

Maternal Mental Health Survey Findings



In October 2022, Healthwatch England launched a national survey to gain insight into maternal mental health care – what is working well and what needs to be improved? This graphic explores the findings from Lincolnshire, whereby 21 women shared their experiences.



21 women shared their experience*.



18 experienced mental health difficulties during or after birth.

What's working well?



6/8 agreed that they were informed about the risks of taking medication for their mental health through pregnancy.

What needs to be improved?

Support for mental health needs



5/8 disagreed:

- The support offered allowed them to make informed choices about managing their mental health during pregnancy;
- The healthcare professionals they saw or spoke to during their pregnancy were aware of their mental health needs.

Half of the respondents didn't know how to access maternal mental health services.

*We acknowledge that these 21 views are not likely to be full representative of all those who have been pregnant in Lincolnshire in the past 12 months. However, the experiences shared are invaluable and still provide some insight into the mental health support available during this time.

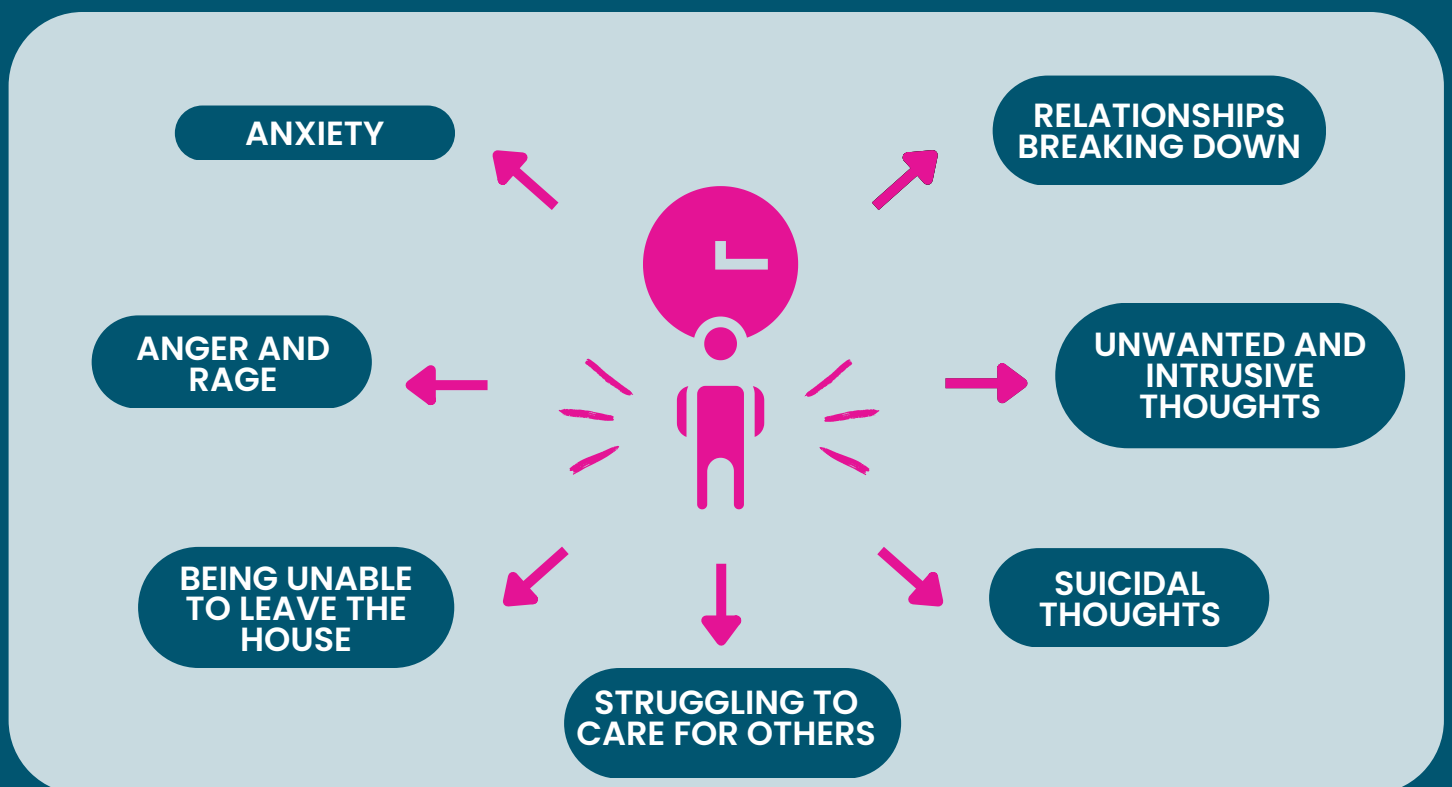
What needs to be improved?

Timely access



Timely access to support services is crucial in preventing symptoms from getting worse. For those that were referred, **2/5** were seen within a week, an additional **2/5** were seen within 1 – 2 weeks and one had to wait 3 – 4 weeks to be seen.

In this very small sample, the longer it took to be seen correlated with symptoms worsening. The symptoms included:

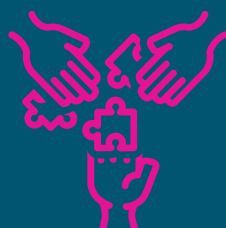


Back to basics

The data suggests that in some areas there is a need to go back to the basics:



Listen to patients



Involve patients in decision making



Take patients' concerns seriously



Ensure patients feel informed about their care

What needs to be improved?

Labour and after childbirth



- **13/21** reported that their experience of labour and childbirth negatively impacted their mental health.
- **3/21** did not have a post-natal check-up.
- For the 18 that did have a post-natal check-up, **11/18** said mental health and wellbeing was not mentioned at all and,
- Only **4/18** felt that mental health and wellbeing was mentioned 'just the right amount'.

Thank you to women who shared their views. The full report is available on our website.