



TAHP

The Texas Association of Health Plans

**SB 750 Postpartum
Depression Treatment
Network Provider Training**


Background

[SB 750, 86R Sec. 32.154](#) directs HHSC to work with MCOs and HTW providers to develop and implement a postpartum depression treatment network for women enrolled in Medicaid or HTW.

- Bill language: Using money from an available source designated by the commission, the commission, in collaboration with Medicaid managed care organizations and health care providers participating in the Healthy Texas Women program, shall develop and **implement a postpartum depression treatment network** for women enrolled in the medical assistance or Healthy Texas Women program.



Goals of Legislation

The goal of creating a Postpartum Depression Treatment Network of Providers is to increase the accessibility of postpartum screening and support services for Medicaid members, ultimately improving maternal health outcomes and promoting overall well-being for mothers and their families. 

- To help achieve this goal, MCOs will be required to collaborate with Providers to facilitate the referral of Members who screen positive for a Maternal Mental Health (MMH) condition to appropriate Providers in their Networks to confirm diagnosis and provide treatment as deemed necessary.

Creating a PPD Treatment Network

- MCOs have been directed to create a network of providers consisting of Primary Care Providers who are appropriate to address non-crisis MMH conditions as well as Mental Health Providers who are appropriate to address a range of MMH conditions, including postpartum depression and anxiety, at varying levels of severity.
- Phases of provider enrollment to the MMH treatment network:
 - Initial – MCOs identify behavioral health providers who may participate in the MMH network.
 - Future – MCOs identify additional provider types to participate in the MMH network.

MCO Referral & Follow Ups for Members with Positive Screenings

As part of this implementation, HHSC is requiring MCOs to:

- Facilitate the referral of Members who screen positive for a maternal mental health (MMH) condition to appropriate Providers in their Networks to confirm diagnosis and provide treatment as deemed necessary.
- Educate Members and Providers about hotline services MCOs offer to facilitate scheduling and follow-up for Members with a positive screening.
- Assist the Member, Member's authorized representative, or LAR with scheduling appointments.
- Follow up with the Member with a positive screen, the Member's authorized representative, or LAR to verify the appointment was attended and appropriate treatment is received. The attempt(s) and outcome should be recorded in the Member's file.

MCO-Provider Data Sharing

- Data sharing of positive mental health screening results by the Providers to MCOs will be required for MCOs to be able to make appropriate referrals.
- TAHP has developed a resource to help providers connect with their contracted MCOs and learn about the process for this data sharing requirement (add later).




Provider Screening Resources

Why screen for perinatal depression?

- As a healthcare provider, **you may be the first to recognize signs** of depression. Screening tools can help you introduce the subject of depression and can be incorporated into the batter🗳️of questions that are routinely asked during visits.
- Screening is an easy, quick, and affordable method of identifying women who may be struggling with depression. While there is no "perfect" screening tool, and research is limited on effectiveness, certain tools such as the [Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale \(EPDS\)](#) and the [Patient Health Questionnaire \(PHQ-9\)](#) have shown promise in health care settings.
 - [Additional MMH screening tools](#)
- It is important to note that screening does not replace a diagnostic interview, but it can help to identify women who are at risk and in need of further intervention or referral to mental health services.

When is the best time to screen?

Mood fluctuations are extremely common during the first postpartum week, with approximately 60%-85% of women reporting mild to moderate mood symptoms, or “the blues”. While this may complicate screening, [studies which have used the EPDS to screen for depressive symptoms within the first postpartum week](#) suggest that the EPDS may be used to predict which women will go on to have postpartum depression.

- In this study, women who scored 9  or greater on the EPDS were about 30 times as likely to have postpartum depression at week 4 than women with lower EPDS scores. [Similar results were observed when the EPDS was administered at 2-3 days postpartum.](#)

Risk factors for postpartum depression

If patients report or you observe any of the following symptoms in a pregnant patient or new mom, please refer for further mental health screening and treatment as it may be indicative of PPD:

- Feeling sad, hopeless, empty, or overwhelmed
- Crying more often than usual
- Worrying or feeling overly anxious
- Avoiding friends and family
- Oversleeping or being unable to sleep
- Eating too little or too much
- Trouble concentrating and making decisions
- Frequent feelings of anger or rage
- Persistently doubting your ability to care for your baby
- Feeling moody, irritable, or restless
- Suffering from physical aches and pains
- Having trouble bonding with your baby
- Thinking about harming yourself or your baby



Additional Resources



PeriPAN

- [Perinatal Psychiatry Access Network](#) (PeriPAN)
 - Helps clinicians with perinatal mental health (training, assistance around screening, protocols, meds, etc).
 - Available Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and they follow up on after-hours messages the next business day.
 - Reach a mental health expert within 5 minutes.
 - Call or text to start your consult as you move between patients in your busy day, or during your admin time.
 - Call as often as you need.
 - [PeriPAN Access Network Map](#)

Guidance and Education

- [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists \(ACOG\) Toolkit](#)
 - Summary of perinatal mental health conditions, resources on patient screenings, assessment and treatment of MH conditions, educational resources for providers, guide for integrating MH into OB practice.
- ACOG eModule: [ACOG eModule: Addressing Perinatal Mental Health Conditions in Obstetric Settings](#) (2 free CME hours)

Additional information

- Postpartum Support International: www.postpartum.net
1.800.944.4773
- Texas Department of State Health Services Family Health Services,
Information & Referral Line:
<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/mch/depression.shtm> 1-800-422-2956
- Mental Health America of Texas: 1210 San Antonio Street, Suite
204 Austin, TX 78701
<http://www.mhatexas.org/postpartum-disorder> 512-454-3706
- 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: Call, chat or text 988
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
(SAMHSA) – National Helpline: 1-800-622-HELP (4357)
<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>

Community resources and treatment programs

- [Shades of Blue Project](#) – Dedicated to helping women of color before, during and after childbirth with community resources, mental health advocacy, treatment and support.
- [Wings for Wellness](#) (Dallas/ Ft. Worth) – Provides listings of mental health providers who treat MMH conditions.
- [The Pregnancy and Postpartum Health Alliance of Texas](#) (Central TX) – Nonprofit provides training for providers, Provider Directory of local PMAD-trained providers, list of local support groups and resources.
- [PACE Mental Health](#) (Houston) – Treats women with psychiatric disorders before, during, and after pregnancy. Provides medication management, therapy, and substance use disorder treatments.
- [Texas Children's Hospital, The Women's Place](#) Center for Reproductive Psychiatry (Houston) – Provides expertise in psychiatry and obstetrics, addressing reproductive mental health. Services include psychiatric consultation and treatment plans.

The image is a grayscale, semi-transparent overlay of the Idaho State Capitol building. The building's prominent dome is on the right side, featuring a statue on top. To the left, a flagpole with the Idaho state flag is visible. The background shows a mountain range under a cloudy sky with a crescent moon. The word "End" is centered in a blue font.

End