

Treating for Two- Optimal care for the mother and infant in severe postpartum psychiatric morbidity

Background

Women have the highest lifetime risk of developing a psychiatric disorder during the postpartum. Risk for suicide and infant harm is high and needs careful assessment and management. Mother infant bonding and interaction is also affected due to conditions like Postpartum Psychosis, Postpartum OCD or worsening of pre-existing psychosis. Women who have faced trauma also experience PTSD like symptoms or severe anxiety. Partners are also affected and require support.

In many women conditions like hypothyroidism or autoimmune conditions may flare up during the postpartum adding to the complexity. Clinicians need to develop a careful risk assessment plan and provide safe interventions that keep in mind the unique needs of a mother infant dyad.

Learning Objectives

1. To assess risk (self-harm and infant harm) and provide appropriate interventions for mother and infant in postpartum psychosis and other severe psychiatric disorders
2. To learn safe use of psychotropic drugs and ECT in the postpartum period including during breast feeding
3. To address co morbidities especially trauma related conditions/medical disorders that influence psychopathology and outcome
4. To learn simple methods of assessing mother infant interactions and providing dyadic interventions
5. To learn about different models of services for delivering care for women with postpartum severe mental illness

Teaching Methods

The course will use small group methods, videos and case based reflective discussions. The participants will be provided forms that can be used in inpatient settings for risk assessment, psychopathology and dyadic assessments. All participants will be provided with a free e book copy of 'Baby Steps' - a book that has been written by experts on how to set up a perinatal psychiatric service in secondary care especially in low and middle income countries.

Facilitators

Prof. Prabha Chandra is a Professor of Psychiatry and Dean, Behavioral Sciences at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Bangalore, India and is the President of the International Association of Women's Mental Health. She is in charge of the Mother Baby inpatient unit in India, which is the first and largest dedicated perinatal psychiatric service in Asia.

Dr. Ranga Rao is a Consultant Adult and Perinatal Psychiatrist at the Channi Kumar Mother Baby unit, Bethlem Royal Hospital, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, London. This unit is the largest and one of the oldest Mother Baby Units in the UK.

Assoc. Prof. PD Dr. Claudia Klier, Department of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, Medical University of Vienna. A perinatal psychiatrist who now works with families with young children within a pediatric C-L service. She is a researcher in the field of infanticide and its prevention which is linked to improvement of perinatal services and access to these. Traumatic birth in the context of

unperceived pregnancy and its potential impact on infant harm and maternal suicide are other areas she works on.