditions and the treatments available to help make informed decisions about choosing the right medicine: www.choiceandmedication.org/sabp</p>
--	--

Information on specific mental health problems or difficulties

<p>Association for postnatal illness</p>	<p>Information on signs, symptoms and treatment for postnatal depression plus phone/online support available: https://apni.org/</p>
<p>Maternal OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder)</p> <p>OCD Action</p> <p>OCD UK</p>	<p>Charity set up by two women with lived experience of maternal OCD. Resources, peer support, signposting for women experiencing all forms of OCD: www.maternalocd.org</p> <p>Support and general information for anyone affected by OCD: www.ocdaction.org.uk</p> <p>National charity run by and for people with lived experience of OCD www.ocduk.org</p>
<p>Birth Trauma Association</p> <p>Make Birth Better: network raising awareness around birth trauma</p> <p>Beyond Birth Trauma: Facebook page</p>	<p>Support, advice and information for women, fathers/partners who have experienced birth trauma: www.birthtraumaassociation.org.uk</p> <p>Campaign information, personal stories, signposting to support and consultation for individuals and professionals: www.makebirthbetter.org</p> <p>“Offering Hope and Supporting healing for those affected by birth trauma”. www.facebook.com/BeyondBirthTrauma/</p>
<p>Action on postpartum psychosis</p>	<p>Peer support, advice and information by and for women, their partners and families, with experience of or at risk of postpartum psychosis: www.app-network.org/</p>
<p>Bipolar UK: Women & bipolar disorder</p>	<p>Leaflets, resources and information regarding pregnancy and bipolar disorder. Click on link, or type in web address to browser, click ‘Get Information’ and explore leaflets including ‘Bipolar disorder, Pregnancy & Childbirth’: www.bipolaruk.org</p>
<p>Royal College of Psychiatry</p> <p>Tommy’s bereavement advice</p>	<p>Information leaflets on all aspects of mental. Click link below, or put web address in browser and select ‘health information’ tab, then select ‘A-Z index’ to find relevant leaflet or video: www.rcpsych.ac.uk</p> <p>Tommy’s ‘Baby loss series’ explores all aspects of grief, bereavement/latest research on infant loss: www.tommys.org</p>

<p>The Miscarriage Association</p> <p>SANDS: Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Charity</p>	<p>Information, leaflets and more on all aspects of pregnancy loss: www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk</p> <p>Support, counselling, groups, information on stillbirth and infant loss: www.sands.org.uk</p>
--	---

Phone apps: for iPhones and Android – search the iTunes App store/Play Store for self-help apps and resources for pregnancy

<p><u>For anxiety & depression:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CatchIt • BeatPanic (Apple) • iPrevail • My Possible Self • SilverCloud • <p><u>For adolescents and young adults:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MindShift (to manage anxiety) • BlueIce (to manage emotions and reduce urge to self-harm) <p>prescription only</p>	<p><u>To help manage emotions for those who self-harm:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CalmHarm <p><u>Information, peer support and more around pregnancy:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby Buddy 	<p><u>Promoting relaxation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headspace • Feeling Good: positive mindset
--	---	--

Support for dads and partners:

<p>Support and resources for fathers:</p> <p>Twitter group Dads in Mind:</p> <p>Fathers reaching out:</p> <p>MIND: Support and further links for partners</p>	<p>www.dadsmatteruk.org/</p> <p>www.twitter.com/DADSINMIND</p> <p>www.reachingoutpmh.co.uk</p> <p>www.mind.org.uk/ type 'partners depression' in search box</p>
---	---

Self-help resources for mild to moderate mental health difficulties

Online resources/workbooks/courses to manage anxiety and low mood.

Moodjuice: self-help resources and information	Helping you think about emotional problems and work towards solving them: www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk
Centre for Clinical Interventions: A specialised clinical psychology service	Information and self-help resources for those living with any mental health difficulties or supporting those who are experiencing mental health difficulties. Click on the link below, or type the address into your browser and then click on the 'resources' tab: www.cci.health.wa.gov.au
NHS: Moodzone – identifying mental health difficulties & help available	Mood self-assessment, videos, real-life experiences, tips to improve well-being: www.nhs.uk/moodzone
SMILE: Supporting Mums in Living with Emotions	Self-help techniques & relaxation tips: click link below, or type in address and click tab 'self-help resources' www.thesmilegroup.org
PND & ME: peer support for perinatal mental health (please use any social media sites with caution as not endorsed by NHS/SASH).	Support & contact with others with lived experience of perinatal mental health difficulties: www.pndandme.co.uk , or visit Twitter https://twitter.com/PNDandMe for #PNDHour every Wednesday evening 8-9pm – a chance to hear other's experiences around perinatal mental health – you can join in if you want, or just look.
NCT: National Childbirth Trust	Information and myth-busting on feelings around becoming a parent. Click on link, or type address into browser and put '10 myths' in search bar. www.nct.org.uk

Phone support

North West Sussex & East Surrey Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service – for women and their families with severe mental health difficulties; East Surrey, Crawley, Horsham, Haywards Heath. Mondays – Fridays (9am – 5pm)	<i><u>Referral to this service is via your health or social care or mental health care professional</u></i> and can offer additional support for women experiencing or at risk of severe mental health difficulties such as bipolar disorder, postpartum psychosis, schizophrenia, major depression/anxiety: Tel: 0300 304 0213
Surrey & Borders Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service – as above for women in: Guildford and Waverley; North West Surrey; Surrey Downs and Surrey Heath. Mondays – Fridays (9am – 5pm).	As above Tel: 01372 216285

<p>Surrey & borders MH Crisis helpline</p> <p>Sussex mental healthline: crisis line</p> <p>Samaritans: confidential support 24/7 for mental health crisis</p> <p>Rethink Sahayak Asian Mental Health Helpline Crawley: languages include Gujarati, Punjabi, Hindu, Urdu, English</p>	<p>Evenings & weekends: 0300 456 8342</p> <p>24h a day, 365 days a year: 0300 5000 101</p> <p>Someone to talk to, confidentially on the phone, or by email. Telephone 116 123 from any phone:, or email:jo@samaritans.org Website: www.samaritans.org/</p> <p>For mental health support services Tel: 0808 800 2073 or, click link below, or type into your browser and in search button type 'Sahayak': https://rethink.org</p>
--	--

Local mental health services and talking therapies

Self-referral and more information (if you prefer, your midwife can refer you instead – please ask)

<p>Surrey talking therapy services – counselling, cognitive behavioural therapy, trauma therapy and more</p>	<p>Choose from the service most suited to you, including online talking therapy if you prefer this to face-to-face. Select link below, or copy address into your browser and select 'Mental Wellbeing' tab and follow links to adult services. www.healthysurrey.org.uk</p>
<p>Sussex talking therapy service: Time to Talk, - services as above</p>	<p>To self-refer, phone Tel: 01403 227048 or you can do this online clicking the link below, or typing it into your browser and selecting 'Time to Talk talking therapies' link. www.timetotalk/sussex</p>
<p>Surrey Recovery College – support and courses for those experiencing MH difficulties and for carers</p>	<p>Courses on mental health and wellbeing for anyone affected by mental & physical health difficulties. Click on link, or copy address into your browser, scroll down to 'find services' and type 'Recovery College' in keywords.www.sabp.nhs.uk</p>
<p>Sussex Oakleaf Local services for young people</p>	<p>A range of services and resources for adults and young people (18-25) living with mental health difficulties in Crawley area: www.sussexoakleaf.org.uk/</p>

Other local resources Surrey & Sussex area

<p>Children's centres: range of support and links to groups, activities and other support and services in both Surrey & Sussex areas.</p>	<p>Children's centres have a range of courses and support available both in pregnancy and after the baby is born including baby feeding cafes. You can drop in and introduce yourself or ask your midwife to help you. Click on link for you area, or type into your browser and in search button, type Children's Centre (Surrey): www.surreycc.gov.uk or, (Sussex): www.westsussex.gov.uk</p>
--	--

<p>Horsham National Childbirth Trust (NCT): a local group</p> <p>Crawley and Horsham Positive Birth Group: local organisation of The Positive Birth Movement</p>	<p>Pregnancy and postnatal resources and groups which are free except for antenatal classes. www.nct.org.uk/branches/horsham</p> <p>This Facebook group is for pregnant women, birth professionals or anyone interested and positive about birth. Click link below, or go to your Facebook page and search for Crawley & Horsham Positive Birth group. Facebook Sussex Positive Birth Group</p>
<p>Crawley wellbeing groups: strategies, signposting and resources to maintain good mental health</p>	<p>A wide range of resources for mental health, healthy eating/healthy living, substance use, social activities. Click on link, or type in address to browser and search for 'mental health' www.westsussexwellbeing.org.uk</p>
<p>Crawley WORTH: Domestic abuse services for anyone experiencing emotional, psychological and/or physical abuse</p>	<p>Confidential services, counselling, healthy relationships work etc. for people over age 16: www.worthservices.org</p>
<p>PANDAS Foundation UK: support to people coping with Pre and Postnatal Mental Illnesses</p>	<p>Local support groups supporting women as well as their families, and friends affected by perinatal illness. Click on link below, or type address in to browser and search for local groups www.pandasfoundation.org.uk</p>
<p>Caterham & Oxted NCT: support for parents to be and new parents – meet others, get connected</p>	<p>Run by local parents, we offer support, information and friendship to new parents and parents-to-be across Caterham and Oxted. www.nct.org.uk/caterham</p>
<p>The Mary Frances Trust: services to support wellbeing for people struggling with their mental health</p>	<p>Available in Epsom, Dorking and other areas in Surrey. Groups, activities, benefits and housing advice. phone: 01372 375400 or visit: www.maryfrancestrust.org.uk</p>
<p>Epsom Safe Haven: For mental health crisis – drop in service Mon-Sun 7pm-11pm</p>	<p>The Safe Haven will help people with mental health problems to find their way out of crisis quickly, simply and without the need to go into hospital. Location: Surrey Choices building at The Larches, 44 Waterloo Road, Epsom, Surrey, KT19 8EX. Or click link below for their leaflet to find out more at: www.maryfrancestrust.org.uk/services</p>
<p>Redhill Save Haven: - For mental health crisis - drop in service 6pm-11pm</p>	<p>As above, located at: Wingfield Resource Centre St Anne's Drive (off Noke Drive) Redhill RH1 1AU or telephone: 01737 771 282. www.richmondfellowship.org.uk/redhill</p>

<p>Redhill & Reigate Positive Birth Group</p>	<p>A support group connecting mothers and pregnant women to share stories, expertise and positivity about childbirth and parenting. www.facebook.com/PositiveBirthRedhillReigate/</p>
<p>Surrey NHS First Steps: Emotional wellbeing leaflet</p>	<p>Huge range of resources, signposting and downloadable leaflet promoting emotional health and mental wellbeing: Advice and support guide from www.healthysurrey.org.uk/mentalwellbeing</p>
<p>East Surrey Domestic Abuse Service (ESDAS)</p>	<p>An independent charity providing outreach and associated services in the borough of Reigate & Banstead and the districts of Mole Valley and Tandridge. https://www.esdas.org.uk Tel: 01737 771 350 (9am – 4pm, Monday to Friday) Text 07860 049720 To make a referral email leigh.esdas@cjsm.net</p>
<p><u>Exercise in pregnancy:</u></p> <p>NHS Start for Life: advice & tips on exercise in pregnancy</p> <p>NHS general advice on exercise & pregnancy</p> <p>Healthy Surrey: resources & information on getting fit and staying fit.</p> <p>Crawley wellbeing: local information and services</p>	<p>Exercise tips, advice & more information on pregnancy and health: Click on link, or type into browser and search ‘exercise in pregnancy’ and select ‘Pregnancy, start4life’. www.nhs.uk</p> <p>NHS Exercise tips, videos and advice. Click on link, or type into browser and search ‘exercise in pregnancy’ www.nhs.uk</p> <p>Advice & links on local resources getting fit and eating well in Surrey area. Click on link or type into browser and search ‘get active’ www.healthysurrey.org.uk</p> <p>www.crawley.westsussexwellbeing.org.uk</p>

Next – making your own emotional wellbeing plan

My emotional wellbeing plan

Thinking about and completing this plan allows you to individualise your difficulties, put them in your own words and think about what you might want help with or what you really struggle with.

Remember talking about your difficulties is the first step – you are not alone! You might want to fill this in with your midwife, your partner, a friend or family member. You can take it along to your midwife appointment and keep it in your maternity notes to make it easier to talk about with your midwife or other health care professional.

How am I feeling?

(How you are feeling right now? What thoughts do you have about being pregnant and how do you feel about the birth? How do you feel about your baby? Do you have any of the symptoms talked about in this leaflet – if so, what are they and how do they affect you?)

If I am struggling with my mood or my thoughts I will talk to:

The kinds of things that help me are...

This might be things you know that work for you – like being encouraged to use a phone app for support; slow, calm breathing; going for a walk; taking time out; talking to a particular person... what are the things you do that make you feel better?

What might be difficult about talking through my feelings?

How will I start this conversation if I feel ashamed or embarrassed? (What might you advise a friend to do in a similar situation?)

Who else can I turn to if I don't feel listened to or supported?

Contact us

SASH maternity

Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
East Surrey Hospital
Redhill Surrey RH1 5RH

<https://www.surreyandsussex.nhs.uk/our-services/a-z-of-services/maternity-services/>

Telephone:

Maternity triage: Tel: 01737 231 764

If you have a non-urgent question or concern about pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding or postnatal issues then email your message to Sasha who can respond to you within three working days.

<https://www.surreyandsussex.nhs.uk/maternity/sasha-e-midwife/>

For medical advice please call NHS 111 or visit the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk

Tell us about your birth experience

We welcome your feedback and comments about our staff and services. This will help share what we do well, learn and make improvements. To share your compliments, comments, concerns or complaints please speak to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) in the first instance.

SASH offer a birth reflections service that offers you a meeting with a senior midwife who can take the time going through your labour notes with you to explore what happened, why and answer any questions you may have. Email sash.birth.reflection@nhs.net.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can provide confidential advice and support, and can negotiate prompt solutions by liaising with staff and, where appropriate, relevant organisations on your behalf. You can also ask a member of staff to contact PALS on your behalf.

Telephone: 01737 231 958

Email: sash.pals@nhs.net

Write to: PALS, East Surrey Hospital, Redhill, Surrey RH1 5RH

Document information

Author: Susie Cabrillana, Specialist mental health midwife

Last updated: November 2018

Emotional wellbeing plan