Maternal Depression Screening

CHILD AND TEEN CHECKUPS (C&TC) FACT SHEET FOR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS

C&TC Requirements

General

It is recommended that C&TC providers offer universal maternal depression screening during infant C&TC visits, ideally at least at the 0-1 month, the 2-month, the 4-month, and 6-month visit.

Screening may be offered more frequently or at other infant visits as needed up through 12 months of age, as outlined in the Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP) Provider Manual - C&TC Section (www.dhs.state.mn.us).

Personnel

The qualifications to administer maternal depression screening are instrument-specific. Refer to the instrument’s manual or instructions to determine qualifications. A licensed health care provider (physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or registered or public health nurse (RN, PHN) who has completed the C&TC Comprehensive Screening training through the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) must interpret the results and ensure appropriate follow-up.

Documentation

Record the name of the completed screening instrument and that you performed the screening as a “risk assessment” in the child’s medical record. It is not required to include the screening score results or a copy of the screening instrument in the child’s record.

For documentation examples, refer to the C&TC Documentation Forms for Providers and Clinics (www.dhs.state.mn.us).

Procedure

Use one of three approved screening tools:

- Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) (www.fresno.ucsf.edu)
- Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) (www.phqscreeners.com)
- Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) (www.pearsonclinical.com)

The PHQ-2 does not have adequate validity studies to show that it is accurate or reliable for screening post-partum depression, particularly for women who have lower income levels.

For specific implementation procedures and resources to help providers develop referral plans in their community, visit Postpartum Depression - Information for Health Professionals (www.health.state.mn.us).

Referral

The Psychiatric Assistance Line (PAL) is a service available to health professionals. Any provider can call for mental health triage and referral, or for a consultation with a Board Certified Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist regarding a patient. This is a free service provided by PrairieCare Medical Group through a grant from Department of Human Services (www.mnpsychconsult.com or 855.431.6468).

Importance of Screening

Due to the long-term consequences of perinatal depression on children, screening for depression is an important part of preventive pediatric care (Berkule, et al., 2014). Children of depressed parents are more likely to perform lower on cognitive, emotional and behavioral assessments (Berkule, et al., 2014).
They more commonly have difficulties in social and educational situations and have an increased risk of mental health issues later in life (Ferro & Boyle, 2015). An estimated 10-35 percent of mothers experience depression during the postpartum period (Berkule, et al., 2014).

Professional Recommendations

American Academy of Pediatrics
The AAP recommends maternal depression screening at well-child visits. The EPDS and PHQ-9 are feasible and effective measures (Hodgkinson, Beers, Southammakosane, & Lewin, 2014).

U.S. Preventive Services Task Force
The USPSTF recommends maternal depression screening if systematic follow-up services are provided for individuals with positive screening results (Olson, Dietrich, Prazar, & Hurley, 2006).

Resources

Minnesota Department of Human Services
- C&TC Schedule of Age-Related Screening Standards (www.dhs.state.mn.us)
- Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP) Provider Manual – C&TC Section (www.dhs.state.mn.us)

Minnesota Department of Health
- Child and Teen Checkups (C&TC) (www.health.state.mn.us)
- Depression or Anxiety During and After Pregnancy Info Sheet and Maternal Wellbeing Plan (www.health.state.mn.us)

Other Resources

Mother-Baby Hope Line at Hennepin County Medical Center:
- Statewide phone services: 612-873-5692. A counselor will return calls within two business days. In-person services are only available in Hennepin County.

Pregnancy Postpartum Support Minnesota
- Pregnancy and Postpartum Support Minnesota (www.ppssupportmn.org)
- PPSM HelpLine (612) 787-PPSM or (612) 787-7776 or PPSMhelpline@gmail.com

References


For More Information

The Child and Teen Checkups (C&TC) program is administered through a partnership between the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the Minnesota Department of Health.

For questions about this fact sheet or to obtain this information in a different format, call 651-201-3760 or email health.childteencheckups@state.mn.us.

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