



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Ceannasaí Náisiúnta Oibríochtaí Meabhairshláinte
Ospidéal Naomh Lómáin Baile Phámar Baile Átha Cliath 20.

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PQ Ref: 19255/21

6th May 2021

Parliamentary Question:

To ask the Minister for Health the number of women treated clinically for post-natal depression in 2019, 2020 and to date in 2021, in tabular form. -Thomas Gould

Dear Deputy Gould,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Perinatal mental health services are specialist services for women with a mental health problem. The service is for pregnant women and women with a baby up to one year old who may have an existing or new mental health problem and also women with severer mental health problems and are planning a pregnancy. Although as many as 1 in 5 women have mental health problems in pregnancy or after birth a perinatal mental health service will usually look after someone who has a more serious or complex mental health problem. So, not every woman with a mental health problem during pregnancy, or after their baby is born, will need this service. Women can get good care from their GP and public health nurse (PHN) for milder mental health problems in pregnancy and after birth.

Depending on the severity of the women's depression it may be treated in Primary Care through her GP or by the specialist perinatal mental health service if it is more severe. At present the service does not have a data system to capture specific diagnosis of women treated by the service. The National Programme is engaging with the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OoCIO) to procure a bespoke data system which will be able to give us this type of information in the future. The fact that there is also no unique patient identifier developed for patients is also a limiting factor for data collection.

However, the specialist teams and perinatal mental health midwives work jointly to ensure that all women attending the maternity service will have information on positive mental health. Women are routinely asked about their mental health as well as their physical health at booking clinics.

Perinatal Mental Health leaflets have also been developed by the PMH service and are available to order free of charge for individual women and frontline healthcare services at www.healthpromotion.ie, these include a leaflets on general mental health in pregnancy as well as for specific conditions such as postnatal depression and a leaflet for carers or partners of women who are experiencing postnatal depression.

General Leaflet – Mental Health in Pregnancy



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<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/specialist-perinatal-mental-health/mental-health-in-pregnancy-print-version.pdf>

Postnatal Depression leaflet

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/specialist-perinatal-mental-health/postnatal-depression-print-version.pdf>

Postnatal Depression for carers leaflet

<https://www.healthpromotion.ie/hp-files/docs/HMP01354.pdf>

For more information on the Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service please see the following link [here](#).

Yours sincerely,

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