

such as fish, nuts, legumes, dairy, and meat). Home-cooked meals combining a wide variety of these foods provide a great foundation for a happy gut and simultaneous support your mood. As we come into the autumn and winter months it's a perfect time to consider one-pot wonders like hearty soups with plenty of vegetables, or minestrone-style soups with beans or lentils, alongside warming casseroles, curries, chilli, or Bolognese which are great ways to combine your chosen protein foods and veggies all in one meal.

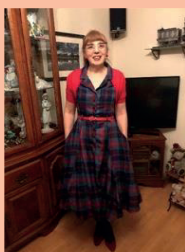
The same goes for snacks – think whole foods like fruit, nuts & seeds, or veggie sticks and olives. These all provide that all-important fibre our gut needs, as well as other helpful nutrients. Start small and aim to add-in one extra portion of plant foods daily.

Just as our brain responds to healthy whole foods, it also reacts to processed foods and drinks which are typically high in sugars, salt, and saturated fats. These foods are less beneficial to our gut health and can over-excite the brain, potentially exacerbating mental health symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression. Limiting these foods can be helpful. It's a bit like a see-saw, as you add in more of the good stuff the processed foods tend to come down. As you focus on adding-in more whole food ingredients you may notice subtle differences in how you feel such as more stable and upbeat mood, more energy, and a sense of improved well-being. Food truly feeds both your body and mind.

For more healthy recipes visit - https://bant.org.uk/foodforyourhealth_tools/recipes/

Fundraising

We are so very grateful to our friends and supporters who have continued to donate throughout this year. We acknowledge that times are tough for a lot of people especially those who have lost their income as a result of this pandemic. Nevertheless, we have received incredible donations that have helped us continue our work in helping mums and their families affected by postnatal illness.



Lesley Hampson

We wish to thank the following for their fundraising efforts: Katrina Blyth for her New Year's Eve Rave to the Moon £100.00; Lesley Hampson's 365 days of Dressing Up £50.00; Michael Mulkerrin's Half-

Marathon Run in April raised £262.50;

Samantha Cook's Half A Million Steps in June £1003.75; and Kirsti/Official Koop's Charity Twitch Stream in August £490.86



Samantha Cook

We would also like to thank Lucie Holland who completed a virtual marathon and raised £2383.



Michael Mulkerrin

In Memoriam Donations

We are grateful to the friends and families of Mrs Brenda Clarke who raised £1597.50 in memorial donations and of Professor Brice Pitt who raised £710.91 in memorial donations.

We would like to mention our generous monthly donors who have been supporting us over the years: Jennifer Barna, Anthony Churchill, Angela Crockatt, Emma Daeth, Hilary Dale, Rachel Fenwick, Stella Giblett, Lucy Gibson, Juliet Mahrous, Jeffrey Robinson, Stephanie Ryland, Pamela Smith, Emma Stabler, Elizabeth Taylor, Alison Wilson, Rebecca Rideout, Jeannette Caw, Donna Ferguson and Matthew Evans.

And lastly, we would like to extend our gratitude to all our supporters who have been sending us their annual donations and have been doing so for many years now, your continued support is truly appreciated.

We have received some lovely messages from people we have helped in the past and we'd like to share some of them with you...

"APNI's continued invaluable services are crucial in preventing the anguish of postnatal mental health conditions. Keep up the good work!"

"You saved my life thirty six years ago – please keep up the good work".

"I first rang Mrs Delpech in 1989 during my postnatal depression. It was a turning point, a lifeline and I am forever grateful".

"Keep up the good work. My son is 15 years old now! I still remember that first call to APNI and crying because I had finally someone who understood how I felt".


We would like to send you all our very best wishes for a happy Christmas season and healthy New Year.



The APNI Newsletter

The Association for Postnatal Illness

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The easing of lockdown restrictions has finally brought longed-for opportunities – to see friends, play sports, resume contact with loved ones or get back to work that we value. Hopefully some of you will have managed a well-earned holiday or staycation.

For many of us, even the much anticipated changes and re-adjustments can be difficult for our mental health. This may especially apply to those more vulnerable to the virus or new parents who are understandably wary. Just as it took us time to find ways of coping during lockdown, we should also expect that it will take time to find our way back, and to reconnect with life.

News from the Office

At APNI we continue to work remotely and like others have had to adapt the way we communicate and live our lives. Our team consisting of Siobhan, Alice, Jenny, Margie and Dave remains unchanged. We are open from 10am to 2pm Monday to Friday. We are active on Facebook and Instagram so do check out what is going on and also to look for further support and signposting.

In January our committee member, Liz Wise, along with one of our volunteers, attended a 'lunch and learn' webinar for Marsh UK on the subject of maternal mental health where they shared their own experiences. It was a wonderful, informative session.

In March Siobhan was interviewed for BBC Radio Berkshire Drive time, highlighting the signs and symptoms of postnatal illness.

Jenny was interviewed by the Community Practitioner magazine about the effect of lockdown on mums.

Siobhan attended the excellent Healthcare Conference on 'Improving Perinatal Health Services' in May. The focus was looking at ways to improve perinatal mental health services, including crisis prevention, and how to access support during and beyond Covid 19.

Alice spoke to Good Morning Britain/ITV about PND cases during the pandemic. Alice and Siobhan spoke at Involve Kent Focus Group which was on the subject of 'Support for Mothers During a Pandemic'.

Professor Brice Pitt



We are very sorry to report that our President, Professor Brice Pitt died in January 2021 of Covid-19. Brice was an early exponent of treating post-natal depression. He wrote his M.D. thesis on the subject in the 1960s. Brice was Chairman of the APNI Committee for over 15 years. Following the death of Professor Merton Sandler in 2014 Brice became President of the APNI and was still writing to us about ideas for the organisation the month before he died.

Brice worked in Old Age Psychiatry and revolutionised the treatment of his elderly patients. He was always gentle and humane with his patients who generally loved him.

There is a more in depth appreciation of Brice on the APNI website at <https://apni.org/professor-brice-pitt-md-bsc-frcpsych-dpm/>

APNI has also been working closely with ITV to help them develop their postnatal depression storyline on Emmerdale.



In the latest nail-biting Emmerdale episodes Tracy Metcalfe, played brilliantly by Amy Walsh, battles with her postnatal depression. The popular character has found it difficult to adapt to life as a new mum, and she's been unable to sleep, and worries that something terrible is going to happen to her child.

The script writers worked extensively with APNI as well as two of our volunteers, to portray a very honest account of how postnatal depression affects Tracy and the family around her.

We hope that, although some of the scenes may be harrowing to watch, it is ultimately a story of hope for others.

New President for APNI – Professor Vivette Glover



We are extremely excited to announce that our new president will be Professor Vivette Glover. We asked Vivette to compose a piece about her impressive career and she writes:

"I am delighted to be the new President of the Association for Post-natal Illness. I think the Association does such important work.

I have been carrying out research in the area of perinatal mental illness for the last 30 years. I am a member or advisor for the All Party Parliamentary Group for the First 1001 Days, the Maternal Mental Health Alliance, the Global Alliance for Maternal Mental Health, the Early Intervention Foundation, Post Partum Support International, and the Universal Scientific and Research Network (USERN), as well as being Treasurer of the Marce Society.

I studied Biochemistry at Oxford, and carried out my PhD in Neurochemistry at University College London. I then went to work with Professor Merton Sandler (the first president of APNI) at Queen Charlotte's Hospital. At first our work was on different aspects of biological psychiatry and neurology, including on how antidepressants work, especially the monoamine oxidase inhibitors. But after a while our interests became more focused on postnatal depression. Channi Kumar, whom I met at a conference in India, particularly encouraged me to focus on this. After all, we were working in a maternity hospital. After Merton retired, I took over the research group and focused entirely on perinatal mental illness and the possible effects on the child. Researchers at Queen Charlotte's became incorporated into the Royal Postgraduate Medical School and then into Imperial College London. I became first a Reader and then Professor of Perinatal Psychobiology at Imperial. I am now a Visiting Professor because I am semi-retired.

My main research has been to show that if the mother is stressed, anxious or depressed during pregnancy, this increases the risk of problems for her child. It is important to note that most children are not affected. But it does mean it is extremely important to look after the mental wellbeing of women who are pregnant, as well as postnatally. I have recently become interested in how music can help reduce perinatal stress, and have been involved in a research project in The Gambia in West Africa, where we have shown that group singing in antenatal clinics reduces the women's symptoms of depression and anxiety.



I look forward to learning more about the work of APNI and to helping in any way I can."

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 we would like to pay tribute to Monica Acquah-Ghann. The mother she supported wrote:

"You kindly recommended a volunteer who was a great support to me when I was at my lowest. Her reassurance, empathy and understanding was a great help as I thought I was going crazy. Monica was a god send."

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 contact us.

PND Awareness



In May Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week saw a week-long campaign dedicated to talking about mental health problems during and after pregnancy. This year's theme was 'Journeys to Recovery'.

The week is organised and led by MMHA member the Perinatal Mental Health Partnership (PMHP UK), who launched the first-ever UK Maternal Mental Health Matters Awareness Week in 2014.

PMHP UK is a small group of individuals, including women with lived experience, who came together to raise awareness of maternal mental health.

Wales has been without a Mother and Baby Unit since 2013. However, interim Uned Gobaith ('Unit of Hope') near Neath, is now officially open for referrals which is great news.

There was more good news in April that thousands of new, expectant or bereaved mothers will receive help and support for mental health problems through dozens of new dedicated hubs which are being set up across the country.

The 26 new hubs will bring together maternity services, reproductive health and psychological

therapy under one roof as part of the NHS Long Term Plan.

Around 6,000 women will receive care and treatment for a wide range of mental health issues from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after giving birth to others with a severe fear of childbirth.

The pandemic has placed additional challenges on new and expectant mums and the services supporting them. It is clearer than ever that women and families need access to comprehensive perinatal mental healthcare (PMH), including and beyond specialist PMH provision.

Book Recommendations



We can't think of anyone more deserving of a mood-boosting read than our NHS workers.

Health Education England and The Reading Agency have created a crowd-sourced uplifting book collection and a supporting list of digital resources, all recommended by NHS staff, for NHS staff.

The collection will be available in all 184 Health Education England libraries, so NHS staff can easily access the books.

The book collection contains fiction, non-fiction, and poetry, and a supporting collection of uplifting digital resources, including poems, websites, videos and apps, is available on the Reading Well website – www.reading-well.org

Food and Mood - Connecting the dots with simple tips for mood-friendly foods



By Claire Sambolino, Communications Manager for the British Association of Nutrition and Lifestyle Medicine (BANT) and Registered Nutritional Therapy Practitioner

The conversation around mental health is continually evolving and this comes with exciting discoveries about how much the food we eat can affect our mood. We need a healthy gut to have a healthy brain. What we eat has the power to activate many biological processes and essentially feed our feelings.

It means we need to give our gut the nutrients it needs to stay healthy (think plenty of fibre-rich fruits and veggies!) as well as the ingredients to make neurotransmitters for our brain (think protein foods