

# memo

**To:** WIC Coordinators and CPAs  
**From:** State WIC Staff  
**Date:** June 20, 2012 (updated 8/2017)  
**Subject:** Postpartum Depression: WIC's Role & Resources Available

During the 2012 MN Legislative session, a bill was passed requiring all WIC clinics to make available information about postpartum depression. This memo describes how Local Agencies can meet this new requirement and explains WIC's role in addressing postpartum depression.

**Perinatal / Postpartum Depression (PPD):** While many women experience some mild mood changes during or after the birth of a child, 15-20% of women experience more significant symptoms of depression. Symptoms can appear any time during pregnancy and/or through the first 12 months after childbirth. There are effective treatment options, and women experiencing depression should be provided information and a referral to services in the community.

**WIC's Role in Addressing Postpartum Depression:** to identify women who may need more extensive assessment, to provide information (such as a brochure), and to refer on to other non-WIC services.

- Screening for depression is part of the WIC nutrition and health assessment conducted at every certification appointment. CPAs should assign risk code #361, if (per FNS risk criteria) a health care professional has diagnosed the participant as having depression.
- However, any time a woman shows or expresses concern – whether or not the risk code applies, **CPAs should provide information and refer to non-WIC services in the community.**

**Services beyond the scope of WIC:** More extensive screening for PPD, providing support and/or mental health services, etc. Although these services may be provided in coordination with the WIC visit, **they may not be charged to the WIC grant**, nor should they interfere with the WIC nutrition services.

**Resources Available:** There are many resources available. We recommend a brochure developed by the MDH Maternal and Child Health Program.

**[Depression or Anxiety During and After Pregnancy: When Being Pregnant or Having a New Baby Is Not What you Expected](#)**

The [MDH brochure is available online](#) in several languages to download and print.

In addition to giving directly to women who have indicated concern, Local Agencies should make these (and/or other) brochures available in the clinic waiting area.