



# Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service (SPMHS)



Sussex Partnership  
NHS Foundation Trust

## Prevention & Early Intervention

- Awareness raising and training for professionals working in perinatal pathway: primary healthcare (GPs), medical, maternity, obstetric assessment and treatment, early years and other settings.
- Information, advice and guidance e.g. prescribing guidance.
- Specialist pre-conception advice or support with medication for women with complex or severe mental health problems who are planning a pregnancy.
- Training in perinatal mental health for perinatal, adult and infant mental health workforce.
- Signposting and navigation to appropriate services, e.g. IAPT, Recovery College, RISE, Children and Families Social Services.

## Referrals

- From:
- GPs
  - Midwives
  - Health Visitors
  - Obstetricians,
  - Adult mental health services,
  - IAPT services,
  - Children's Centre and Children's Social Care,
  - Self-referral for women previously under the service.

## Transfer of Care

If a mother does not have a severe current or historic mental health problem, or tocophobia, refer back to referring service.

## Assessment

- Conducted by the SPMHS multidisciplinary team member;
- 5 days for a face to face meeting if urgent,
  - Within 20 working days if routine;
  - May include joint obstetric and psychiatric clinic appointment.

## Screening/ Triage

All referrals are triaged within 5 days of referral to assess severity and risk. Following this women accepted into the service are offered assessment.

## Mother & baby unit (MBU) admission

Woman and her baby admitted together for inpatient psychiatric care and treatment.

## Inpatient treatment

Refer to MBU when community treatment needs stepped up level of intensity to safely manage risks and provide treatment.

## Specialist Community Interventions

Systemic Family Practice - working with women, their babies and their families to help and support parent and infant, enable recovery, build on strengths, and reduce risk of relapse.

Interventions delivered from referral to discharge based on the SPMHS care plan for parents and babies by a specialist multidisciplinary team of NHS professionals trained in adult and infant mental health: psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses, clinical psychologist, parent infant psychotherapist, providing specialized treatment within:

- Family homes
- Accessible community venues e.g. children's centres
- SPMHS bases (maternity hospitals, GP surgeries, Birthing Units)

Sessions can include:

- One to one work with mother
- Dyadic work with parent and infant
- Group work including dialectical behavioural therapy
- Mental health and wellbeing screening and monitoring
- Psychiatric, Adult mental health and Infant mental health input, as required.

Interventions may include:

- Mental health screening and monitoring
- Couples and Family Therapy
- Parent-infant psychotherapy and Infant mental health
- Trauma-focussed CBT and EMDR
- Joint Psychiatric and Obstetric assessment and treatment
- Evidence based prescribing of psychotropic medications balancing risks of medications in pregnancy and breastfeeding with the potential benefits they may have in promoting recovery and wellbeing in the mother.

## Discharge

When baby reaches 12 M or when recovery achieved.  
SPMHS sends detailed discharge summary to women and all involved professionals.  
SPMHS organises follow up by appropriate tier of primary or secondary care mental health services e.g. GP, IAPT, Secondary care mental health teams, Early Intervention in Psychosis service.

## Post discharge

Women who have been discharged can self-refer back into the service any time up until their baby is 12 months old.  
Women who have been discharged from SPMHS can self-refer back to the service in subsequent pregnancies.

**Contact hours:** Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm

**Coastal West Sussex:** 0300 304 0214

**Brighton and Hove:** 0300 304 0097

**East Sussex:** 0300 304 0212

**Northwest Sussex(NWX) and East Surrey:** 0300 304 0213

**Referral email address:** [spnt.perinatalreferrals@nhs.net](mailto:spnt.perinatalreferrals@nhs.net)

**Sussex Mental Healthline:** Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm

Weekends and Bank Holidays 24 hours **Telephone:** 0300 500 101