

Testing your perinatal mental health pathway from a baby's point of view.

Consider each of these scenarios in your group. What would happen to this baby and his or her family if they were in your area? How would anyone know they were having problems or at risk? What support would they receive? Is this enough?

1. I have been developing in mum's womb for 12 weeks. My mum has a history of bipolar disorder, although it's been well managed for many years. She no longer has contact with mental health services and she feels everything will be fine when I arrive. What happens to ensure that she and I remain healthy and safe?
2. I have been developing in mum's womb for 24 weeks (I'm still in here!). Mum has a history of violent relationships and substance misuse, although she's made a great effort to stay safe and clean since she's known I'm here. She lives in a homeless hostel and because I'm not born yet, she's still in an adult hostel surrounded by lots of scary people. She's stressed and anxious. What can you do for me?
3. I have been developing in mum's womb for 30 weeks. I had an older sister, but she died just before she was born. Mum and dad are really worried about that happening to me. They haven't bought anything, set up a nursery, or thought about what to call me. Mum occasionally gives my bump a rub or talks to me, but she is very anxious and sad. Can someone help mum and dad get ready for me?
4. I was born today. My mum and dad have a stormy relationship and didn't really want me. They haven't prepared much for my arrival, or talked to me while I've been inside. Now I'm on the postnatal ward with mum. She sent dad home after they argued. I'm being left in my cot a lot, and not getting many cuddles. Can anyone help?
5. I'm 8 weeks old, and I cry A LOT. There's nothing really wrong. It's just that I'm finding it hard to adjust to the big wide world. It helps a lot when mum and dad pick me up and cuddle me. The tiredness and crying are getting to Mum and she's quite down. She isn't seeing friends or going to baby groups because she worries about me crying too much. She is crying more and more herself and Dad looks tired and worried too. Will anyone help us?
6. I'm four months old. My arrival into the world was a bit difficult. Mum was in labour for a long time, and the birth was very scary for her. She was quite poorly afterwards and has been left with some damage. She doesn't leave the house because she is worried about going to the toilet. She has flashbacks and nightmares about being in hospital. She seems very sad and doesn't say much. She doesn't like being left alone with me. Dad told her not to say anything to the health visitor because he was worried they would take me away. Can anyone help?