



The APNI Newsletter

The Association for Postnatal Illness

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News from the Office

We hope you had a wonderful summer – finally a warm one!! Hopefully you have managed to get a bit of rest to prepare yourself for the season ahead.

The office is staffed by Siobhan, Alice, Jenny, Margie and Dave.

Margie joined the office in January having worked in NHS mental health services for a number of years. She has two daughters and enjoys keeping active, volunteering at her local school and some yoga in between.

As always we try to keep abreast of all things perinatal and have been attending many interesting events. Highlights include:

A trip to the House of Commons for Alice who attended “The Importance of Addressing Mental Health in Pregnancy”.

Alice attended the Future Midwife Forum, run by the Nursing & Midwifery Council.

Siobhan was delighted to be invited to a local community event in Battersea by the Co-op. She also attended a ‘Depression Wears Lippy’ event hosted by Lobella Loves, which was an evening of mental health chat involving those with lived experience and health professionals.



Siobhan featured in an excellent and informative Facebook ‘live’ session with Jessica Ellis from ‘Unfiltered Society’, a fashion lifestyle

brand that's changing the way we talk about mental health.

Jenny, Alice and Margie were invited to talk to new parents at Hillbrook Children’s Centre in Wandsworth as part of their excellent ‘New Beginnings’ sessions.



Jenny attended the excellent ‘Achieving the 5 Year Forward View in Perinatal Mental Health Services’ conference. It was great to hear talks from expert speakers at a local and national level and to network with colleagues working to improve the quality of all perinatal mental health services. She also recently attended the Perinatal Mental Health Summit which was another very positive day of talks from experts in the field.

Margie attended the MMHA Everyone’s Business Campaign Evaluation Event in September. The campaign calls for all women throughout the UK who experience perinatal mental health problems to receive the care they and their families need #turnthemapgreen. It was great to be amongst key representatives and those with lived experience to think together about the vital next steps going forward.

The Linda Page Unsung Hero Award

Every year we invite mums to nominate their volunteer to receive some flowers to say thank you for their invaluable support. This year the winner of the award is Donna Walker. The lady she supported wrote:

“I just want to let you know that I’m still talking to Donna on the phone to help me with my postnatal depression and anxiety. It’s been a huge relief to know I have someone I can call”.

Well done Donna. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our amazing volunteers who help make APNI the organisation that it is. If you would like to nominate your volunteer for next year’s award, please do write to us.

Postnatal Depression and Dads

Research from the NCT found that more than 1 in 3 new fathers (38%) are concerned about their mental health. In general, studies have shown that one in 10 dads has PND and fathers also appear to be more likely to suffer from depression three to six months after their baby is born. We have produced a leaflet specifically for Dads and it can be found on our website.

If anyone knows of any good support groups for men, please do let us know so we can keep our database up to date.

Fundraising and Donations

We are truly grateful to the wonderful, generous people who have been supporting us over the years with their fundraising efforts and monthly donations, including those made through JustGiving, Virgin Money Giving, direct debits, cash & cheque donations. Here are some of them:

Mt. Kilimanjaro: Claire Bailey reached the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro in February this year after a 9-hour climb. Claire said that climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro was an adventure she’ll never forget and it was lovely to know that every step she’d taken will help others take small steps towards health and wellness.



Hackney Half Marathon: Tessa Devonshire ran the Hackney Half in May. Tessa said that running it was totally out of her comfort zone. She had postnatal illness in the past and had chosen to raise money for APNI. Tessa said that so many people suffer in silence and this illness should be talked about more.



London Marathon: Pippa Noble ran the London Marathon in April. Pippa said that she had chosen a small charity like APNI as she wanted all the donations to go directly to helping the people who need it most. Pippa wrote: “Postnatal mental health issues can truly affect anyone. You need to know things will get better and I’m living proof.”

In Memory of Emma Cadywould: Huge thanks to Lucie Malangone (nee Holland) and family for their on-going fundraising drive on our JustGiving page which began back in 2012, raising valuable funds to help us continue our service.

The SWC National Citizenship Service Team, is a group of 16 year olds with a fundraising project called Clean-Up Sheffield over the summer and raised funds for 3 perinatal mental health charities, one of which is APNI.

Torquay Ladies Circle sent a generous donation through one of our very own volunteers, Angela Lafferty.

Toddler Time, a toddler group in West Ewell, Surrey headed by Sheila Chadwick, made a generous donation.

Lindt UK: We were very delighted to receive a generous donation of £5000 from Lindt UK. This was made possible through the fantastic efforts of Amani Choucair who works at Lindt and has kindly put our name forward. Amani is a friend of one of our volunteers, Ceri Carney, who you might remember as the person who organised a musical theatre evening to raise much-needed funds for us. For this reason, we would like to appeal to other working parents out there who might be reading this newsletter. If your company makes charitable donations, please could you put APNI’s name forward? We exist solely on donations, so any help you can extend to us is very valuable.

We would also like to thank Rebecca Mowat for her *5-Event Challenge* and Lauren Souster for her *Personal Fitness Challenge*.

Regular Donors: A special mention and thanks to all our regular monthly and annual donors. We greatly appreciate your support. Thank you very much.

PND Awareness



This May saw the second UK Maternal Mental Health Matters Awareness Week, led by the Perinatal Mental Health Partnership.

The theme was 'Support For All' with a focus on enabling all families affected by perinatal mental illness to access the information and help they require for recovery. Throughout the week, the hashtag #maternalmh matters was used on social media and it was great to see so many people and services getting involved. It also coincided with the third World Maternal Mental Health Day

It was great to hear the announcement of the second wave of England based geographical areas to receive perinatal mental health funds. This was part of the original £365 million investment in perinatal mental health services announced in 2016. 35 successful areas were named and NHS England pledged that all areas in England will have funds to establish specialist services by April 2019.

Other good news is that the doors have opened at the two of the four new MBUs in England. The Devon MBU is now accepting women at an interim facility, whilst building works continue in the new unit. Kent's first Mother & Baby Unit also opened in Dartford this September.

We are pleased to continue to support NCT's Hidden Half Campaign. The aim of the Hidden Half campaign is to improve the postnatal check-up, carried out at about 6-8 weeks after the birth, normally by a GP. They want every new mother experiencing mental health problems to get the help they need, quickly. Momentum is building in parliament, with 17 MPs asking parliamentary questions prompted by the campaign - six of them specifically mentioning Hidden Half. You can get involved by emailing your local MP. For more details go the NCT website.

We have certainly noticed a much greater media presence of perinatal mental health issues and are pleased to have been mentioned on ITV's This Morning several times.



We were delighted to be invited to the launch event of The Perinatal Positivity Project's new animated film at the Chelsea & Westminster Hospital. This 6-minute short

film uses the real voices and experiences of women and men who have had mental well-being difficulties around the time of pregnancy, childbirth and beyond. It is hoped that it will help you emotionally prepare and find support, if needed, at this time. You can view the film on their website www.perinatalpositivity.org

Waitrose Green Token Scheme

We were delighted to receive £276 from Worcester Park Waitrose Green Token Scheme. Pictured below is one of our youngest supporters, Bonnie!



If you have a Waitrose branch near you, please could you nominate APNI in their Green Token Scheme. All you need to do is fill in a small card nominating APNI and if they want to know more details of who we are and what we do, please give us a ring and we will contact them directly. Many thanks.



How 'eating well' may support PND



One of our lovely supporters, Claire Bailey, is a Nutritional Therapy Practitioner and has kindly written the piece below for our newsletter:

If 'we are what we eat' then it makes perfect sense that a good diet has a role to play in how well we feel. People are often surprised by the close connection between the gut and brain which share a sophisticated communications network. One of the key messengers between the two is serotonin, our 'happiness hormone', which is mostly produced in the gut. So what we eat has a direct relationship with our mood. It is therefore good to include as wide a variety of foods as possible in your everyday diet such as colourful fruits and vegetables, good quality meat, oily fish and seafood protein, beans and pulses, and nuts and seeds. This helps to ensure a good mix of nutrients. It's an easy trap to fall into eating the same thing over and over, especially postpartum when new mums may be sleep deprived. Asking friends and family to get involved in helping with shopping and meal preparations is often a great

support at this time. When we are tired and ‘low’ there is also a tendency to reach for quick snacks and comfort foods which typically are higher in sugars, salts and unhealthy fats, all of which can exacerbate a low mood. Research has shown that poor diet may be linked to a greater risk of postnatal depression and can increase feelings of stress and anxiety. Aim for healthy switches from biscuits and crisps to, apples, vegetable sticks, hummus, olives (to name just a few examples) which will provide more goodness to help support your mood and the body’s all-important communication systems.

Mood Boosting Books

Regular readers for pleasure report fewer feelings of stress and depression, according to a study from the University of Liverpool. As well as this, they found that people experience stronger feelings of relaxation from reading than from watching television or engaging with technology intensive activities.

Reading Well Mood-boosting Books is a national promotion of crowd-sourced uplifting books, curated by The Reading Agency. They have been developing these collections of books since 2010, featuring titles recommended by readers and reading groups. The 2018 list can be found here www.reading-well.org.uk/books/mood-boosting-books.

Another good read for anyone going through depression is “Driving Over Lemons” by Chris Stewart. At 17, the author retired from his schoolboy band, Genesis, and became a sheep shearer and travel writer. He moved with his wife to a remote mountain farm in the Alpujarras, south of Granada, and writes about his life on a mountain with no access road, water supply or electricity.

GDPR

In line with the new data protection laws please refer to our website for our privacy policy and how we protect your data. If you wish to have your details removed from our database, please email us at the office info@apni.org.

Deputy Charity Secretary (voluntary)

We are looking for a person who would like to be involved in the running and administration of APNI. This is a voluntary post. The job will involve getting to know and liaising with the Staff in the office. Encouraging and planning new initiatives within the financial means of APNI. Interaction with major charity donors. Discussing with staff problems that

arise associated with the work. Interviewing prospective employees and other HR functions. Compiling material for the Annual report. Learning to complete Charity Commission forms. As meetings are held in Fulham and Wimbledon it is essential that anyone considering this role can attend such meetings and be able to visit the Fulham office without difficulty. The commitment would be 4-5 hours per week but this may vary. If you are interested please contact the office initially.

APNI Fundraiser (voluntary)

APNI gets much of its income from donations and grants from individuals, families and Charitable Trusts.

A volunteer is required to assist in the work of identifying suitable Charitable Trusts, and completing applications on behalf of Apni. This work will be done from home and requires the use of a computer and software including MS Office. The volunteer will receive advice and assistance from the current fundraiser, with whom they will liaise in order to coordinate both their efforts.

If you think you can spare a few hours per week making applications on behalf of APNI please contact the office.

We have received some more lovely notes from past sufferers that we’d like to share with you ...

“I am very impressed with the continuing work you do for mums with PND”. *Christina*

“Keep up the good work – I’m still happy to support APNI even after 21 years! So grateful still for all your help!” *Kathleen*

“Good luck with your work. You are doing an invaluable job”. *Mary*

“30 years since I needed you and you helped. Great to know you are still helping mums”. *Teresa*

Keeping in Touch

If any of you have changed your contact details, please update us via email - info@apni.org.

Finally **We would like to wish you all a very healthy and happy Christmas and New Year.**

