



The peer support provided by this network will allow your patients to talk to:

- Someone who knows what they are going through...
- Someone who is just like them ...
- Someone who can give them hope and practical ideas for helping themselves...
- Someone who can talk to their partner, family and friends and help them to help your patient...

Refer your PND patients for peer support
referrals@sunraysiapnd.org.au

Sunraysia Postnatal Depression Support
Network Inc.

www.sunraysiapnd.org.au

One day a woman fell down a hole.

It was dark, and deep and she was so confused that she could not find a way out.

She cried. And cried.

Along came a great scholar. He heard the crying, looked down into the hole and saw the woman. 'Aha' he thought, 'I have read about this, I know just what to do!' He called out to the woman and threw her down a book. 'Read this,' he said, 'it will help you find a way out.' The book hit the woman on the head, she cried on.

Next a great scientist came past. He heard the crying and looked down into the hole and saw the woman. 'Aha' he thought, 'I have studied this, I know just what to do!' He stood at the edge of the hole called down step by step instructions to the woman, describing how she could get out of the hole. The instructions went in one ear and out the other and the woman cried on.

Eventually two women came along. They heard the crying and looked down into the hole and saw the woman. 'Aha' they thought, 'we have been in that hole before, we know just what to do!' Together they jumped down into the hole, hugged the woman until she stopped crying, took her by the hand and showed her the way out.

Author unknown.



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Printed May 2009



Information for GPs and Therapists

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Proudly supported by:





Sunraysia
Postnatal Depression
Support Network Inc.

What is the Sunraysia Postnatal Depression Support Network?

A network of local women who have experienced and recovered from Postnatal Depression (PND), reaching out to those who have been recently diagnosed (and who have commenced treatment with a recognised practitioner*) to provide hope and practical support.

What it isn't?

The Sunraysia PND Support Network does not:

- Provide peer support for people with other types of depression.
- Provide therapy or counseling.

What can it provide your patients?

Outreach **peer support** (providing hope and practical ideas for self help) as well as information for partners, family and friends on how best to help women with PND.

NB: **The SPNDSN is not a substitute for therapy.** Your PND patients will also need to be referred to an appropriate therapist. Once a woman with PND has been stabilised, the peer support provided by the network will complement her therapy.

Why is peer support important?

Women with postnatal depression want hope. Talking with other women who have experienced PND and recovered provides hope and comfort.

Who can be referred?

Women in the Sunraysia region who have been recently diagnosed with Postnatal Depression and who have commenced treatment with a recognised practitioner*.

NB: The network will only interact with recently diagnosed PND patients who are considered stabilised by their practitioner. PND patients who are: about to be hospitalised; suicidal; psychotic; or in any other way considered critically unstable should not be referred to the network until their condition had stabilised.

Who can make referrals?

Referrals will be accepted from recognised practitioners.

*Recognised practitioners are those who are involved in the ultimate treatment and care of women with PND.

These include:

1. Psychiatrists,
2. Psychologists,
3. Primary mental health team,
4. Private counsellors, and
5. General practitioners (referral to one of the above therapists is also highly recommended)

It is not intended that referrals to the network come directly from the Maternal & Child Health Service. Self referrals will not be accepted.

How do I refer my patients for peer support?

1. Ensure your PND patient is stabilised (see above).
2. Advise the patient of the existence of the Sunraysia Post Natal Depression Network.
3. Ask if they would like to be contacted by someone in the network.
4. With permission, pass on their details via email to:

referrals@sunraysiapnd.org.au

The following details are required in the email:

1. Name of the women to be referred
2. Contact phone numbers (home and mobile)
3. Your name (as referee) and contact details
4. Any relevant information that may assist a peer supporter (e.g number of children, history of PND etc. GPs should also include who the woman's therapist is and their contact details.)
5. The network Executive will send a confirmation email to the referring practitioner once contact has been made with the referred woman.

NB: Although many General Practitioners and Therapists are not used to making direct referrals via email, the above process is recommended as (due to the nature of depression) it is often overwhelming for many women with PND to seek out assistance for themselves. We wish to make it as easy as possible for women with PND to access the network.

How can I be sure my referrals will be managed confidentially?

Referrals will be managed by the Executive of the Sunraysia PND Support Network. Confidentiality is a key guiding principle of the network and all referrals will be treated confidentially. The name of the referred woman will be provided only to the supporter to whom she is allocated. No names will be referred to in network debriefs.

What is the peer support process?

A peer supporter will make contact with a referred woman within three working days from the date of the referral.

The complete peer support process is:

1. Initial phone call.
2. Home visit.
3. Follow up call.

Peer supporters will be provided with tools to assist them and to ensure a consistent approach. These tools have been developed with assistance from the **SPNDSN Reference Group** (comprising representation from local health care providers) and align with tools used by national and international postnatal depression support groups.

Where do I get more information?

Further information on the Sunraysia Postnatal Depression Support Network Inc. is available at

www.sunraysiapnd.org.au