

Progress Report for Item 4 of Maternity Update 14 November 2008

Update on improvements to ante and post natal care and outreach services

This report details the considerable progress that has been made over the past months to improve ante and post natal care and outreach services for local women. For ease the report highlights the work under three separate streams. Work continues to ensure midwifery services develop to meet the needs of the local population.

Geographical Working for Midwives

This group is meeting to discuss the restructuring of operational issues that fit with Maternity Matters and the delivery of locally accessible ante natal and post natal services. The objectives of the group are to ensure that the operational aspects of the draft maternity strategy are met and delivered, which involves the implementation of changes necessary to deliver a community based midwifery service.

The group membership consists of the Head of Midwifery, Head of Children's Services, Midwifery Service Managers, and the East Sussex County Council Health Adviser. Two GPs, one from each PCT will be co opted on to the group from January 2009. The publication of Maternity Matters has helped the process by raising the profile of this issue and both the hospital Trust and PCT are working together to ensure this becomes reality for our PCTs' parents.

Expected Outcomes

- Improved access to services.
- Direct access to a midwife.
- Booking by 12 weeks.
- National choice agenda met
- Active targeting of vulnerable groups
- A commitment from the PCTs to expand/strengthen community based maternity services to meet the recommendations of Maternity Matters.

Significant Changes

- Community bases for midwives – these will be co-located in Childrens Centres with health visiting teams and family outreach services
- Geographical case-organisation
- Alternative innovative clinic venues e.g. ASDA in Eastbourne
- Open access to all clients from GP surgeries; even clients who are not registered, as accessing that venue will improve access to maternity services

The group will continue to meet until all the changes and outcomes are in place. This group is an excellent example of partnership working and commitment to improving midwifery community services for the population of East Sussex Downs and Weald PCT and Hastings and Rother PCT.

The Family Nurse Partnership

Hastings and Rother PCT and East Sussex County Council has been successful in a joint bid to develop the Nurse Family Partnership programme This is an excellent example of partnership working with our ESCC colleagues. The new team will consist of four nurses from various nursing backgrounds and a family nurse supervisor. The team will be working very closely with midwifery and children's community services.

The Family Nurse Partnership is an evidence- based home visiting programme that improves the health, wellbeing and self sufficiency of low income, first time young parents and their children. It is an intensive support for first time young mothers which is grounded in theory, strength based and is a licensed programme. It is based on research from the USA over a period 30 years in different cultural settings, which found the outcomes to be consistent. Hastings and St Leonards on Sea is 1 of 10 (wave 2) pilot sites in the UK.

Client enrolment and participation is voluntary, and offered to all first time mothers aged 19 and under at 16 weeks pregnancy. Hastings and St Leonards will be recruiting 80 mothers in total. Additionally, a further 20 mothers from the 20 – 22 year age group will also be recruited.

Clients remain in the programme until the child is 2 years old and then return to main stream services. The same nurse visits the client for the whole of the duration and the therapeutic relationship between the nurse and the client is essential and lies at the heart of the programme.

Weekly, fortnightly or monthly visits are offered during the programme. Each visit has a structured and planned content covering the following 6 domains:

- Personal health
- Environmental health
- Life course development
- Maternal role
- Family and friends
- Local services.

Nurses have weekly one to one supervision and there is also a psychologist attached to the team who provides group supervision on a monthly basis. Ongoing training for the team is provided both locally and nationally throughout the programme.

Perinatal Mental Health

External funding from the Care Services Improvement Partnership was obtained to implement a Perinatal Mental Health Network for Sussex – supported by a specialist midwife. Since this post commenced, a great deal of cross-boundary, multi-disciplinary networking has taken place and as a result a Sussex-wide Perinatal Mental Health network group was established in May 2008. The aim of this group was to map current perinatal mental health services across Sussex, identify the 'client group', review current national and local guidelines and develop integrated care pathways to improve outcomes for women suffering from perinatal mental illness and their families.

Progress to date includes:

- Establishing local working parties to look more closely at local statistics and collecting information from Euroking to establish the 'common' mental health conditions reported by women at booking. Using the 'traffic light' system developed by Frimley Park Hospital, Surrey, we are able to estimate the number of women who may require specialist assessment.
- It is estimated that annually approximately 400 women in East Sussex, may require assessment by a specialist perinatal mental health service. These women suffer from a range of mental health conditions including: anxiety, stress, current depression, schizophrenia, previous postnatal depression, psychosis, eating disorders or attempted suicide.
- Areas of good practice have been identified, i.e. those hospitals with dedicated perinatal mental health services. These have provided models of multi-agency service provision designed to meet the needs of women and their families.
- A mandatory training package for midwives, maternity care assistants and obstetricians was compiled in collaboration with the health specialists for perinatal depression. This was aimed at raising awareness of the need to predict and detect women at risk of severe mental ill health early to ensure they receive the appropriate level of support and treatment. The training sessions have been held each week, at alternative hospital sites since September. This will be supported by an online learning package.
- An information resource pack has been developed for use by professionals. This will ensure appropriate and timely sign posting to a variety of services which can offer support and advice to women with perinatal mental health complications.