**Mental Health Toolkit**



**Addressing mental wellbeing**

It is well recognised that the postpartum period can be a challenging time. Normalising statements such as “we know that more than 1 in 10 parents are affected by postnatal depression”, as well as active listening techniques, asking open questions and demonstrating that you are there for them can help to build trusting relationships and lead to more open discussions. Below are guidance for using specified tools to better understand and support a person’s mental health.

**Building Mental Wellbeing**

**Tommy’s Wellbeing Plan**

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**Purpose**

* A psycho-education tool to help new parents think about how to protect their mental wellbeing and build emotional resilience.
* It helps create a safe and non-threatening space for practitioners to raise the idea that they are supportive and open to helping parents with their mental health.
* It’s an opportunity for the parent and practitioner to collaborate, sharing ideas and knowledge.
* It has the potential to prevent the development of poor mental health.

**Resources needed:**

* A paper copy of the plan <https://www.tommys.org/pregnancy-information/calculators-tools-resources/wellbeing-plan/pregnancy-and-post-birth-wellbeing-plan>
* A knowledge of local resources (currently available on SharePoint)
* Emotion wheel such as Plutchik’s wheel of emotions.

**Structure:**

1. To be used as early as possible with a parent.
2. Leave the plan with the parent.
3. Review at each contact. Ideally using the plan, itself.
4. With consent, take a photo of the plan to upload to the Rio records.

**Narrative:**

Having a baby is a challenging time, physically and mentally. Would it be supportive if we looked at how you might like to look after your mental health?’

**Ideas for questions:**

What have you been feeling over the past few weeks?

How have you used the plan? Tell me about that…

Have you found anything about the plan helpful? What would make it more helpful?

Have you done anything to support your emotional wellbeing? Would you be happy to tell me about that?

Is there anything on this plan that you might like to review or change?

Is there anything on this plan that you would like a bit more support with?

**Mental health screening**

The following questions can help you to identify someone who might be struggling with their mental health.

**Depression Identification Questions:**

* During the past month, have you often been bothered by feeling down, depressed or hopeless?
* During the past month, have you often been bothered by having little interest or pleasure in doing things?

**GAD 2 Anxiety identification:**

* Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by feeling nervous, anxious or on edge?
* Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by not being able to stop or control worrying?

For questions about anxiety: an answer of 'not at all' scores 0; 'several days' scores 1; 'more than half the days' scores 2; 'nearly every day' scores 3. [2014]

* If a positive response is received offer further assessment using GAD 7 and PHQ 9. This can be carried out by the named health visitor or the FOREST practitioner. Remember to always feedback and liaise with the allocated HV.
* Please see table of mental health intervention triangle below to interpret assessment results and plan care.

**A positive score on question 9 ‘thoughts that you would be better off dead, or of hurting yourself’ requires immediate referral to GP or perinatal team.**

A computer screen shot of a pyramid

Description automatically generated**Table of mental health intervention**

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**Psychosocial assessment**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| How have you been feeling? | Where can you go for support? | How do you feel about your baby? | Are you moving your body? |
| What makes you happy? | Are you able to rest and recharge? | How do you feel about becoming a parent? | Would you like help with eating a healthy diet? |
| Are you able to relax? | Where can you ask questions about your baby? | Do you feel safe?  Mindline 0800 138 1692 or 01823 276 892  Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. |  |

**After using the framework leave a copy with the parent. Ask for consent to take a photo and upload to RIO.**

**Agree on a review date (within 1-4 weeks), this could be face to face or by telephone. Always re-assess mental health using the GAD 7 or PHQ 9.**

**Facilitated Self-help**

**NICE (2014) recommends offering facilitated self-help to people with sub threshold depression or anxiety. The main resources for this in Somerset:**

* Open Mental Health - [Somerset's Mental Health Alliance - Open Mental Health](https://openmentalhealth.org.uk/)
* The Recovery College - [Somerset Recovery College – A college providing courses to improve mental health for people in Somerset](https://somersetrecoverycollege.co.uk/)

**Activities and resources**

**Play and interaction with your baby**

Interacting with your baby is not only great for their development, but research has shown that reciprocal interactions between you and them release hormones that also make you feel good too.

A person holding a baby

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* [Serve and return interactions with baby - how it helps baby brain development - BBC Tiny Happy People](https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/articles/z3mr3j6)
* [Enjoy silly time - BBC Tiny Happy People](https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/articles/zbgyvk7)
* [Fun Face Game to Help Your Baby Learn To Talk - BBC Tiny Happy People](https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/articles/zmmjqp3)
* [Let's dance - BBC Tiny Happy People](https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/articles/zh33mfr)
* [Understanding child brain development | NSPCC Learning](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-health-development/childhood-trauma-brain-development#serve-and-return)
* [Look say sing play leaflet (nspcc.org.uk)](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/3273/look-say-sing-play-leaflet-june-2023.pdf)



**A person and person looking at a baby

Description automatically generatedManaging mental health when becoming a new parent:** [How to build your baby's mental health master class | UNICEF (youtube.com)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dp2NKV0C7_k)

**NSPCC Top tips for managing stress related to your baby or child:**

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For more resources, videos and support on managing mental health from NSPCC please visit: [Mental health and parenting | NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/mental-health-parenting/)

**Get your Mind Plan**

If you're struggling with your mental health and wellbeing, this simple mental health quiz can help. It generates a personalised plan based on the information you provide –  
  
[Your mind plan (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/your-mind-plan-quiz/)

A screenshot of a quiz

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**Mindfulness** - What is mindfulness? - Mental wellbeing tips - Every Mind Matters - NHS (www.nhs.uk):

1. [Video: What is mindfulness?](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/what-is-mindfulness/#video)
2. [What does "mindfulness" mean?](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/what-is-mindfulness/#What%20does%20mindfulness%20mean?)
3. [Mindfulness tips and techniques](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/what-is-mindfulness/#tips-and-techniques)
4. [The three Cs of mindfulness](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/what-is-mindfulness/#three-cs)
5. [Practising mindfulness](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/what-is-mindfulness/#practising-mindfulness)
6. [If mindfulness is not for you](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/what-is-mindfulness/#more)

**Mindful colouring**Rather than trying to draw something in particular, focus on the colours and the sensation of your pencil against the paper - [Adult Coloring Pages · Download and Print for Free ! - Just Color](https://www.justcolor.net/)

A coloring page of a sloth

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**Meditation -** How to meditate for beginners - Mental wellbeing tips - Every Mind Matters - NHS (www.nhs.uk):

1. [The benefits of meditation](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-meditate-for-beginners/#benefits)
2. [Video: How to meditate for beginners](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-meditate-for-beginners/#video)
3. [How to meditate in 7 steps](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-meditate-for-beginners/#7-steps)
4. [Try our guided meditations](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-meditate-for-beginners/#guided-meditations)
5. [More self-help ideas](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-meditate-for-beginners/#more)

**Self Help CBT Techniques** - Online self-help CBT techniques - Every Mind Matters - NHS (www.nhs.uk):

1. [What is CBT?](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/self-help-cbt-techniques/#what-is-cbt)
2. [Self-help techniques you can try](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/self-help-cbt-techniques/#articles):

* **Reframing un helpful thoughts**
* **Tackling your worries**
* **Problem solving**
* **Bouncing back from lifes challenges**
* **Facing your fears**
* **Tackling your to do list**
* **Staying on top of things**

1. [More ways to boost your mental health](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/self-help-cbt-techniques/#more-support)

**Top tips to improve your mental wellbeing -** Top tips to improve mental wellbeing - Every Mind Matters - NHS (www.nhs.uk) :

1. [1. Reframe unhelpful thoughts](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/top-tips-to-improve-your-mental-wellbeing/#reframe-thoughts)
2. [2. Be in the present](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/top-tips-to-improve-your-mental-wellbeing/#present)
3. [3. Get good sleep](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/top-tips-to-improve-your-mental-wellbeing/#sleep)
4. [4. Connect with others](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/top-tips-to-improve-your-mental-wellbeing/#connect)
5. [5. Live a healthy life](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/top-tips-to-improve-your-mental-wellbeing/#healthy-lifestyle)
6. [6. Do something for yourself](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/top-tips-to-improve-your-mental-wellbeing/#keep-learning)
7. [7. Write a letter to future you](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/top-tips-to-improve-your-mental-wellbeing/#write-a-letter)

**Sleep**

The mental health benefits of good sleep include boosting our mood, reducing stress and helping with anxiety. If you're having trouble sleeping, knowing how to sleep better can make a big difference - [Fall asleep faster and sleep better - Every Mind Matters - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-fall-asleep-faster-and-sleep-better/) :

1. [Video: Tips for sleeping better](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-fall-asleep-faster-and-sleep-better/#video)
2. [Get sleep tips sent to your inbox](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-fall-asleep-faster-and-sleep-better/#sleep-ecrm)
3. [1. Have good sleep routine (sleep hygiene)](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-fall-asleep-faster-and-sleep-better/#1)
4. [2. Relax, unwind and try meditation to help you sleep](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-fall-asleep-faster-and-sleep-better/#2)
5. [3. Try mindfulness for sleep](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-fall-asleep-faster-and-sleep-better/#mindfulness)
6. [4. Create the right sleep environment](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-fall-asleep-faster-and-sleep-better/#4)
7. [5. Do not force sleep](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-fall-asleep-faster-and-sleep-better/#5)
8. [6. Improve sleep through diet and exercise](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-fall-asleep-faster-and-sleep-better/#6)
9. [More help and support with insomnia and sleep](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-fall-asleep-faster-and-sleep-better/#support)

**Sign up for Anxiety easing emails from Every Mind Matters:**

[Every Mind Matters Registration (ecrm-registration.nhs.uk)](https://anxiety.ecrm-registration.nhs.uk/)

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**Feeling good app**The Feeling Good app uses a range of techniques to help improve thoughts and feelings, self-esteem and self-confidence. There is lots of free content available.



**Daily activity**

Being active reduces stress, increases energy levels, and can make us more alert and help us sleep better. Set aside some time each day for physical activity so that it becomes routine. An easy way to start is with our follow-along home-workout videos. Exercise is great for your mind as well as your body - [Home workout videos - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/home-workout-videos/)



Can you think of other ways, with the support of your practitioner that you could incorporate activity in to your days, and perhaps include your little ones too? Have you considered joining a group or activity outside of home to increase your activity, and meet others at the same time?

[Moving Mums - Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership (sasp.co.uk)](https://www.sasp.co.uk/moving-mums)

[Unbreakable Men - Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership (sasp.co.uk)](https://www.sasp.co.uk/unbreakable-men)

**Traffic light activity**

Write out a list of your routine on an average day. For each activity, determine if they are positive (green), neutral (amber) or negative (red) in relation to your own mental wellbeing. See if you can set an achievable goal for reducing the red elements of your routine, or adding more greens, using the support of your practitioner.

Example:

**Wake up  
Watch videos on Tik Tok comparing myself to influencers  
Interact with my baby and get smiles in return  
Get myself dressed  
Have breakfast  
Brush my teeth and hair  
Stay inside all morning due to worry of going out  
Spend more time on Social Media making comparisons   
Watch TV despite hoping to be outside**

**Games and activities**

Research has shown that playing a game or puzzle can help to distract the mind from other thoughts. You can find some ideas from Mind here: [Games and puzzles - Mind](https://www.mind.org.uk/need-urgent-help/how-can-i-distract-myself/games-and-puzzles/)



**Self-care**

****Ensuring time for yourself is an important element for a lot of parents in maintaining or improving mental wellbeing. Could you bath while baby sleeps? Are you able to take a walk while somebody you trust cares for baby? Will an hour in front of the TV help you relax? Brainstorm some ideas with your practitioner about how you may be able to implement this into your lifestyle.

**Reducing social isolation**

* Provide information on networking apps/local social media pages to join
* Provide information on local groups, both PHN led, and other community activities
* Discuss barriers to accessing these services, including mental health barriers
* Gently build up to this goal if needed
* Offer accompaniment to leave the house initially; a walk around the block/through the park
* Offer to walk from their home to the PHN group if possible, or arrange to meet them outside
* Is it appropriate to show them the building and space whilst no groups are running to build familiarity and comfort with the setting
* Are you able to be present initially to greet at a group and introduce to the facilitator to reduce anxiety
* Are there any other ways that you are able to support in reducing barriers and building confidence?

GOAL  
Parents will feel confident and able to leave the home when they choose, and access universal community groups & activities, to benefit themselves and their baby.

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**Baby massage**

Please speak to your practitioner about a referral to baby massage, available via the Health Visiting Team in your area. You will learn the skills and technique to massage your baby, improving bonding and encouraging positive interactions.

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**Supporting life limiting illness, premature birth, bereavement and baby loss**

**Together for Short Lives**

If you care for a child with a life-limiting or life-threatening condition, Together for Short Lives is there to help you. Their website has lots of information on how they can support you and your family, including:

* **Emotional and listening support:**[Emotional and listening support - Together for Short Lives](https://www.togetherforshortlives.org.uk/get-support/emotional-and-listening-support/)
* **Practical and financial support:**[Practical and financial support - Together for Short Lives](https://www.togetherforshortlives.org.uk/get-support/practical-and-financial-support/)
* **Helping connect with other families and services:**[Help connecting with other families and services - Together for Short Lives](https://www.togetherforshortlives.org.uk/get-support/help-connecting-with-other-families-and-services/)
* **Information about your childs care:**[Information about your child's care - Together for Short Lives](https://www.togetherforshortlives.org.uk/get-support/information-about-your-childs-care/)

Together for Short Lives helpline: 0808 8088 100

Looking after yourself leaflet:[Wellbeing leaflet\_final (togetherforshortlives.org.uk)](https://www.togetherforshortlives.org.uk/app/uploads/2020/11/Wellbeing-leaflet_final.pdf)

**Childrens hospices**Children’s hospice services provide care and support for children and young people with life-limiting conditions and their families throughout a child’s life. Delivered by a multi-disciplinary team and in partnership with other agencies, children’s hospice services take a holistic approach to care, aiming to meet the needs of both child and family – physical, emotional, social and spiritual – through a range of services.

These include:

* support for the entire family (including siblings, grandparents and the extended family)
* 24 hour end of life care
* bereavement support
* 24 hour access to emergency care
* specialist short break care
* 24 hour telephone support
* practical help, advice and information
* provision of specialist therapies, including physiotherapy, play and music therapy
* provision of information, support, education and training to carers, where needed

Children’s hospice services sometimes deliver this care in the home, or more often in a purpose built building.

To see if you are eligible to receive support from your local hospice, phone them and ask to speak to the care team. They will then work with your child’s consultant to see if they can help you.

The Childrens Hospices most local to Somerset are:

* Childrens Hospice South West Charlton Farm – Bristol
* Childrens Hospice South West Little Bridge House – Barnstable
* Julias House - Poole

**BLISS**Bliss is a charity supporting parents and families of premature and sick babies.

You can find support for each stage of your journey here: [Bliss Support | Homepage](https://support.bliss.org.uk/?_gl=1*gcd5d0*_ga*MTkzNzM3NzU0OS4xNjQzMDM1MjYw*_ga_QHN2PJXZ6R*MTcxODcwMzc1My4yLjEuMTcxODcwMzc2OS40NC4wLjA.)

You can access email support by visiting: [Support via email | Bliss](https://www.bliss.org.uk/parents/support/emotional-support/email-support)

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You can book a video call with a Bliss Champion here: [Support via video call | Bliss](https://www.bliss.org.uk/parents/support/emotional-support/online-volunteer-support)

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**Towards Tomorrow Together**

Towards Tomorrow Together provide support, information and resources to people affected by baby loss – at any time, for any reason. We walk with you as you take steps Towards Tomorrow, joining you at the time of your loss, as you grieve and during any future pregnancies.

The charity endeavour to provide their services for free or at low cost, however as a small charity with a very small income this may not always be possible. They may ask for a donation or a deposit, but are aware times are tough for people so this is always flexible.

**You can access the website here:** [Welcome to Towards Tomorrow Together - Towards Tomorrow Together (towards-tomorrow.com)](https://towards-tomorrow.com/about/)

**The contact form for Towards Tomorrow Together can be found here:** [Contact - Towards Tomorrow Together (towards-tomorrow.com)](https://towards-tomorrow.com/contact/)

A close-up of a website

Description automatically generatedBelow shows the support that the charity are able to offer.

**A close-up of a logo

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**Tommys charity**   
  
Tommy’s is now the largest UK charity researching the causes and prevention of pregnancy complications, miscarriage, stillbirth and premature birth.

They offer a lot of support and resource around baby loss: [Baby loss information and support | Tommy's (tommys.org)](https://www.tommys.org/baby-loss-support)

You can also access specific guidance on pregnancy and parenting after loss: [Parenting after loss | Tommy's (tommys.org)](https://www.tommys.org/pregnancy-information/after-birth/parenting-after-loss)

The Tommy's Midwives' Helpline is a free-phone line open 9-5, Monday to Friday for anyone who needs advice, reassurance or support on any pregnancy or planning for pregnancy issue, including mental health.

The number is 0800 0147 800.

The midwives will also answer your questions by email on midwife@tommys.org

**Josephines Star**

Josephine's Star offer s[upport](http://www.josephinesstar.org.uk/support-for-a-child/)to children and their families in Somerset when someone special has died.

You can access further details on their support offer here:  
[Our Support | Josephine's Star (josephinesstar.org.uk)](https://www.josephinesstar.org.uk/support)

**Digital resources for signposting:**

**Eves plan – A list of quality assured mental health resources for Somerset Health Visiting Teams:** [**Eve's Plan November 2023 Branded SC.docx (sharepoint.com)**](https://somersetcc.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/PHO-PHN-AllStaff/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B030AFC2F-DD03-4921-8DCF-8A03CBCCDFB8%7D&file=Eve%27s%20Plan%20November%202023%20Branded%20SC.docx&wdLOR=cEF8DD36F-9D33-418E-AB6F-CDAE80BC9039&action=default&mobileredirect=true)

NHS website: Postnatal depression - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

Open Mental Health – Community Mental Health Support (NHS, VSCE, Social Care). Self-referral [support@openmentalhealth.org.uk](mailto:support@openmentalhealth.org.uk) Tel: 01823 276892, freephone 0800 138 1692: [Localities - Open Mental Health](https://openmentalhealth.org.uk/localities/)

Mindline - Somerset’s 24/7 confidential listening and emotional support telephone service, (all ages) Tel: 01823 276892, freephone 0800 138 1692. Web chat available 8pm – 11pm daily: [www.mindinsomerset.org.uk](http://www.mindinsomerset.org.uk/)

Somerset Talking Therapies - Online resources and self-referral form for Talking Therapies (must be 18+ registered with GP): [Talking Therapies - Somerset IAPT Service - NHS Foundation Trust (somersetft.nhs.uk)](https://www.somersetft.nhs.uk/somerset-talking-therapies/)

Healthy Somerset – Local training offer, support resources and signposting: [Support with your Mental Health – Healthy Somerset](https://www.healthysomerset.co.uk/support-with-your-mental-health/)

Every Mind Matters – Online self-help resources for mental wellbeing: [Every Mind Matters - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/)

Infant attachment FOREST toolkit: [Infant attachment toolkit V3.docx](https://somersetcc.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/PHO-PHN-AllStaff/Forest%20Team%20EPP/Toolkits%20development%20folder/Infant%20attachment%20toolkit%20V3.docx?d=w07a275f654ff4f44a90169a0a300a135&csf=1&web=1&e=bMdE1d)

Fathers FOREST toolkit: [Father in the family toolkit.docx](https://somersetcc.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/PHO-PHN-AllStaff/Forest%20Team%20EPP/Toolkits%20development%20folder/Father%20in%20the%20family%20toolkit.docx?d=w65b69f650cf04ace8a4858be18a173c1&csf=1&web=1&e=tfUzqB)

Easy read guide: [4.-You-Can-Do-It-Being-Active-and-Feeling-Better-Booklet.pdf](file:///C:\Users\Sbryant\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\0F1SBCP9\4.-You-Can-Do-It-Being-Active-and-Feeling-Better-Booklet.pdf)

**Supervision**

* If anyone discloses poor mental health always discuss this with the named health visitor.
* If you have safeguarding concerns discuss with PHN safeguarding [phnsafeguarding@somersetft.nhs.uk](mailto:phnsafeguarding@somersetft.nhs.uk)
* Monthly supervision is available via teams on the second Wednesday of every month: Meeting ID: 310 872 601 726 Passcode: uTnBDG
* One to one discussion available from Jenny Candler: Service Lead for Family Mental Health.