

PRIMER

PRomoting Motivation, Empowerment & Readiness

The overall aim of the PRIMER study is to examine whether help-seeking for mental health issues can be increased through a brief motivational interviewing (MI) intervention developed by PIRI. The key concept is to prepare and motivate women to take action for their own emotional health needs in the year following childbirth. The intervention is delivered by Maternal and Child Health Nurses (MCHNs) during their routine consultations with women post-birth. MCHNs are training in MI in a 2-day workshop and follow an intervention manual containing session prompts.

The rationale for the study is that substantial numbers of women with postnatal depression (PND) do not accept help; yet there is scant research on this group. Currently, no effective, evidence-based strategy to enhance uptake of services exists, despite findings that as few as 1 in 3 depressed women correctly identified by screening end up receiving treatment.

There is an urgent need to redress this and see if we can improve uptake of treatment when women experience PND. MI has shown enormous success in other fields of healthcare. We hypothesise that MI intervention will prepare women to take action for their own current and future emotional health needs.

The longitudinal design of this study allows us to track changes in measures of emotional health throughout the first year postpartum. This will help build a clearer picture of the paths that postnatal women take through the health system following both positive and negative screening results for PND.

