



## Perinatal Mental Health Integrated Care Initiative

The mission of Maternal Mental Health NOW (formerly the Los Angeles County Perinatal Mental Health Task Force) is to remove barriers to the prevention, screening, and treatment of prenatal and postpartum depression in Los Angeles County. A major barrier to addressing perinatal mood and anxiety disorders identified by Maternal Mental Health NOW is the disjointed nature of the behavioral health and mental health care systems that provide care to women and their offspring in the county. To address this barrier, several years ago, Maternal Mental Health NOW launched an integrated perinatal mental health initiative that is spreading to diverse medical settings throughout the county:

- **USC-Eisner Family Medical Clinic (an FQHC)** – The Maternal Mental Health Improvement project, based on the IMPACT model, began in 2011 and continued through 2014. All prenatal and postpartum patients were screened at each visit with both the PHQ9 and EPDS-3. Positive screens were connected with an onsite social worker, social work intern and/or occupational therapist, who conducted a full assessment. These cases were then referred to the New Family Care Team, which consisted of primary care physicians, social workers, occupational therapists, psychologists, and case managers at the clinic, as well as a consulting perinatal psychiatrist, psychologist, licensed marriage family therapist, and social worker. Members of the New Family Care Team met on a weekly basis to discuss cases, provide expertise from members' respective disciplines, and construct optimal treatment plans. Treatment options included individual or group therapy, psychiatric care, medication, cognitive behavioral therapy, interpersonal psychotherapy and/or psychodynamic psychotherapy, social support, and intensive case management with warm referrals to community resources. Although the program is no longer operating at this intensive level, USC-Eisner continues screening perinatal patients, providing therapeutic interventions and case management, and referring patients when necessary using the *Los Angeles County Maternal Mental Health Resource Directory* ([directory.maternalmentalhealthnow.org](http://directory.maternalmentalhealthnow.org)). According to USC-Eisner's Medical Director, the pilot has changed the way the clinic approaches care for all of its patients, not just its perinatal patients.
- **Harbor Community Clinic (an FQHC)** – Maternal Mental Health NOW has trained the obstetricians, pediatricians, clinic psychologist, and medical assistants at this small clinic in San Pedro to recognize and respond to perinatal mood and anxiety disorders. The clinic screens prenatal and postpartum patients using both the PHQ9 and the EPDS-3 at each trimester, the postpartum visit, and at all well-child visits. Positive screens are referred to the on-site psychologist—often immediately—who provides

psycho-education and self-care tips, cognitive behavioral interventions, and referrals as needed using the *Los Angeles County Maternal Mental Health Resource Directory*. When a patient requires medication, she is referred to San Pedro Mental Health, a directly-operated DMH clinic that provides medication management in conjunction with Harbor Community Clinic's therapeutic interventions. The project includes a strong data collection component to monitor improvement in maternal depression screening scores in treated patients. Since the project began in March 2015, more than 80 patients have been screened, and 20% have screened positive. Maternal Mental Health NOW believes that this model, which leverages the resources a clinic already has and does not place undue burden on the staff, is replicable throughout Los Angeles and beyond.

- **LAC+USC New Family Care Clinic** – This novel clinic established by Dr. Emily Dossett and other physicians at LAC+USC, which began in July 2015, integrates maternal mental health care, pediatric well-child care, and mother-infant attachment interventions in one comprehensive clinic. Maternal Mental Health NOW provides training on maternal mental health, cost-effective dyadic interventions for pediatricians, obstetricians, and mental health staff, and attachment interventions, as well as ongoing consultation and technical support on integration and data collection.
- **Harbor-UCLA Pediatric Group** – Attending physicians and case managers have received specialized training on perinatal mood and anxiety disorders from Maternal Mental Health NOW's Training Institute, regularly screen parents of pediatric patients for maternal mental health disorders, and refer women to case managers who provide patients with self-care recommendations and warm referrals to informed care when needed using the *Los Angeles County Maternal Mental Health Resource Directory*.
- **UCLA Westwood Pediatric Group** – Attending physicians, residents, and social work staff have received training on maternal mental health and use of the EPDS to screen new mothers at well-child visits. Positive screens are referred to resources using the *Los Angeles County Maternal Mental Health Resource Directory*. Screening rates have increased dramatically in the past several months.

For more information on these initiatives, visit [www.maternalmentalhealthnow.org](http://www.maternalmentalhealthnow.org) or contact Jo Bloomfield, Policy Director, at [jo@maternalmentalhealthnow.org](mailto:jo@maternalmentalhealthnow.org).