



Launched on Tuesday 12th April 2011

The approach taken to develop the guide was outlined and the contribution of users, commissioners and providers of perinatal and infant mental health services was acknowledged.

Service users reminded us of the inter-generational impact of failing to identify and attend to perinatal and infant mental health needs. This is a useful starting point for commissioning strategies, both to support families and to give future generations the strongest emotional health start in life. The potential for services to worsen the stigma that women with perinatal mental health needs already feel was described with poignancy, and received with shamefulness.

Our commissioning and general practice colleague described how the guide will act as a stimulus for commissioning consortia but will need a champion to maintain visibility when commissioning decisions are being made.

Across the North West, perinatal and infant mental health will be kept on the agendas of both the NHS and Local Authorities through the leadership of Dr Ann Hoskins in her roles as Director of Children, Young People and Maternity, and Regional Director of Public Health.

There is enough understanding and knowledge about the links between perinatal and infant mental health, life chances and inequality to make doing nothing an unacceptable option. The guide asks that your actions result in improvements that span settings, agencies and levels of need, ultimately securing better outcomes for families.

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