

## Recognising symptoms that you may be becoming unwell

At your booking appointment you will be given a copy of the Well Being Plan which you should look at with a person who knows you well, or you could ask your midwife to discuss it with you. This may help you or the people closest to you to recognise particular warning signs that you may be becoming unwell, so you are clear when and who to contact for help and advice.

## Contacts for more information

01225 821945 Specialist Support Midwife  
01225 825323 Named Midwife Safeguarding

Your own midwife team.....

Samaritans 116 123

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust  
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG  
01225 428331 [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Telephone 01225 825656 or email [ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net)

# Pregnant women with experience of a serious mental health condition



This leaflet has been produced to support you through your pregnancy to ensure you receive the right service at the right time.



## Introduction

This leaflet has been produced to support women who are pregnant and who have suffered with a serious mental health disorder in the past, such as:

- Severe and incapacitating depression
- Psychosis
- Schizophrenia
- Bipolar disorder
- Schizoaffective disorder
- Postpartum psychosis.

Pregnancy, childbirth and caring for a new born baby can be a challenging time for any woman. However there is evidence to suggest that if you have experienced a severe mental illness in the past there could be extra challenges and there is a risk of a relapse of your condition during this time.

This certainly does **not** mean you will definitely become unwell and indeed the purpose of this information is to support you throughout this period and to ensure you receive the right support at the right time. Our aim is that you have the best chance of staying well during pregnancy and after your birth.

## What we would like to discuss with you

- The level of support you have from family and friends.
- How your mental health may affect your developing baby
- What effects pregnancy may have on your mental health
- The pros and cons of medication during pregnancy
- Consideration of other treatments such as talking therapies
- Consideration of medication in relation to breast feeding

## Individualised care

Your circumstances and particular illness is personal to you and we would like to ensure you receive the most effective support. For example, you may benefit from the support of other agencies such as talking therapies, children's centres, specialised parenting classes (available in some areas) or groups local to your area,

You may already have a mental health team working with you but if not we can arrange for you to be seen if this is appropriate and you feel it would be helpful.

If we are ever concerned about your welfare or the safety of your baby it may sometimes be necessary to refer you to Social Care for additional support but we would always try to discuss this with you.

At around 28 weeks of pregnancy your midwife will offer to arrange for you and your partner, family member/ friend to meet with her and other professionals involved in your care such as your Health Visitor and Mental Health Nurse. This is so we can discuss your circumstances and needs with you to ensure there is good communication and a suitable plan in place to support you both in pregnancy and the postnatal period.