

CLAHRCBITE

Brokering Innovation Through Evidence

Perinatal Access to Resources and Support (PEARS)



Improving access to support for perinatal women through peer facilitation: a feasibility study with external pilot.

Women's psychological health and wellbeing matters throughout life but is particularly important during pregnancy and subsequently, postnatally. A pregnant woman's psychological status does not just affect the woman, but also her developing infant, their connection and wider family relationships. At this phase of life, any assistance offered has the potential for preventing future difficulties for women, their families and society as a whole.

Across the UK, there are many health and community resources available, however it is well documented that in more socially-deprived areas, women often do not feel able to access these resources which results in both the mother and her family not gaining potential benefits, leading to inequalities in society.

What was the aim of the project?

The NIHR CLAHRC NWC PEARS project aims to examine access to health and community resources amongst socially deprived women and families. It aims to reduce gaps in health inequalities by testing whether combining elements of care, which have improved access to services and psychological health and wellbeing in other settings, can be implemented locally.

What did we do?

The three elements of the care intervention included:

- 1) support from a non- professional peer
- 2) provision of detailed information about existing local services
- 3) help with identification of what a woman herself might find useful followed by IF-THEN Planning (a simple way to help people put their intentions into action).

The intervention incorporated these elements into a 20 minute session offered to women early in pregnancy.

How did we involve people?

Service users sat on the Steering Board and Management Group for the project and played an active part in the research itself. This included training provision and supervision of the peer facilitators.

Recruitment for the PEARS study was completed in April 2016 with 126 women agreeing to participate with 85% of participants in the highest 1% of social deprivation.

What next?

- The interactive community resources map is an asset likely to have a wide appeal relating to social prescribing and community linking services longer-term.
- Research presented at key health and wellbeing conferences across the UK.
- The research will be published in journals for further sharing and across the national CLAHRC network.

What we found and what does this mean?

The project has highlighted to health visitors and midwives the importance of community resources as an adjunct to health care.

- Health visitors themselves have expressed interest in taking over the role of utilising the community resources map developed during the research.
- Formal testing, potentially considering stepped wedge designs, across different areas of CLAHRCs.
- The intervention may also provide scope for the testing development of new research methodologies that better facilitate generation of reliable evidence from across the spectrum of our society.



What is NIHR CLAHRC NWC?

The mission of the NIHR CLAHRC NWC is to work collaboratively with Partner organisations and other stakeholders including members of the public to co-produce and conduct high-quality, leadership enhancing, applied research designed to decrease health inequalities and improve the health of the population of the North West Coast.

Find out more

<http://www.clahrc-nwc.nihr.ac.uk/index.php>

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Partners / Stakeholders

