

Reference:	FOI.4913.21
Subject:	Perinatal Mental Health services
Date of Request:	6 January 2021

Requested:

1. How many referrals have there been to Perinatal Mental Health services?
Please break this information down by calendar year from the start of 2017 up to and including 2020.
2. What provision is there for patients who need access to Perinatal Mental Health services?

Response:

1. Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) provides, within the table below, the number of referrals to Perinatal Mental Health (MH) services, for the calendar years 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Number of referrals to perinatal MH services				
	2017	2018	2019	2020
January	20	61	64	72
February	18	51	55	77
March	19	60	59	45
April	19	52	49	30
May	30	78	62	44
June	30	60	76	66
July	35	87	74	49
August	33	63	53	55
September	41	55	62	61
October	63	73	74	72
November	55	61	71	33
December	53	47	62	43
Total	416	748	761	647

2. The UHB has a Perinatal MH service, a specialist community team that covers three (3) localities, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion. The multi-disciplinary team (MDT) provides treatment and care to women who are pregnant or postnatal and are at risk of, or are affected by mental illness, which includes, pre-conception, antenatal, and post-natal up until baby is twelve (12) months of age. Women can be referred to the Perinatal MH service by any professional that's involved during the perinatal period.

The MDT includes a consultant psychiatrist, MH nurses, specialist midwife, pharmacist, occupational therapist, support and administrative staff, students and also have access to psychological therapies.

The primary aim of the service is to prevent significant MH difficulties from occurring or becoming worse. Therefore, the Perinatal MH service recommends referrals from the following groups:

- A client who is pregnant or is planning a pregnancy and has ever had:
 - A serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, schizoaffective disorder or severe depression
 - Postpartum psychosis or severe postnatal depression
 - An eating disorder such as anorexia or bulimia
- There is a family history of postpartum psychosis. This can sometimes increase the risk of MH problems after childbirth.
- Concerns that the pregnant woman or new mum, is becoming unwell and feel that the services on offer are not sufficient for her needs.

The best treatment will depend on the type and severity of the illness experienced. Both medication and psychological therapies can help. Untreated mental illness can increase the type of pregnancy problems and can affect the parent-child relationship.

The UHB's Perinatal MH service offers evidence based treatments in a way that is best suited to the woman, her baby, and family. Depending on the new mum's needs at the time of the referral, the following may be offered:

- Practical and emotional support
- Medication advice; it is very important that women do not suddenly stop any medication they may be on unless advised by a GP
- Psychological consultation, assessment and advice
- A range of psychological interventions
- Advice on local services and information, including Flying Start
- Care planning (not Care and Treatment Plan in Secondary Care services)

The MDT team is able to offer treatment to women at many locations, including maternity wards, outpatient clinics and home settings.

Additionally, support for fathers is available. Pregnancy and parenthood is a big change in both parents' lives, with fathers often needing support, advice and other resources when coping with parenthood or supporting their partner. The Perinatal MH service will accept referrals for fathers if the mother is known to the service. Support and guidance is also available on the 'dads matter UK' website via the provided link www.dadsmatter.org