



Shining a light on the future

Northumberland, Tyne and Wear **NHS**  
NHS Trust

# **COMPLETING A COMMUNITY REVIEW**

## **TEAMS INVOLVED:**

**SOUTH WEST PERINATAL MENTAL HEALTH OUTREACH TEAM**  
**NORTH OF TYNE PERINATAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**



## Introduction

The review took place on 10 September 2009.

Anne Oxley, Perinatal Service Manager, and Dr Angela Walsh, Consultant Perinatal Psychiatrist, from Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust, visited the PMHOT and spoke to staff and an ex-service user.



## Service Standards

Devised by the South Central Strategic Health Authority Antenatal and Postnatal Mental Health Clinical Advisory Group. A self-review had been performed by the staff prior to the visit.

- Services
- Functions
- Access
- Patient Care



## Main Strengths of the PMHOT

- ❑ This is a well-established, cohesive and supportive team which is able to meet the needs of the catchment population
- ❑ There is a good skill mix within the team with medical, psychiatric nursing, nursery nursing and psychology input (though latter post is currently vacant)
- ❑ Training is seen as an essential part of the work, both for and by the team
- ❑ The team has the capacity to co-work with Crisis/Assertive Outreach and EIP teams and can advise in emergency situations



- Care pathways are in place to detect women at risk of severe mental illness and there is a computer-generated link from the antenatal booking assessment to the PMHOT if the psychiatric history is positive
- Communication with maternity services and primary care is good
- A range of useful patient information leaflets have been devised
- The team has a clear understanding of their role, and quality improvement is a priority



## The Challenges the Team Face

- ❑ Meeting Trust guidelines for the introduction of electronic notes and the Trust Policy around care coordination
- ❑ A lack of a duty system may be potentially increasing the time taken to discuss urgent referrals and to assess non-urgent referrals. The reviewers appreciated that this might be difficult with a relatively small number of staff, but a modified duty system (e.g. 4-5 p.m. every day to pick up referrals) might be feasible
- ❑ Recruitment of a psychologist



## Advice

- Ensure that electronic notes meet the needs of the clients, team and Trust
- Explore a duty system to reduce time taken to give advice regarding urgent cases and waiting times for routine assessments
- Make a decision about the nature of psychological input required
- Liaise with Trust communications and SHA to develop a website



## Reviewers' Summary

The reviewers were made to feel very welcome and were given plenty of time to speak to staff and an ex-user of the service.

This was an informal review of locally devised standards. The reviewers found this a helpful process and it enabled us to reflect on their own service.

This is a well-established, solid and dedicated PMHOT which is prepared to be creative and embrace progress and development.