

# IDENTIFICATION OF AND INTERVENTION IN POST-PARTUM DEPRESSION

*A*s members will be aware, a case last summer of serious post-partum depression resulted in a tragic outcome in the death of a mother and 2 children. Just before Christmas, the Chief Medical Examiner referred this matter to the College and directed that we further educate members on this potentially fatal illness.

In discussion with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, the Mood Disorders Association, The College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Manitoba and the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba, we present the following notice:

It is important that all physicians be aware of the insidious nature of post-partum depression. The following url's present various materials that attending physicians may provide to their patients. It is very important that all physicians be aware of the potentially tragic results that can occur when a mother who has serious post-partum depression slips through the cracks or intervention is not started early enough. Post-partum depression may become a serious life threatening illness.

## **Please read the following material and consider it carefully:**

### **Key Messages on Post-Partum Mental Health Awareness for Health Care Regulatory Colleges**

*March 2014*

#### **Goals**

1. To create awareness amongst health care professionals about post-partum mental health.
2. To stress the importance of early recognition of symptoms of post-partum depression, anxiety and psychosis.
3. To support health care professionals in finding the tools and resources needed to best serve their patients.

#### **Key Messages**

1. Attention to perinatal and post-partum mental health is crucial to the well-being of both mother and child.
2. Awareness and early recognition is essential because postpartum mental health issues can be silent. Helpful treatment options include counselling, medication and support.
3. Health care professionals must work together to provide comprehensive care to women and children during the perinatal and post-partum periods.

4. You can find resources to support your practice in the following places:

- WRHA Perinatal Quick Reference Guide for Health Care Providers:  
[http://www.wrha.mb.ca/healthinfo/prohealth/files/MentalHealth\\_Perinatal.pdf](http://www.wrha.mb.ca/healthinfo/prohealth/files/MentalHealth_Perinatal.pdf)
- Mental Health Resource Guide for Winnipeg [www.cmhawpg.mb.ca/resources.htm](http://www.cmhawpg.mb.ca/resources.htm)
- Fact sheet for public education on postpartum depression  
[www.heretohelp.bc.ca/publications/factsheets/postpartum](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/publications/factsheets/postpartum)
- Culture of Wellbeing: Guide to Mental Health Resources for First Nations, Metis and Inuit People of Winnipeg [www.wrha.mb.ca/aboriginalhealth/services/resources.php](http://www.wrha.mb.ca/aboriginalhealth/services/resources.php)
- [www.postpartum.org](http://www.postpartum.org)
- [www.postpartum.net](http://www.postpartum.net)
- Women's Health Clinic (204) 947-1517

5. Crisis resources are available in the following places:

- Crisis Services  
<http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthyliving/mh/crisis.html>

This document or appropriate modification will be published by all the Regulated Health Professions in Manitoba in their next newsletters and will appear on their websites.