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Mental health support for parents in the antenatal and post-natal period



North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN) is seeking providers to implement a stepped care approach to support the mental health and wellbeing of parents in the critical antenatal and post-natal period.

The antenatal and post-natal period refers to the period prior to and after the birth of a child. There is increasing evidence that the life events and experiences during this period can have significant impacts on babies' social functioning and cognitive development and parents' health and wellbeing.

NWMPHN has consulted with both the Royal Women's Hospital's (RWH) Mother and Baby Unit and Perinatal Anxiety and Depression Australia (PANDA), confirming there is a need for a community based mental health and wellbeing program to support new parents.

Working through this issue with RWH and PANDA, it has also become apparent that a program to support improved mental health and wellbeing for parents would be particularly helpful for families that have difficulty accessing other services.

NWMPHN CEO Adjunct Associate Professor Christopher Carter said [local data showed](#) that focusing on the mental health of soon to be and new parents should be a priority.



“The likelihood of experiencing antenatal depression can be up to one in ten women and one in 20 men, with more than one in seven new mothers and one in 10 new fathers experiencing post-natal depression every year,” A/Prof Christopher Carter said.

“Parenthood is exhilarating but can also be challenging, especially for first-time parents. These new services will provide real support for new parents when they need it most.”

The new services will be accessible to parents by self-referral or referral from a general practitioner, obstetrician, maternal child health nurse or maternity ward. The services will be provided at a community venue.

Applicants are encouraged to submit innovative tenders that will deliver a model of care that meets the mental health needs of new parents in the NWMPHN catchment.

A collaborative approach that involves working with new parents in the community would be advantageous in developing a proactive and integrated model.

All applicants will need to register and apply through Tenderlink: Visit <https://www.tenderlink.com/mpcn/>

For all enquiries:

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<http://www.facebook.com/nwmpnh> or



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ABOUT PHNs

Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health, PHNs began operation on 1 July 2015 and are responsible for coordinating primary health care and facilitating improved health outcomes in their local community. Melbourne Primary Care Network operates the North Western Melbourne PHN.

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We acknowledge the peoples of the Kulin nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which our work in the community takes place. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

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