

## Mother, baby and family perspectives on maternal mental health services

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### *Baby blanket*

What can my service do to promote bonding even in difficult situations such as maternal-infant separation?

Dads can find themselves with an unexpected double burden of a young baby and ill wife. How accessible is my service to fathers, how well are we signposting dads to mechanisms of support?

Is the environment where my service is provided sparse and clinical or inviting and comfort-orientated?

### *Something missing*

Small things can make a big difference – a feeding bottle wouldn't function very well without this important bit! Stopping breastfeeding can be very emotive for mums even when it makes the best sense clinically.

How well is my service discussing the pros and cons of medication, acknowledging grief and loss over missed opportunities, encouraging parents to enjoy physical closeness whether breast or bottle feeding?

What small things could make a big difference to families in my service?



### *Recovery: my story*

This painting was done by my 4-year old daughter  
"Mummy and me as a baby. Mummy has tears of joy because she loves me so much"

A secure bond against the odds. Postpartum psychosis, separation for 3 weeks and severe postnatal depression left my confidence as a mum very low. Community services came together for my care as best they could. Care was provided by the CMHT and health visitor, CBT provided by a trainee clinical psychologist. But we also had financial resources, education/knowledge about child development and a supportive paternal employer on our side.

What are the outcomes for women in my service who are on their own, young or isolated. How do we support those who need to return to work or education?

## Modelling maternal mental health services



The “skwish” toy illustrates flexible connections between many and diverse services. One woman’s pathway through a network of support services may not look exactly the same as another’s

How flexible are our links with other services supporting mums, dads and babies? Do we have good local knowledge of services providing play opportunities, befriending, domestic support, talking therapies?

How can we help families find their way through the varied support services available?

## Third sector organisations offering support for families

*This list is not exhaustive!*

Action on Postpartum Psychosis (latest research and upcoming telephone/email peer support)  
[www.app-network.org](http://www.app-network.org)

Home Start (volunteers providing befriending, domestic support and a listening ear)  
<http://www.home-start.org.uk/>

Netmums (CBT self-help program for postnatal depression in collaboration with Exeter University)  
<http://www.netmums.com/pnd/>

MAMA: Meet a Mum Association (befriending for mums with postnatal illness)  
<http://www.mama.co.uk/>

Dad info: perspectives on both fathers and mums feelings  
<http://www.dad.info/health/your-health/post-natal-depression-dads/>  
<http://www.dad.info/health/her-health/post-natal-depression-mums/>

## Evidence based treatments

Prevention of postnatal depression in high risk via telephone peer support  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2628301/pdf/bmj.a3064.pdf>

Mums 4 Mums study – a UK pilot RCT of telephone based peer support for postnatal depression (ongoing) <http://www.controlled-trials.com/ISRCTN91450073>

Women’s views about antidepressant treatment in postnatal depression  
<http://fampra.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/25/6/450>

Exercise as an intervention for postnatal depression  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2249793/pdf/bjgp58-178.pdf>