

Perinatal Mental Health Task Force of Los Angeles County

Mission

The Perinatal Mental Health Task Force of LA County is a network of public and private agencies and organizations, community leaders, consumers, and health care providers dedicated to promoting the health and well-being of pregnant and post-partum women, their children, and their families through the effective prevention and treatment of perinatal mood disorders. Our mission is to identify gaps and unmet needs, to mobilize and align resources, to implement systematic and coordinated approaches, and to disseminate knowledge and findings, that are aimed at:

- Raising awareness and removing stigmas associated with perinatal mood disorders
- Providing access to screening, effective treatment, and coordinated care for perinatal mood disorders
- Training health professionals and improving clinical practice
- Supporting affected individuals and their families
- Improving the coordination and functioning of systems of care
- Addressing the unique needs of high risk and vulnerable populations
- Establishing responsive and effective policies

Vision

To be a regional resource for excellence in the prevention, early identification, and intervention for perinatal mood disorders, and to promote maternal and infant mental health in Los Angeles County.

Core Values

Care should be:

- Family-centered
- Universal
- Comprehensive
- Coordinated
- Culturally competent
- Evidence-based
- Continuously improved

History & Accomplishments

The Task Force was created in February of 2007 by Kimberly Wong, Esq., Deputy Public Defender-Los Angeles County, herself a survivor of postpartum depression. Kimberly also serves as the Executive Vice President of Postpartum Support International (PSI),

which is a Task Force partner and a nationwide volunteer organization that assists consumers suffering from postpartum depression, trains health providers, and advocates for responsive public policies. Kimberly's vision has led the way to establishing collaborative, community-driven approaches to improving policies and practices that address maternal mental health. Since its inception, the Task Force has influenced screening practices in health systems and public health programs, has contributed to increased trainings and offerings on perinatal depression for health care providers, has helped shape the planning process for the Mental Health Services Act's Prevention and Early Intervention initiative (MHSA/PEI), and has jointly planned with Los Angeles Best Babies Network a 5-year policy initiative to address perinatal depression, with funding awarded by First 5 LA. Through PSI, the Task Force was awarded a planning grant from The Carl and Roberta Deutsch Foundation to build capacity for a funded Center that can provide training, technical assistance, outreach, research and evaluation that can contribute to continuous improvement of systems of care for prenatal and postnatal depression.

Organizational Structure

Task Force Composition: Over 30 individuals representing more than 15 public and private agencies involved in outreach, screening, and treatment services for prenatal and postpartum depression, along with community leaders, research partners, and advocates for mothers, infants, and families. Task Force membership list attached.

Fiscal Sponsor

The Task Force is a project of Community Partners and as such, Community Partners is the Task Force fiscal sponsor.

Strategic Goals

- Improve the organizational effectiveness of the Task Force by establishing a leadership structure, committee structure, strategic expansion of the Task Force, and strategic partnerships with PSI and local organizations.
- Build capacity for the Task Force to establish a Center that can implement activities consistent with the Task Force mission.
- Establish a media strategy to increase the visibility of the Task Force and a Center on maternal mental health.
- Conduct a needs assessment that pinpoints populations, places, and systems in need of intervention and that contributes to an outcome evaluation strategy for the Task Force and Center.
- Develop a business plan that identifies key programmatic goals, objectives, activities, outcomes, costs and resource needs, and sustainability strategies to raise funds for a Center that will promote and improve maternal mental health.