

IDENTIFICATION OF AND INTERVENTION IN POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

As members will be aware, a case last summer of serious postpartum depression resulted in a tragic outcome in the death of a mother and 2 children. Just before Christmas, the Chief Medical Examiner referred this matter to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba and directed that they further educate members and other professionals on this potentially fatal illness.

Attention to this issue is drawn to members of the physiotherapy profession as physiotherapists may be the first to see women affected by perinatal or postpartum depression.

In discussion with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, the Mood Disorders Association, The College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses, The College of Pharmacists and the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba, the following message was developed:

1. Attention to perinatal and postpartum mental health is crucial to the well-being of both mother and child.
2. Awareness and early recognition is essential because postpartum mental health issues can be silent. Helpful treatment options include counselling, medication and support.
3. Health care professionals must work together to provide comprehensive care to women and children during the perinatal and postpartum periods.
4. You can find resources to support your practice in the following places:
 - WRHA Perinatal Quick Reference Guide for Health Care Providers:
http://www.wrha.mb.ca/healthinfo/prohealth/files/MentalHealth_Perinatal.pdf
 - Mental Health Resources Guide for Winnipeg www.cmhawpg.mb.ca/resources.htm
 - Fact sheet for public education on postpartum depression
www.heretohelp.bc.ca/publications/factsheets/postpartum
 - Culture of Wellbeing: Guide to Mental Health Resources for First Nations, Metis and Inuit People of Winnipeg www.wrha.mb.ca/aboriginalhealth/services/resources.php
 - www.postpartum.org
 - www.postpartum.net
 - Women's Health Clinic (204) 947-1517
5. Crisis resources are available in the following places:
 - Crisis services
<http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthyliving/mh/crisis.html>