

Depression prevention groups at maternity clinics

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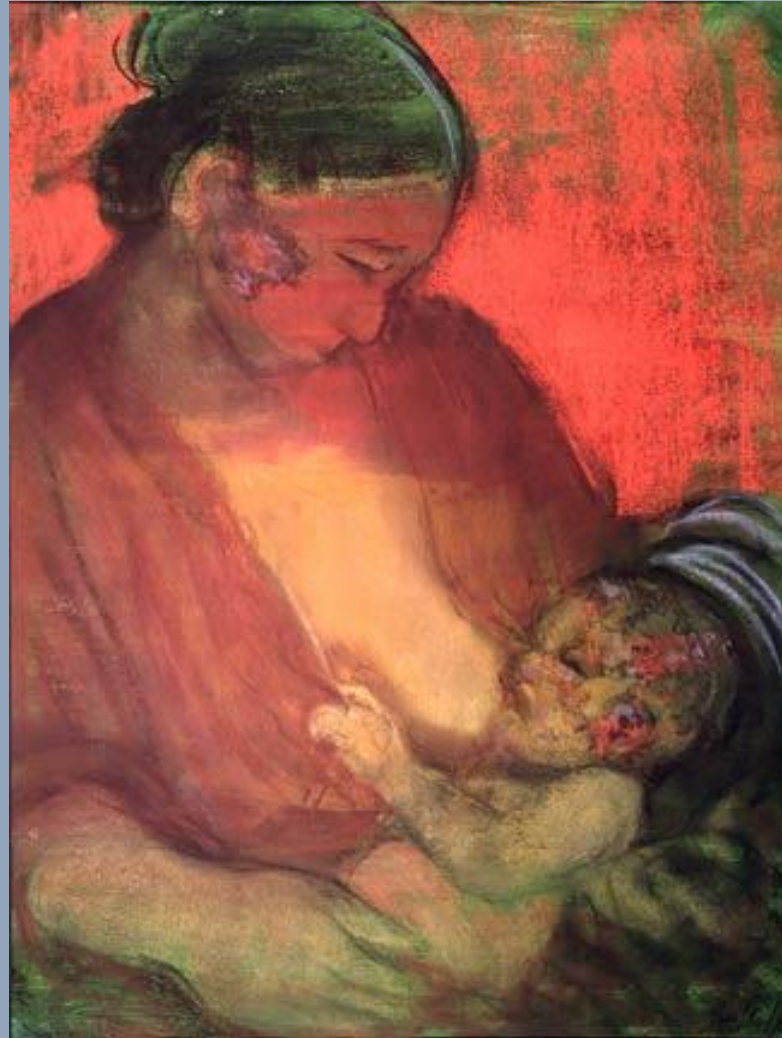
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Background

- **Enhancing competence in mental health among those working at maternity and child welfare clinics is a means to promote the population's mental health**
- **Children of parents suffering from depression face a risk of contracting depression in their adolescence**
- **The critical development stages of children shall be protected by using early interventions among depressed parents and their children**
- **Depressed parents have usually missing parenthood and need more support than other parents**



Aims and Methods

■ Aim

- **To pilote a cognitive-behavioral based, nurse lead groups for early recognition and treatment of depressed mothers**

■ Methods

- **Systematic EPDS (Edinburgh Postnatal Depression scale)-screening to all mothers with 2-4 months babies**
- **Mothers scoring 13 or more were referenced to preventive depression groups, targeted at high-risk mothers or pregnant women**
- **Each group consisted of 4-7 mothers and babies**
- **8-10 meetings at one-week intervals led by maternity nurses**



Intervention

- **The interaction between mother and baby as well as parenthood was supported by nurses**
- **After three months there was one follow-up meeting**
- **The groups were based on the theory behind cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy**
- **Mothers were offered possibility to find tools to manage stressful life and copy better ways of perceiving themselves and reacting to other people**
- **They also learn to act in ways that support their physical and mental stamina**
- **Fathers were offered possibility to participate twice, before and after the group**



Evaluation

- 47 mothers who participated in the groups and were followed up approximately one and half year
- Phone interviewed
- They were asked what kind of ways of coping they had now and how they are feeling nowadays
- Each participant had at least one risk factor

Preliminary results

- Remained low during the 18-month follow-up
- Mothers learned self-help methods:
 - positive thinking
 - social contacts and peer support
 - physical exercise
- Mood diary and “ABCD method” not so frequently used
- EPDS scored decreased for most of the mothers
- Mothers received support from their spouses, but experienced need for more emotional support



Conclusions

- **Groups can be easily held at maternity clinics and integrated into normal clinical work**
- **The group leading carry out the possibility psychiatric nurse carrying out their preventive mental health work at maternity clinics**

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
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