

Perinatal Mental Health Service

Information for patients, carers
and family members



Welcome to the Perinatal Mental Health Team

Who are we?

We are a team of health professionals that provide personalised and specialist care to people living in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland who have mental health problems relating to pregnancy, childbirth and the first year following a child's birth (also known as the perinatal period).

We offer various treatments either in homes, community locations, clinics or via video calls.

Our aim is to help you get better and support your family to live a happy, healthy life together.

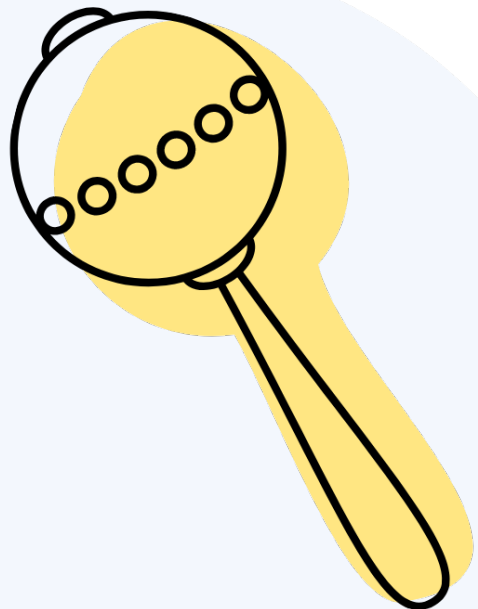
Who do we help?

More than one in ten people who give birth suffer from a mental illness during pregnancy or within the first year of having a baby. Fathers and partners can also experience mental illness following the birth of a baby too. For many, mental health conditions are able to be managed by their GP, health visitor or a counselling service.

The perinatal mental health team look after people with more complex illnesses or when other health professionals, such as those mentioned above, have not been able to help. You may benefit from seeing our team if:

- Your GP or obstetric team feel you need specialist support for your mental health. This may be for conditions such as severe anxiety or depression
- You have a history of serious mental health difficulties and are planning a pregnancy or are pregnant
- You have a family history of serious mental health difficulties such as bipolar disorder or postpartum psychosis. These conditions may increase your risk of becoming unwell during pregnancy or postnatally

If you find you are struggling, then seeking and accepting help is the first step to recovery. Many people have and will face similar challenges, so you are not alone. With the right support, most people are able to make a full recovery.



Who has referred me?

Health professionals including your GP, midwife, health visitor, obstetrician, psychiatrist or the community mental health team can refer into the service. We cannot accept self-referrals.



When and where will I be seen?

We aim to see referrals within 48 hours if urgent or within 14 days if it's less urgent. A mental health professional will complete an initial assessment with you, which will last around 90 minutes. This assessment will help us to understand what difficulties you're facing and jointly think about what may help you. Assessments take place during office hours, Monday to Friday. These can be done via video call or at home, depending on what you'd prefer.

If our team is not the most appropriate support for you, we will discuss other useful services that may be able to help you.

What will the care look like?

If the perinatal mental health team is the best service to help you, you will be paired with a member of the team to work with you and develop a meaningful connection to support you through your recovery.

Together you will agree a care plan to help get you better.

Some of the support we can provide includes:

- Pre-conception advice and counselling
- Home visits
- Group therapy sessions
- Support clinics
- Nursery nurse sessions to teach you how to bond and play safely with your baby, including sensory play
- Counselling and talking therapies

We are an inclusive service and will make adaptations and adjustments in line with cultural, ethnic or other backgrounds to support your needs.

Who can attend appointments with me?

We encourage you to bring your baby to appointments. If you have other children, we'd advise arranging alternative childcare for them as it is often not appropriate for them to be present when discussing difficult issues. If you are pregnant, please bring your hand-held maternity notes.

You are also welcome to bring your spouse, partner, relative or friend with you to appointments. With your consent, they can also be involved in discussions and decisions around your care.

Will I be made to take medication?

We will not make you do anything without your consent. Not everyone needs to take medication. If you do need medication, we will talk you through considerations and offer support to help you make the best choice for you and your baby.

What information will be shared and with whom?

Your assessment and treatment plan will remain confidential between you, the team and other involved professionals. The only exception to this is if we feel there is a significant risk to yourself or your child. If this should be the case and we need to involve another agency, we will inform you.

Consent to treatment

It is important that you understand the risks, benefits and alternatives before you agree to treatment. If you feel unsure about giving your consent please ask a member of staff for further information. As part of your first assessment session, the health professional who sees you will explain more about the treatment and the above in more detail.

Contact details



For more information about the service please call:
XXXXXXXXXXXX

If you, or someone you care about, need urgent advice or support for your mental health, you can call our Mental Health Central Access Point 24 hours a day, seven days a week free of charge and in confidence

0808 800 3302

For mental health support please visit:
www.leicspart.nhs.uk/mental-health

Please contact the Perinatal Mental Health Service if you require this leaflet in other accessible formats such as sign language or another language.

