

Case study title: Family Wellbeing Support

Date: 16th October 2024

Introduction

Drawing on existing parent-infant and perinatal mental health expertise and skills across the 0-2 workforce, Northumberland has developed a non-clinical model of support for women and fathers or significant others experiencing mild to moderate mental ill health in the perinatal period.

In September 2023 the multiprofessional workstream for Perinatal Mental Health and Parent Infant Relationships identified the lack of non-clinical support for families experiencing issues with perinatal mental health and / or the parent / infant relationship and agreed funding to design and deliver a service delivered by Family Hubs.

Service Design

The uniqueness of the approach to building the Family Wellbeing Service was the collaboration between Family Hubs, Public Health, the 0-19 Growing Healthy Service (HDFT) and the Midwifery Service (NHCT) and ongoing willingness to flex and tweak service delivery to get the best impact for families requiring a service.

The Northumberland Family Panels were also consulted regarding the remit and purpose of the role and provided valuable feedback we may not have considered; for example, around reducing the stigma of accessing the services.

A Family Wellbeing Service specification was developed which included mandatory training requirements for workers. 6 FTE Practitioners were recruited across Northumberland in a time limited role (March 2025). All posts were filled as of May 2024.

Service Offer

The service provides non-clinical support to new and expecting mothers and fathers who are experiencing mild to moderate mental health difficulties, who may also need support with practical, emotional or environmental issues, such as breastfeeding, establishing routines, reducing social isolation, and supporting financial stability.

This is personalised support to people at any stage of pregnancy, or in the two years following. Referral criteria and processes followed.

The intention was to develop strong relationships between workers and families, strengthening family capacity and promoting self-sufficiency; reducing the stress experienced by some children in early childhood and to minimise the long-term consequences for a baby's future physical and mental health.



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Workers

- Carry out a Wellbeing Scaling and Family Wellbeing Plan.
- Deliver up to 12 one to one / group / virtual sessions in the Hub, home visit, in the community.
- Support parents to access activities and services.
- Connect parents with local community networks to improve wellbeing and meet new people.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Regular management meetings between the Family Hub Managers and the Project Team.
- Regular multi-agency strategic meetings which are used to unblock any issues around referrals.
- Clinical supervision by NCSPiR for workers.

Awareness Raising and Promotion of the Service

- Welcome Parties have been developed and run across Northumberland; new parents are invited to attend.
- Regular promotion and publicity of the service happens through networks and partnerships and there has been lots of social media promotion which has led to many self-referrals.
- Integrated working with professionals and partners has meant robust referrals and communication between professionals has strengthened where we have identified gaps.
- A bitesize session promoting the service had over 80 attendees October 2024.

Impact

- Within 6 months the service has made a significant impact.
- Over 70 families have benefitted from the service.
- Colleagues in Family Help, Midwifery, 0-19 service and the Community Perinatal Mental Health Team have an additional resource to support families experiencing difficulties.
- The workers are linked in with the healthy parental relationships offer and are supporting families experiencing conflict due to changes in routine and lack of sleep.
- Evaluations and feedback so far positively reflect the support received by families in reducing anxieties and low mood.



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Feedback from families

- “The coping strategies and the positive thinking are really helping with my anxieties”.
- “Helping me to be confident and meeting other new mums and making friends”.
- “Absolutely amazing service”.

Northumberland



Family wellbeing service

Having a child can be the **most rewarding** and also the **most challenging** time in anybody’s life.
‘You are not alone’

As part of the Family Hub offer;
personalised support is available to new and expecting mothers, fathers and significant others (up until a child is two) who are experiencing mental health issues.

- Are you, or do you know someone who may need support to:**
- understand their low mood
 - connect with other parents
 - feel less worried about parenting
 - establish routines
 - breastfeed
 - feel less anxious
 - have better relationships
 - access services

Scan the code to contact your local Family Hub OR speak to your Midwife/Health Visitor



#FamilyHubsNIand



www.FamilyHubsNorthumberland.co.uk

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Graphic illustration shows the Northumberland Family Wellbeing service promotional poster. Featuring an image of baby sleeping in arms. Text describes the features of the service and who to contact. For more information about this poster please go to www.familyhubsnorthumberland.co.uk