



Forty Carrots
Family Center



Perinatal Mental Health Coordination Hub

Background/Intro:

Professionals and parents identified lack of access to mental health services and difficulty navigating the system as two of the top barriers to care in the zero to three population. There were reports from parents that they didn't know where to go for help, psychiatrists wouldn't treat them because they were pregnant and some OBGYNs didn't feel comfortable prescribing anti-depressant medication. Additionally, it was reported by professionals and parents that not all OBGYN practices do routine and/or frequent screening for depression and anxiety during pregnancy or postpartum. This is concerning since it is estimated that nearly 1 in 5 pregnant individuals could struggle with mental illness during this time. Anxiety and depression during pregnancy can also lead to poorer health outcomes for infants and can impact a child's behavior later in life.

Access to Care Workgroup Objectives:

In 2021, the First 1000 Days' Access to Care workgroup collected information on existing perinatal mental health support in the region and SMHCS provided continuing education to medical professionals on the evaluation and treatment of perinatal mental illness. Focus groups were conducted with 120 parents in Manatee, Sarasota, DeSoto, and Charlotte counties. Difficulty navigating services was a consistent theme, as well as a need for more mental health services.

The following objectives were developed for 2022-2023:

- Develop a perinatal mental health coordination hub in partnership with Healthy Start Coalitions of Sarasota and Manatee counties. This is a place where any individual struggling with perinatal mental health concerns can reach out, have a screening performed, and then get connected with community services through the Unite Us platform.
- Spread public awareness about perinatal mental health coordination hub service and reduce the stigma of mental illness

- Use tools such as Unite Us to determine whether there are any capacity concerns and barriers to care for mental health services
- Develop creative solutions to address capacity concerns and missing services by leveraging existing programs and resources
- Increase screening for mental health disorders during the perinatal period (prenatal and postpartum) in OB and Pediatric practices

Perinatal Mental Health Coordination Hub Responsibilities

First 1,000 Days

- Meeting facilitation
- Creative campaign content development
- Information dissemination
- Unite Us advocacy
- Data reporting & evaluation

Healthy Start Coalitions

- Protocol development
- Staff trainings
- Program operations
- Flyer distribution

Access to Care Workgroup

- Creative content feedback
- Barrier identification and solution development
- Identification of professional development opportunities

Taskforce Members:

Carla Johanns, Forty Carrots
 Meredith Piazza, Cysis
 Laura Carson, Sarasota County DOH
 Shon Ewens, Healthy Start Coalition of Sarasota
 Sara Oleson, Healthy Start Coalition of Sarasota
 Lauren Blenker, Healthy Start Coal. Manatee

Cecilia Rivera, Healthy Start Coalition of Manatee County
 Siena Kelley, First 1,000 Days
 Chelsea Arnold, First 1,000 Days
 Tina Wilson, First 1000 Days
 Janice Houchins, First 1000 Days
 Stephanie Harris, Unite Us
 Astride Kovacik, Unite Us
 Katie Williams, Unite Us

Perinatal Mental Health Coordination Hub Logistics

Referral Pathways:

1. **Assistance Request.** Unite Us Assistance Request forms will be embedded into the Healthy Start Manatee and Healthy Start Sarasota websites. Individuals can then fill out the form online. Once submitted, an alert is sent to Healthy Start Coalitions to respond to the request.
2. **Phone call.** There will be a specific phone number for the Perinatal Mental Health Coordination Hub Warm Line for each coalition. Individuals can call to request mental health coordination services and will then be entered into Unite Us for referral to mental health agencies.

Marketing & Promotions:

- **Physician practices.** Flyers, tear offs, and instruction guides will be provided to OB and Peds practices through Healthy Start liaisons in the spring
- **Social Media.** Continuous targeted paid ads, reels, and posts will be placed on Instagram and Facebook.
- **Press.** After soft launch in the winter, a press release will promote the hub to the community at large.
- **First 1000 Days.** The First 1000 Days team will share the program with community partners through newsletters, full partner meetings and community presentations.

Timeline

January 2023- Soft Launch

- Social media ads, reels, posts on Facebook and Instagram with link to HS Coalitions' Assistance Request form and warm line number

April 2023- Physician and Community Launch

- Presentations to the OB and Pediatric Department Meetings, HS physician liaisons to distribute material to practices.
- Press release

Calls To Action for Mental Health Agencies

- If your organization has perinatal mental health services (psych, therapy, peer support, groups, etc. for pregnant or post-partum individuals), please e-mail first1000days@smh.com so we can meet with you and discuss the following:
 - 1. Unite Us**
 - List Perinatal Services as a separate program under your organization's profile, as well as insurances accepted, estimated wait times, estimated cost for uninsured, etc.
 - Referral response commitment. Responding within 2 business days, sending forward to another agency versus rejecting, etc.
 - Trainings for your staff with Unite Us
 - 2. Assignment of a designated point person to:**
 - Attend meetings to discuss trends in the community, review data, and collaborate with others to build new programs to support community needs.
 - Be the point of contact for any Unite Us concerns/follow-ups
- Help us reduce the stigma of mental illness during the Perinatal period and share our content from social media on your page @First 1000 Days Suncoast