

# **ma** | **maternity engagement action**

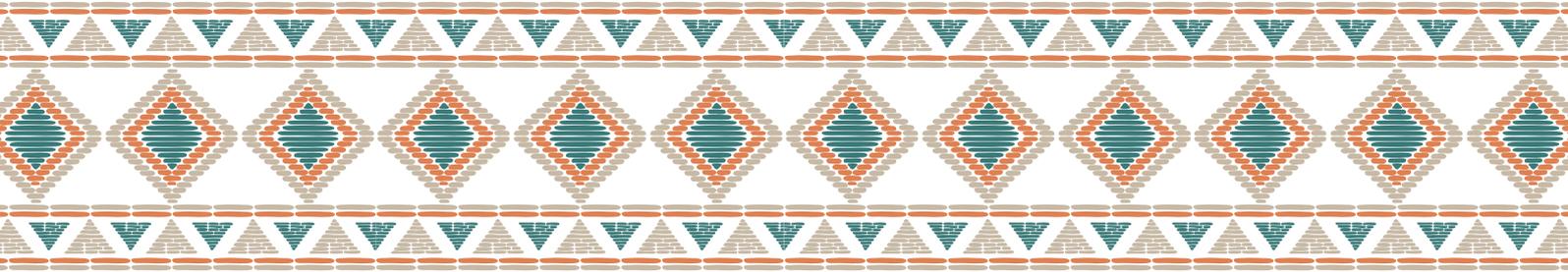
Engaging Black Perinatal Families For Better Maternal Outcomes



BLACK MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH

WEEK 2022

#BMMHW2022



# WHAT IS MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH

Maternal Mental Health problems are those which occur during pregnancy or in the first year following the birth of a child. Maternal mental illness which is often referred to as Perinatal Mental Health (PMH) affects up to 20% of new and expectant mums and covers a wide range of conditions.

Black women experience Postnatal Depression at 13% higher than any other ethnic group.

PMH issues affect 1 in 5 mums, and 1 in 10 dads

Birth trauma as well as infant loss can be a factor in the onset of a PMH condition.



There is a lot of stigma within the Black community around maternal mental wellbeing.

In the UK, ethnic minority groups are more likely to present with mental health problems while their mental health needs are less likely to be detected.

# BARRIERS TO ACCESSING HELP FOR PMH

There are many barriers to accessing help for your perinatal mental health, however those that come with being a Melanin Queen could include things such as...

'STRONG BLACK WOMAN'  
MYTH

THE BLACK EXPERIENCES IN THE  
HEALTH-CARE SYSTEM

THE BLACK CODE –  
NU CHAT U BIZNIZ!

SYSTEMIC/INSTITUTIONAL  
RACISM

TRADITIONAL/FAMILIAL  
(MIS)UNDERSTANDING OF ILLNESS BOTH  
PHYSICAL & MENTAL

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AROUND  
MENTAL ILLNESS – JINN/DUPPY



# WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF MATERNAL MENTAL ILLNESSES WE SHOULD BE AWARE OF?



ANTENATAL & POST-NATAL DEPRESSION

PERINATAL ANXIETY

PERINATAL OCD

POSTNATAL PSYCHOSIS

PTSD

These are some of the most common forms of PMH illnesses however there are a number of PMH illnesses that can affect women pre-natal and post-natal. Some risk factors to take into consideration when talking about PMH are:

- History of MH issue
- Birth trauma
- Stressful life events
- Lone parent family
- Childhood trauma
- Unwanted Pregnancy
- Age related pregnancy
- Lack of social support
- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Lack of education
- Homelessness
- Experiencing Conflict/Disasters
- Racism and discrimination



# HOW TO COPE?

Firstly it's important to not self diagnose, If you do feel you are experiencing symptoms of any PMH illness it's important to seek medical/professional help. However we know as Black women this isn't always so easy or straight forward for us to do and often we're faced with so many barriers.

Here are a few Self-Care tips we have come up with which may be useful in times of crisis or just dealing with everyday life being pregnant or a mother (or both):

- Talk to your partner, friends and family
- Don't try to be a "super-mum"
- Make time for yourself
- Rest and relaxation
- Healthy eating, hydration
- Managed exercise; aqua-natal, yoga
- Talking and being listened to
- Walking, reading, dancing, audiobook,
- Birth support/companion or doula
- Birth plan
- Knowledge/empowerment
- Join a group if possible

This week @themothhoodgroup will be going through what Black Maternal Mental Health is currently like in the UK, MEA will also be posting and sharing information.

If you aren't already in our private facebook group please join our Melanin Mumz of Brum if you are pregnant or your child is below two years of age, here we share advice and words of encouragement with one another.

We hope that the information shared in this booklet will be useful to you and we would like to gently remind you 'It's okay not to be okay Moma'



# WELL-BEING/SELF-CARE TIPS

We would love to open up the room for discussion and allow you all to share any tips or information with each other.

Feel free to write anything down here.

