

PREGNANCY & POSTPARTUM MOOD & ANXIETY DISORDER PROGRAM

This is a unique, comprehensive multi disciplinary program for St. Alexius Medical Center, and Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital providing prevention and wellness programming, screening and a support group geared to meet the needs of women experiencing a pregnancy or postpartum mood disorder.

This Model Program begins prenatally with prevention and screening for women at 24 weeks gestation. It is an innovative program connecting Behavioral Health and Obstetrics Services.

Specifics of the Program:

- Prenatal screening:** Offered in the OB's offices; followed up by our Program contacting the women who are at risk for a perinatal depression. We meet and prepare a Birth Plan for the woman, collaborating with her CNM, OB, Pediatrician, Behavioral Health specialists, and our OB department.
- Perinatal Depression Support Group:** Offered through the hospital three times a month for women who are suffering with a pregnancy or postpartum mood disorder.
- Couples support Group:** for couples who need support dealing with PPD or pregnancy depression/anxiety. This is a support group that offers additional education regarding PPD and discussion about their changing roles as parents.
- Postpartum Dads Group:** For dads whose partners are experiencing a PPD or pregnancy depression /anxiety. This is a group for dads who want to learn more about PPD and want support for themselves as they go through this difficult time with their partner.
- Education:** regarding postpartum depression – offered to the patients and families during their hospital stay and after discharge from the hospital.
- Outpatient consultations & evaluations** for psycho-education and referrals are made to behavioral health professionals.
- Collaboration with various community agencies:** Lactation Consultants, Home Health Nurses, Behavioral Health professionals, EAPs, Marketing department, physicians, and nurses. This is an essential part of the success of the model program.
- Respite Program:** providing day or night care of both mother and baby. This is available to women who are a part of our Program.

For further information or referrals to our Program please contact
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1. St. Alexius Medical Center and Alexian Brothers Medical Center do have a Protected Sleep program, called *Family Rest Time*. The policy is in place for postpartum patients every afternoon from 2-4 pm and from 10 pm to 5 am. No visitors allowed, no consults are to be done, no lab work, etc within those hours. Visitors are to leave the nursing unit by 8 pm each night; fathers or designated support persons may stay overnight with the patient.
2. For our patients who are scheduled for a C-section, they are given instructions by their doctors and given verbal instructions from Labor and Delivery to have a good night's sleep the night before they are to come into the hospital, type of food to eat the night before and what to bring to the hospital.
3. The Prenatal classes that are attended during the last trimester of the pregnancy, include in their seventh class information about new mother care and parenting information, ABC's of baby care as well as mammocare information (breast self exam information). There is a segment of the prenatal classes that discusses Perinatal Mood Disorders (PPMADP), hand outs for the couples. Information as to when to call our Pregnancy & Postpartum Mood & Anxiety Disorder Program, if the woman experiences symptoms of PMD, information about risk factors and encouragement to contact our PPMADP for an appointment during their pregnancy if they would like to formulate a plan (which is attached to the patient's prenatal, so that when the patient presents to L&D, the plan is shared with the nurses and doctors who care for this patient) to help them perhaps avoid PMD symptoms, and information that someone from our PPMADP will see them while they are in the hospital or contact the new mother when she gets home if we don't visit her in the hospital.
4. Each woman who delivers at our hospital is given information about PMD by her nurse, along with information about baby. The patient is given a booklet and DVD about her care as well as care of her baby. If the patient has a baby in our NICU/Special Care Nursery, they are given a booklet about the special little patient and care for that baby. The bulk of the education is done postpartum, not in labor and delivery. There is a checklist that the postpartum nurses go through with each of their patients for educating them about everything from breastfeeding, baby care, self care, immunizations, near-by clinics, WIC, English as a second language, agencies who help mothers and children, mammocare teaching and signs and symptoms of PMD.
5. Each patient who delivers at our hospitals is screened by their OB's office during their pregnancy for PMD; if the patient is at risk for a PMD, they make an appointment with our PPMADP for a consult, after delivery each patient is screened for PMD at their OB's office and then referred to our Program if needed. Pediatricians and Family Practice offices also use the EPDS screening tool and refer to our Program, if needed.
6. If a postpartum woman needs to be readmitted to our hospital and the nursing staff and/or doctor feels that she needs an assessment from our Program, we will see the patient and do a consult, and give our recommendations to her physician.
7. If a pregnant or postpartum woman is admitted to our Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital (either inpatient or Day Program), our Program is notified and we are called to do a consult. We will meet with the patient, patient's family, Case Manager, and psychiatrist prior to the patient's discharge from the Behavioral Health Hospital.
8. Our Program is working with our Emergency Department to develop more effective screening of any woman who is pregnant or postpartum.
9. Our Program has an ongoing Illinois state-wide consortium for all facilitators of Postpartum Depression Support Groups that meets quarterly in the state of Illinois. The purpose of the consortium is to extend collegial support to facilitators of these specialized support groups; to identify the array of mental health services, including support groups, in IL that benefit women with Perinatal Mood Disorders. We have formed community partnerships to identify and address postpartum depression services to improve access to care in the state of IL. We are a networking group of professionals who are committed to supporting one another as we educate and support women and their families who experience a perinatal mood disorder.