

# PARENT INFANT MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

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- 3 PIMHI's in Vic
- DHS funded

# KEEPING THE INFANT IN MIND WHEN THE PARENT HAS A SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS

Supporting Area Mental Health  
Workers

# Austin Parent-Infant Services

- APIP- 6 public inpatient mother & baby beds
- PIRI-Infant Clinic
- PIRI-Clinical research programs partnering with *beyond blue*, local Maternal and Child Health Programs, Northern Hospital, Angliss Hospital & GPs. To provide evidence for innovative treatment approaches and pathways to care for women.
- CAMHS
- Postnatal Depression Initiative (DHS funded project)
- PIMHI (DHS funded project)

# AIM

- Improving IMH / parent infant relationship when mother has a serious mental illness
  - Incl. of Schizophrenia, Bipolar Illness, *severe* Mood Disorders, anxiety, personality issues
  - Case Manager at AMHS / CAMHS

# HOW?

- Primary, Secondary, Tertiary Consultations
- Education, training
- Facilitate networking

# WHAT AND HOW

- Flexibility
- Varies
  - Tel consult
    - Medication
    - Risk factors
  - Joint home visits – assessment / intervention followed by secondary consults
  - Period of time

# EDUCATION / TRAINING

- NEVIL day
- Grand Rounds of Mental Health Services
- Requests – training days
- Specific Teams
- (MCHN)

# TOPICS

- Awareness of PIMHI / Awareness of infant
- Effect of Mental Illness on Parenting / relationship capacity
- Model : attachment theory / attachment disorganization
- Medication during pregnancy / breastfeeding
- Thinking about the interaction

# PREVIEWING

- A PROCESS STARTING DURING PREGNANCY
  - REFLECTING TOGETHER
    - INVOLVING SIGNIFICANT OTHERS
      - Health professionals
      - Family and friends
  - WHAT WILL THE CHALLENGES BE GIVEN
    - Psychiatric history and compliance, interpersonal style, pattern of asking for and accepting help, empathy, emotional regulation, present circumstances, available supports

FACILITATES THE PROCESS OF MOTHER THINKING  
REALISTICALLY ABOUT HER CAPACITY / INFANT'S NEEDS

OPPORTUNITY TO DEAL WITH EMOTIONAL PROCESS

# EMOTIONAL TOPICS

- Reflecting on the interaction between
  - mind of the mother
  - mind of the infant
  - Self / our own feelings / perceptions

# MOTHER

- Relationship
- Little knowledge of infants / emotional needs
- Extreme – pregnancy as a “cure”, something good happening
- Intent vs Capacity

# INFANT

- Devastating consequences of chronic misattunement; frightened or frightening caregiving, lack of positive reciprocal interactions
- Dangerous vs suboptimal caregiving
  - Capacity for improvement

# OUTCOMES

- Loss of care
  - Mother and child needs to *process* this
    - Meaning to the child
    - Meaning to the mother
      - Loss of child
      - Implication of seen to be an incompetent parent
  - There is / was AN attachment
  - Ongoing relationship

# OUTCOMES

- Suboptimal parenting situation
  - Not seen as dangerous, far reaching emotional consequences
  - Keep the experience of the infant in mind (bear the anxiety / pain) and engage the mother to facilitate her parenting optimally

# FOCUS ON THE AND

- Emotional process
- Anxiety
- Own past and present parenting experiences

# THE REALITY

- Video clip



# This is the way it is

- Open, honest, non judgmental, respectful process
- Uncertainties
- Keep on thinking
- Allow for anxiety, loss to be acknowledged and processed
- Our own feelings