

Advancing Maternal Mental Health in Georgia

POSTPARTUM SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL - GEORGIA CHAPTER



Postpartum Support International
Georgia Chapter

2024 Georgia Maternal Mental Health Legislative & Policy Agenda

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Create a comprehensive statewide universal screening system for perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADs).

It is vital that providers offer universal maternal mental health screenings of all pregnant and postpartum women. The universal screening system would look for the presence of prenatal or postpartum mood disorders, using evidence-based tools such as the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Screen or Patient Health Questionnaire. Both are validated for use in the perinatal population and they are free instruments. The timing for screening should include all the following:

- First prenatal visit
- At least once in second trimester
- At least once in the third trimester
- Screening at facility where the woman gives birth (between labor and discharge)
- Four to six weeks postpartum at an obstetrical visit
- Repeated screenings at 6 and 12 months in the postpartum period in the obstetric and/or primary care setting (also includes care received in midwifery and Federally Qualified Health Center settings)
- 1-, 2-, 4-, and 6-month pediatric visits

Perinatal mental health screening at periodic intervals is recommended by the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG), American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM), American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Medical Association.

Call for Paid Family and Medical Leave

Georgia parents should not have to choose between their job or taking time off to care for themselves or a loved one. Only 15% of workers have access to paid family leave through their employers and almost half of all private sector workers have no family or medical leave protection. Paid parental leave has been associated with improved maternal mental health and improved maternal health. We seek paid family and medical leave policies for public and private sector workers to ensure that Georgia families can take care of their family or their own healthcare needs without risking losing their job or economic security.

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Require CMOs to reimburse obstetric providers for maternal mental health screenings during pregnancy and postpartum

Ensuring the universal implementation of maternal mental health screenings for all pregnant and postpartum women is crucial for healthcare providers. As part of our commitment to prioritizing maternal mental health, this legislative agenda proposes the enactment of a requirement for Care Management Organizations (CMOs) to reimburse obstetric providers for maternal mental health screenings conducted early in pregnancy. This legislative measure aims to integrate routine maternal mental health screenings into early pregnancy care, ensuring that healthcare providers are fairly compensated for implementing these crucial screenings. Clear guidelines and reimbursement rates will be established to facilitate the seamless incorporation of maternal mental health screenings into standard prenatal care practices, fostering a comprehensive approach to maternal well-being.

Enshrine World Maternal Mental Health Day in Georgia Code.

The first Wednesday in May is World Maternal Mental Health Day across the globe. On this day, advocates bring awareness to the fact that women of every culture, age, income level and race can develop perinatal mood and anxiety disorders. Importantly, we share that there are effective and well-researched treatment options available to help women recover. We support formally enshrining Maternal Mental Health Day into Georgia code and a yearly Proclamation at the State and local government levels that highlights this day. This year, World Maternal Mental Health Day falls on May 1st, 2024.

Expand Certified Peer Specialist credential to include Perinatal Mental Health.

Peer support is a cornerstone of treating mental health complications, including PMADs. The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) provides a foundation for those with lived experiences to pursue Certified Peer Specialist credentialing to provide this form of social support. In conjunction with our support of perinatal provider workforce development measures, we seek the inclusion of perinatal mental health (PMH) into DBHDD's Certified Peer Specialist - Mental Health (CPS-MH) credential.



Need Help? Call or Text our HelpLine.

Call 1-800-944-4773 (4PPD)

English & Spanish

Text in English: 800-944-4773

Text en Español: 971-203-7773



OUR PROGRAMS

All of our programs are FREE for families!

PROVIDER TRAINING

Our organization trains providers in Georgia to identify, treat and refer families for maternal mental health conditions and concerns. In partnership with the Department of Public Health (DPH), we provide scholarships to providers in underserved areas of Georgia, those who accept Medicaid, sliding scale and/or ProBono clients, and those who speak a language other than English.

BLACK MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH SUMMIT

For the past three years, we have hosted Georgia's Virtual Black Maternal Mental Health Summit! This free event focuses on education and awareness building and provides a community space to Black mothers in Georgia, and it has received an overwhelmingly positive response.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Our support groups went live online during the pandemic. We offer support groups to moms, fathers, veterans, LGBTQ+ families, and other communities by language and demographic.

PEER SUPPORT & HELPLINE

PSI operates a nationwide helpline (see above). This toll-free telephone number allows anyone to get basic information, resources and connected with their State Coordinator. Calls are returned within 24 hours. PSI-GA State Coordinators have served hundreds of families to get the care and support they needed, including referrals to maternal mental health providers and systems of care.

CLIMB OUT OF THE DARKNESS

Every year, PSI hosts Climb events all over the world where families and communities gather to bring awareness to perinatal mood and anxiety disorders and their impact.

ACCESS THESE PROGRAMS AT WWW.PSIGA.ORG