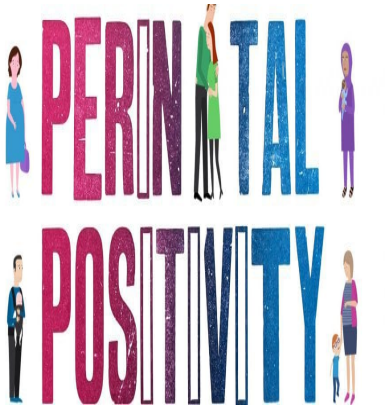


Description

Perinatal Positivity – new film to help Health professionals talk about perinatal mental health

Emma Lazenby – Director of ForMed Films CIC

Midwives are uniquely placed to support parents and parents-to-be at one of the happiest, and, most stressful times of their lives. But what do you do when you find both the mother or father in tears? Or a mother has disclosed that she 'just doesn't feel right' and cannot cope? How can we prepare families to be be aware of their mental health during this time, and when needed help them to be ready to find support early on?

I'm a film-maker and founder of ForMed Films CIC, we create animated films about health and medical issues. In 2010 I won a BAFTA for my film celebrating midwifery and childbirth. 'Mother of Many' is based on the work of my own mother, a midwife for 30 years in West Yorkshire. While interviewing people for that film I heard a lot about the loss of identity and difficulties people had when starting a family. This set the seed of an idea for a new project, Perinatal Positivity, an animated film to help families-to-be mentally prepare for having a child.

In 2014 I met Rachel Liebling (Consultant Obstetrician at St Michael's Hospital, Bristol). Rachel's been involved in trying to improve services for pregnant women with mental health problems for many years and we wondered if we could work together?

In 2016, we found a small pot of funding to set up workshops. With the help of local charity Bluebell Care we gathered people with experience of perinatal mental health issues and discussed what had helped find positive ways forward. This resulted in the Perinatal Positivity manifesto designed and printed by participants (available to download and print on our website).



Perinatal Positivity Team

In 2017 we started our search for funding for a film and gathered parters. Specialist Midwife, Louise Nunn and Consultant Obstetrician, Louise Page joined the team, bringing thier expertise and funding from the Perinatal Mental Health Partnership in Innovative Education. Health Visitor Barbara Jayson joined as an executive producer, locating a considerable sum from the Burdett Trustor Nursing. The Foundation for Mother and Child Health and The Mother and baby Trust also contributed. Bluebell Care founder, Ruth Jackson, and trustee Sasha Barber (Mental health and bereavement lead at New Horizons – M+B unit) gave their support and advice.

This meant that as well as funding to make the film, we had a brilliant team of health professionals with in-depth knowledge who regularly come into contact with new parents, to advise on the film.

I'm always keen to use real voices and experiences in my films. Animating films means that we can use audio interviews whilst protecting people's anonymity. Nine people agreed to be interviewed and six of these were used in the final film.

As well as touching on what it might feel like to have mental health problems as a new or expectant parent, we wanted to make a positive film with ideas for self-care. When interviewed, people were open and honest about their experiences and many spoke about particular things that had helped them. We were able to include these in the film alongside information about professional support.



According to NHS England, 43–61% of adults (aged 18–65) do not have adequate literacy and/or numeracy skills to understand health information. ForMed Films aim ismake health information more accessible,becauseour filmsare engaging to watch and shared are designed to speak to any level of literacy. We plan to translate Perinatal Positivity into other languages commonly spoken in the UK to extend its reach.



Our aim is that the film is seen by all parents-to-be, and we hope it will be a useful resource for health professionals. This is a free resource. You can show Perinatal Positivity to parents on a phone or tablets, or text/email them the website address (www.perinatalpositivity.org). You can also ask your Trust/organisation to embed it on their website as well as sharing it with colleagues in training and staff meetings.

At the time of writing (08/10/18), Tommy's, the Institute of Health Visiting have joined support for the projec using the film. As well as the NCT, a number of NHS Trusts, one New Zealand health team and one in Canada have embedded the film on their websites. It has been watched by around 6,000 people already (only one month after the films launch).

www.perinatalpositivity.org

The Perinatal Positivity Team:

- Director – Emma Lazenby,
- Producer – Rachel Tomlinson
- Executive producers:
- Dr Rachel Liebling (Consultant in fetal medicine and obstetrics, St Michaels hospital, Bristol)
- Louise Nunn (Perinatal mental health specialist midwife)
- Dr Louise Page (Consultant obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Chelsea and Westminster hospital)
- Barbara Jayson (Health Visitor; Clinical Nurse Specialist at St Georges NHS Foundation Trust; Founder/co Chair of charity 'The Foundation for Mother & Child Health').

Film advisors:

- Ruth Jackson (Founder and CEO Bluebell Care Trust)
- Sasha Barber (Mental Health and Bereavement lead, North Bristol Trust)

The film is Funded and supported by:

The Burdett Trust for Nursing

The Foundation for Mother and Child Health

Bluebell Care

The Mother and Baby Trust

Perinatal Mental Health Partnership in Innovation Education

Tommy’s

The Institute of Health Visiting

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