



Perinatal Anxiety Disorders training

The Perinatal Anxiety Disorders (PAD) training was developed by the Western Australian (WA) Perinatal Mental Health Services (i.e. representatives from the Department of Psychological Medicine Consultation Liaison Service and the WA Perinatal Mental Health Unit (now Statewide Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Program; SPIMHP)).

Target audience

Health professionals from across WA working with families during the antenatal (pregnancy) and postnatal (after birth) periods, including (but not limited to) general practitioners, child health nurses and midwives.

Audience size

Maximum of 15 participants.

Duration

One day.

Overview

The perinatal period (from conception to three years after birth) is an especially important time. The mental health of parents and caregivers during this time can have a profound influence upon the short- and long-term development of the infant.

Research into perinatal mental health has largely focused on postnatal depression, though there has been a recent movement to acknowledge the importance of anxiety. Perinatal anxiety is now known to affect fetal development and impact upon a child's long-term social, emotional and psychological wellbeing. Furthermore, antenatal anxiety has been identified as a significant risk factor for postnatal depression.

There is a need for health professionals to learn about the adverse effects of perinatal anxiety and how it can be managed. The module is possibly the first of its kind in Australia.

The training has five sections:

1. Introduction to anxiety in the perinatal period
2. Anxiety disorders in the perinatal period
3. Engagement, screening, strategies and referral
4. Treatment
5. Role plays

Expected outcomes

- Recognise the signs and symptoms of a client presenting with anxiety.
- Identify factors that contribute to anxiety.

- Describe the possible impact of anxiety on the individual and the family.
- Differentiate between types of anxiety disorders in the perinatal period.
- Describe strategies for engagement and screening of clients with anxiety disorders.
- Formulate a care plan including referral options.
- Describe the range of treatment options available.
- Identify issues of concern that warrant further exploration.
- Screen for anxiety, using the EPDS and the ANRQ.
- Describe potential diagnoses.
- Discuss treatment and referral options.

Bookings

Bookings can be made in one of the following ways:

- Complete a [registration form](#) and forward to spimhp@health.wa.gov.au.
- Contact us at spimhp@health.wa.gov.au with your enquiry.