

Mas Matter!



From our own lived experience:
What needs to change in the healthcare service

Communication

It would help if you could talk to us in plain English and with our permission, please communicate with other healthcare professionals who we have been in contact with. Take good notes and read the notes so that we don't have to explain our situation again and again, it is exhausting. When someone debriefs you and tells you what's going on, it calms you down. Many of us have been left in limbo with no answers and fearful that something is wrong. With better communication, we believe that experiences could be improved.

Compassion

A kind word would make a big difference to us. Most of us experienced kindness from a healthcare professional but not always. It makes us feel upset when we receive care without kindness. We understand that delivering difficult news can be hard but when this is spoken with compassion it does help us.

Judgement

Some of us were reluctant to share that we were feeling unwell as we were afraid of being judged. When you are a new mum it's hard to say you are struggling with your mental health. Many of us also felt judged for being young mums, older mums, unmarried or not working. Those of us who have a disability also felt judged, as if it is assumed that we can't cope alone with our baby. We want to feel valued and heard no matter what our age, background, situation, race, culture.

Consistency

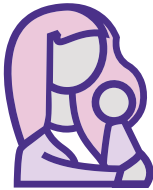
We know that continuity of care will improve consistency. It would be helpful if advice was also consistent, in relation to breastfeeding and general support and approach. We know that healthcare professionals are people with a variety of views but following guidelines on breastfeeding support and advice would be helpful.

Sign-post

There are a lot of services and charities out there, looking back many of us didn't know about them when we needed them. This is improving but needs to get better so that we can get support as soon as possible.



We need a mother and baby unit in Northern Ireland



The
Mas
Project

Maternal Advocacy and Support

Early identification of a perinatal mental health problem is so important. We all understand the huge pressure that the health service is under. However, some of us feel that we could have been helped sooner.

We also believe that there needs to be more maternal/perinatal mental health training for healthcare professionals. It is essential that all healthcare professionals have training on Postpartum Psychosis, a serious and life-threatening condition that is very treatable when detected and diagnosed.

<https://wrda.net/maternal-advocacy-and-support-project-the-mas/>



women's
RESOURCE & DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
Supporting Women's Groups and Women's Access to Health Services

 **COMMUNITY**
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