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# Mums and Babies in Mind: We know what good looks like but how do we get there?

25TH JULY 2016 | ANNA FRANCE-WILLIAMS




by Sally Hogg, Strategic Lead for Mums and Babies in Mind

It's great to be writing this, the first blog post for the [Mums and Babies in Mind \(MABIM\) Project](#). We hope that our blog will be a key part of the project; a useful source of information, ideas and inspiration for anyone who is working to try and improve services for mums with perinatal mental health problems and their babies.

At least 1 in 10 women will experience a mental health problem during pregnancy or the first year of life, and – if untreated – these problems can have serious and long term consequences for the woman, her baby and her family, as well as bringing costs for public services. Perinatal mental health problems are not homogenous, and neither are the women who are affected by them. Preventing, identifying and addressing these problems in a timely and effective way requires a range of services to be in place in each local area, across maternity, health visiting, mental health and children's services. It often involves driving changes in culture, practice and skills in existing services as well as creating new

ones. Ensuring that the right care pathways are in place is complex. This work requires commissioners and providers to have a shared understanding, strong commitment, and effective partnerships to secure a joined up, coherent and comprehensive offer.

There is a lot of great – and very consistent – guidance about what good perinatal mental health services and care pathways look like (see the [Everyone's Business website](#) for more information). I see MABIM's role as supporting local leaders to move their local services towards these standards. The 'what' has been clearly defined, but we hope we can help to define the 'how' to get there.

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There are three core elements to the [MABIM project](#) and we will be launching a new, online hub in September which will explain more.

First, my colleagues and I will provide **bespoke advice** to the leaders in the four sites where we are working (Blackpool, Gloucestershire, Haringey and Southend). We bring clinical, commissioning and communications expertise and a wide range of experience from health, children's services and the voluntary sector which we hope we can use to help partners to identify local priorities and overcome any barriers to progress.

Second, we will be bringing leaders from across the four sites together through our **Leaders' Programme** to learn together, share ideas and support each other. This programme will be focused around seven particularly important topics and challenges, such as how to engage service users, reaching vulnerable groups, and ensuring that infant mental health services are fully integrated into the perinatal mental health pathway. More information on this Leaders Programme will be available on our forthcoming online hub.

[Mums and Babies in Mind](#) is a [Maternal Mental Health Alliance project](#). One of our USPs is that we can draw on all of the enthusiasm and expertise of the Alliance, which includes over 70 national patient and professional organisations, to support those commissioners and providers who are trying to effect changes for mums and babies on the ground.



Finally, we'll be **sharing all that we learn and do** through the project on this website through a dedicated online hub which will be live in September. This will support

champions in other areas of the UK to drive forward changes. On this blog, we will be sharing the work we do to support the four MABIM partner areas to improve their local services. We'll also be highlighting case studies from providers and commissioners who have made positive changes – both in the MABIM areas and more widely. In addition we will be writing reports on key topics, and we'll be developing and sharing useful tools – such as an interactive mapping tool which enables local partners to assess the quality of their local offer.

We are keen to hear from you too. Please email us at [mabim@maternalmentalhealthalliance.org](mailto:mabim@maternalmentalhealthalliance.org) if you have developed or improved a local service, whatever the sector or size and tell us about what you've done and lessons you'd like to share with others following in your footsteps.



**mums and babies in mind**

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## Read more

[Mums and Babies in Mind blog](#)

Read Alain Gregoire's blog post on applying for the NHS funding: [Six tips for the PMH Development Fund](#)

## About Mums and Babies in Mind

[Mums and Babies in Mind](#) supports local leaders in four areas of England to improve care and quality of life for mums with mental health problems during pregnancy and the first year of life, and their babies. Mums and Babies in Mind is a [Maternal Mental Health Alliance](#) project, hosted by the [Mental Health Foundation](#) and funded by the [Big Lottery Fund](#). It lasts for three years, until September 2018.

## Connect with MABIM

**COMING SOON....**we will be launching the Mums and Babies online hub in September 2016. This will be hosted on the MMHA website and will showcase our work and give local leaders access to tools for improving their perinatal mental health services.

- Email us at [mabim@maternalmentalhealthalliance.org](mailto:mabim@maternalmentalhealthalliance.org) to subscribe to our blog and newsletter
- Follow the MMHA on Twitter [@MMHAlliance](https://twitter.com/MMHAlliance) using #MABIM to tweet about your local perinatal mental health services and stories (lessons to share, services developed, stories to tell)

## » GET IN TOUCH

We'd love to hear from you. Please email us at [mabim@maternalmentalhealthalliance.org](mailto:mabim@maternalmentalhealthalliance.org) if:

- you have developed or improved a local perinatal mental health service
- you have lessons you'd like to share with others
- you are a woman with lived experience who wants to share your story with others