

# Report to the Meeting of the

BOD 44/2021

(Agenda item 02)

# Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust

#

# Board of Directors

**28th July 2021**

**Buckinghamshire Perinatal Services –Story from a mum**

**For: Information**

**About the person sharing their story**

Michaela is going to share her story, she has been under the Perinatal Mental Health Team since Oct 2019 when she was pregnant and struggling to cope with her PTSD (her husband died suddenly in her arms), depression and anxiety. She also had a history of alcohol and drug use. She gave birth to her daughter in July 2020 with her new partner, Andy. Since then she has worked with a range of professionals within the Perinatal Service including Lisa Manser, her care coordinator, a psychologist, psychiatrist, pharmacist, nursery nurse, and support worker. Today is Michaela’s discharge day!

***About the service***

The Buckinghamshire Perinatal Team is a specialist service providing assessment and treatment of women/mums with complex and severe mental health problems during and after pregnancy. Our service ensures improved access to treatment and better outcomes for mums and their families. The service launched in May 2019. Our Multi-disciplinary team of professionals help mums pre and post birth who have a range of needs, including severe depression and anxiety, psychosis, bipolar, infant loss issues, attachment and bonding issues, pre conceptional advise, emotional regulation, medication management and psychological input. We have professionals from a range of backgrounds including a Psychologist, a Consultant Psychiatrist, a Pharmacist, Mental Health Nurses, Social Workers, Occupational therapists, Nursery Nurses and Support Workers.

We received 50 referrals in June 2021 mostly from GPs (this is higher than usual and mentioned in more detail under challenges below) and our current caseload is 114 mums.

Care is provided across Buckinghamshire to mums in their own homes wherever possible allowing them to continue with their lives and maintain their roles as mothers whilst safely receiving treatment for serious mental illness.

***About our service users - mums***

We can work with women from the time they are pregnant up until their baby is a year old. Mums will often be discharged before the baby is a year if support is no longerneeded. We can also offer preconception advice for women who are planning a pregnancy and there are Mental Health concerns (i.e. a woman is 50% more likely to have Psychosis if they are Bipolar etc.)

***Service challenges***

A challenge for our team is other professionals understanding of mental health issues and the impact on families.

The team has one Consultant Psychiatrist and cover arrangements are through the Early Intervention Consultant Psychiatrist. Buckinghamshire Perinatal Service would be keen to support trainees within the team which would provide an excellent learning opportunity. The team is having discussions with senior management team about employing a staff grade doctor to help reduce pressure on the Consultant Psychiatrist.

The number of mums that was accessing the service was lower than the national target last financial year. The team is developing stickers and information leaflets to put in ‘red books’ to help increase awareness of the service and is exploring ideas to include in bounty packs.

However the team has recently received an increasing number of referrals for mums and children with identified social are needs. This is impacting on capacity within the team as an increased volume of report writing is necessary on these occasions. The team is exploring options and solutions.