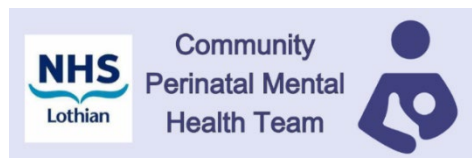


Community Perinatal Mental Health Team

For dads, partners, co-parents, relatives & carers

Looking after yourself and your significant person who's mental wellbeing is affected in the perinatal period.



As a partner or relative you may feel:

Frustrated **Helpless** **Exhausted**
Resentful **Worried** **Blame** **Scared**

These are all common feelings. It is important that you have somewhere you can talk about how you feel and get support for yourself.

- Don't be afraid to ask for help. Ask friends, family members or your GP for support.
- Your GP will be able to explore ways to support your own mental wellbeing.
- We can also refer you to the carer's support team for additional support for yourself.

Looking after yourself

- Get some rest when you can.
- Try to get regular exercise, meals, and sleep.
- Explain to your employer why you may need extra time off.
- Share your worries with trusted friends or family members.
- Speak to your GP.
- As things improve, try to have some fun with your partner/ family member. Get a babysitter or go out together as a family.
- Do not feel that you are solely responsible for your partner/ relative's recovery.

Who to contact

If your significant person is under the care of our team, we are happy to speak with dads, carers, partners, and relatives if you wish to ask questions or have any concerns. We have a dedicated duty line Monday-Friday 10-4 on 01506 523 918.

If your significant person is not under the care of our team, has been recently discharged or is awaiting assessment please contact the GP service or current professionals involved in their care.

If you have immediate concerns out of hours, please contact NHS 24 on 111.

It can be hard to know what to do when your partner or relative is unwell here are some tips on how you can offer support:

Recovery focused

- Work together to understand what helps your partner/relative through so you can help her control her own recovery.
- Regularly check in with your partner to see what could help, or not help.

Emotional

- People need different types of support at different times. You will know, from experience, what helps your partner/relative.
- Perinatal mental health can make a mum question her parenting ability.
- Encourage her and remind her what she is doing well. Help her to feel that she is doing the best she can.
- Use positive moments as beacons of hope and praise her.
- Give your partner/relative hope – remind her that she can recover.

Communication

- Keep listening and talking.
- It can be very frustrating to see your partner/relative unwell. If you feel this, try to reassure them that it's the illness you are frustrated with, not her.
- Remember that with help and support she can get through this.

- Try to agree together to have some conversations that are not about illness.
- Some women find it helpful to choose a simple word they can say to a friend or family member to let them know they are feeling distressed and need support when they are in a social situation.

Practical

- Help around the house e.g. cook healthy meals, manage children's bedtimes, share the housework, make sure there are small healthy snacks around.
- Encourage times for rest.
- Agree when people will visit in advance. Space out visits.
- Help your partner/relative to understand that they can say 'no' to requests.

Increase your understanding of Perinatal Mental Health

Find out more here:

<https://maternalmentalhealthalliance.org/about-maternal-mental-health/>



Information and support for dads:

www.dadsrock.org.uk



www.fathersnetwork.org.uk



Carer's support & organisations:

<https://services.nhslothian.scot/supportingcarers/supporting-organisations/>

