

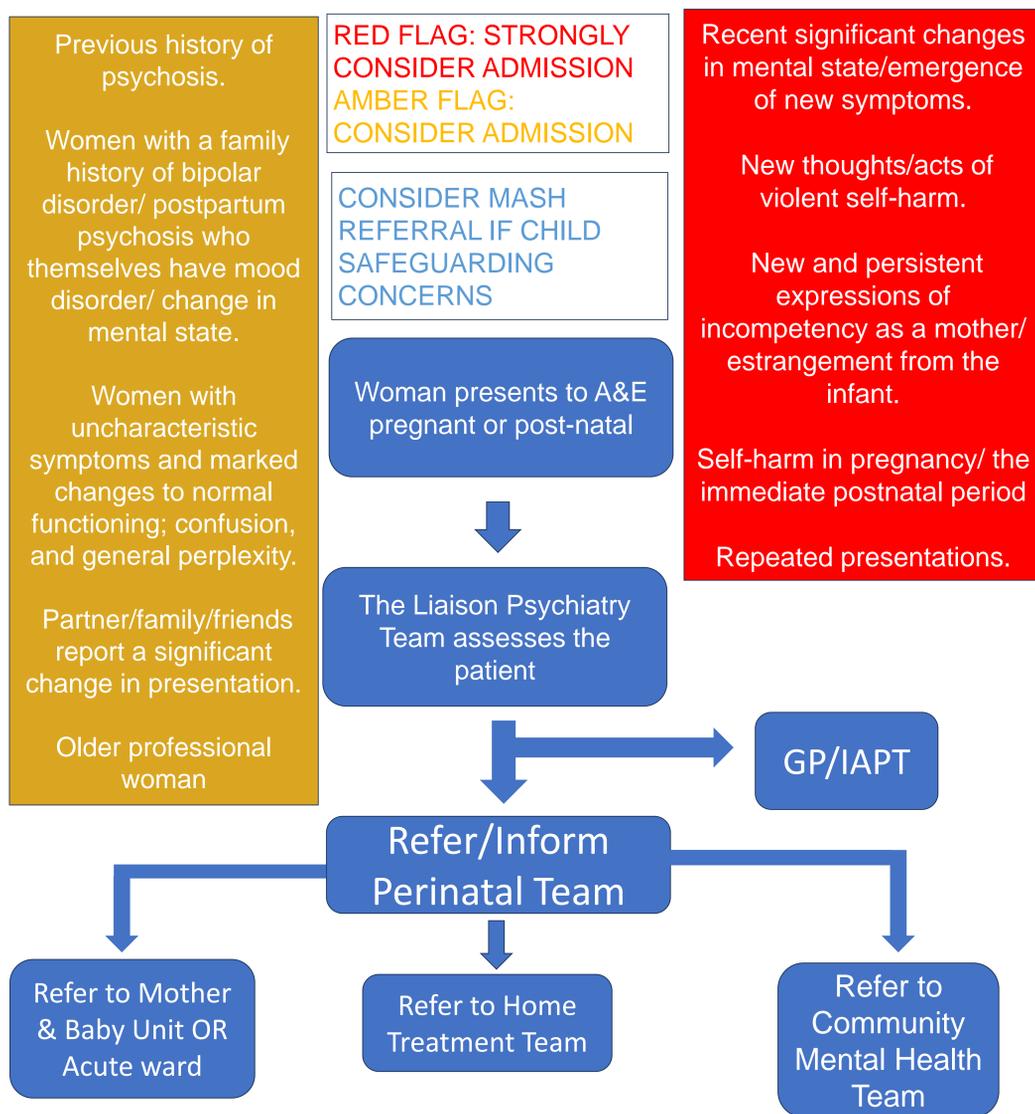
Improving the quality of care by the Greenwich Mental Health Liaison Team to patients presenting in crisis in the perinatal period

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Aim & hypothesis

- This Quality Improvement Project aims to inform better care planning and risk assessment of patients seen by the Greenwich Mental Health Liaison Team (MHLT) in the perinatal period.
- The Oxleas perinatal team devised a flow chart (see Figure 1.1 for a simplified version) based on NICE Clinical Guideline CG192¹.
- The flow chart categorised patients into red, amber and green risk, depending on whether specified criteria had been met.
- The ultimate aim, by consulting the flowchart for each perinatal patient, is to ensure accurate referral of patients to appropriate services.

Fig 1.1: Oxleas Perinatal Team Flowchart (simplified)



Background

- The perinatal period is more likely to exacerbate existing mental health conditions as well as unmask unaddressed ones¹.
- The threshold for admitting perinatal patients to a psychiatric ward is lower than the general population.
- A more objective method of risk assessment is needed to ensure accurate management of perinatal psychiatry patients.

References

¹<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg192>

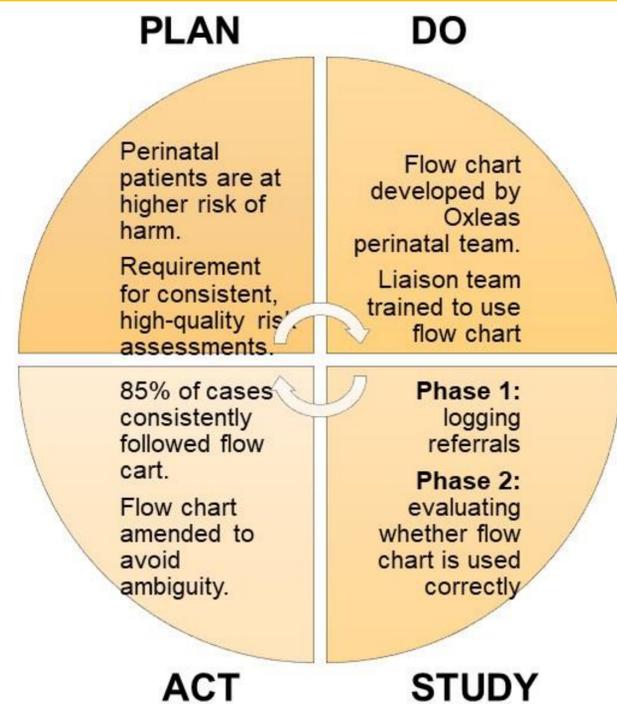


Figure 1.2 PDSA cycle

Methods

- The Perinatal team designed and shared the flow chart with the Liaison team. Copies were made available to everyone.
- The Liaison Database was retrospectively audited from January 16th 2023 till April 30th, 2023
- Referrals were logged, and perinatal patients were identified
- Both teams evaluated the Liaison team assessments and later discussed the outcome

Results

- 13 patients were identified from 1046 referrals
- 11 assessments had an appropriate decision as per the flow chart
- 1 assessment raised concern about its outcome not being appropriate, and another showed that there was ambiguity in the red flag alert's wording.
- Both teams had good consensus in the evaluation of the assessments and the flow chart's application

Changes agreed to the flowchart

- In the red flag alert – change recent significant changes in mental state to recent significant deterioration in mental state
- Add in the new HELIX and Mental Health Hub Services

Conclusions

- The flow chart was an excellent tool to help clinicians in the risk assessment of perinatal patients
- Training sessions from the perinatal team to the liaison team were identified as a need to help reinforce the flow chart to all team members.

Acknowledgements

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