Foraging Perinatal Mental Health Support in an Early Pediatric Healthcare System

Children’s National Hospital is a free-standing pediatric hospital in Washington, DC that serves families across DC, MD, and VA. The PMAD Team identifies postpartum caregivers experiencing perinatal mental health disorders in the Emergency Department and NICU by conducting universal screening, providing intervention and support, and referring to community-based resources.

LESSONS LEARNED
- Established formal PMAD team.
- Increased staff awareness of PMADs and team services.
- Employed direct feedback from caregivers and medical staff.
- Instituted remote screening and virtual treatment options to reach and serve caregivers unable to be at bedside.
- Identified sustainable methods to engage non-birth and non-native English-speaking caregivers through screening and specific educational materials.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE
- Continue to prioritize perinatal services as a standard of care in pediatric settings.
- Integrate feedback from the Parent Advisory Committee.
- Expand staff education and identify PMAD Champions to serve as liaisons between the PMAD Team and the Champion’s respective specialty groups (e.g., nursing, child life, nutrition).
- Further grow our robust community-based resource network.
- Locate and offer services, in-house and outpatient, in languages other than English.
- Expand remote outreach capacity to include text, email, and the hospital website alternatives for communication.
- Identify a HIPAA-compliant texting platform.

Evaluate iPad loaner program to ensure families with socioeconomic barriers have access to telehealth therapy.

INNOVATIVE FEATURES OF PROGRAM
- Opt-out screening for all newborn (<7 months) caregivers
- Screening measures in 36 languages (19 validated)
- Warm handoffs to network of community providers for services & wraparound care
- % Caregivers Screened
- Median
- Upper Control Limit
- Lower Control Limit

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