



LETTERS

MATERNAL SIX WEEK POSTNATAL CHECK

Maternal six week postnatal check should assess for postnatal anxiety

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Jakes and colleagues summarise the maternal six week postnatal check.¹ This is an important and integral part of primary care and presents general practitioners with opportunities to make a huge difference to new mothers and their children.

We were disappointed, however, that the article mentioned anxiety only in the context of sleep. Perinatal anxiety might affect 22% of women²—higher than the 14% often quoted for perinatal depression.³ Our work indicates that awareness and understanding of perinatal anxiety among healthcare professionals is limited, with care being fragmented and interprofessional communication poor.⁴

An article discussing what to cover in the maternal six week health check should have emphasised the important role of the GP in identifying postnatal mental health problems and the particular need to identify and manage postnatal anxiety.

Competing interests: None declared.

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