Quality improvement in perinatal mental health services in the UK - establishing a national network

1. Objectives/Background

In 2006, the Royal College of Psychiatrists made a commitment to promote Perinatal mental health. As part of this, funding was given to establish a UK wide Quality Network for Perinatal Mental Health Services which would measure the quality of services and support service development.

2. Methods

The network has developed two sets of service standards – one for inpatient mother and baby units (in 2007) and the other for specialist community Perinatal teams (2012). Services in the network complete a self-review measuring their compliance with the standards and then receive a peer-review visit from a team of clinicians working in similar services nationwide and a patient representative. On the day, the reviewers meet with staff, patients and families to identify areas of achievement and for improvement and share their own experiences to help the service's action planning. Accreditation is also available to services who meet sufficient standards.

3. Results

All mother and baby units in the UK participate in the network and the standards are included in NHS England's national service specification. Over 20 community teams also participate. The network has increased sharing of good practice between services and compliance with the standards has improved over time. The presentation will give examples of improvements across services since the network was established.

4. Conclusion/Discussion

Possible application of the model outside the UK.

5. 3 Key words

Quality, service development, audit

6. References

Thompson, P., Mahon, K. (2014). Quality Network for Perinatal Mental Health Services, Standards for Mother and Baby Inpatient Units, Fourth Edition. London: Royal College of Psychiatrists
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