



## Guidance for referrals to the Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW) Ocean – Birth, Loss and Trauma Service

The BSW Ocean – Birth, Loss and Trauma Service (MMHS) is a small team of Psychological Therapists providing assessment and treatment to those experiencing moderate/severe and complex mental health difficulties related to pregnancy and childbirth.

### Who is eligible?

Women and birthing people who have a GP within BaNES, Swindon or Wiltshire, who have experienced the following issues and are struggling with high levels of emotional distress.

- **Perinatal loss (including early miscarriage, recurrent miscarriage, stillbirth, termination of pregnancy for any reason and neonatal death).**
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- **Traumatic birth**
- **Tokophobia (severe fear of childbirth) during or before pregnancy**

### Typical Symptoms

Many people who experience trauma and loss are able to manage the distress themselves and with the help and support from family and friends. If their symptoms persist for **more than a month** however they may benefit from therapy to help with the symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress. Typically, people are likely to experience intrusive memories and or dreams of the event. They may have negative and unhelpful thoughts and beliefs often about themselves, life and the future related to what happened (such as it was my fault, I did something wrong or things will never be OK again) and they may be avoiding any reminders of the event such as visiting hospitals, not seeing friends with babies, or avoiding TV programmes with related themes. They may be feeling anxious, depressed, guilty, angry and confused.

People with Tokophobia may well have had a previous traumatic birth experience or another trauma such as sexual abuse that makes them frightened about giving birth.

Please wait at least month after the trauma or loss before referring as many people will experience improvements to symptoms during this time.

### Other Services who may be more appropriate

We are part of wider perinatal mental health services offering a range of support.

**BSW specialist perinatal service:** Supporting people with severe and complex mental health problems during pregnancy up until children are 1 years old.

**IAPT (in Swindon LIFT):** For anyone with mild to moderate depression and anxiety disorders.

**Voluntary sector services:** such as SANDS, TOMMYS, Antenatal Results and Choice (ARC) and the Lullaby Trust can offer support through websites, helplines, and groups.

### Before you refer

Please feel free to call us to discuss a referral on 01249 477399 or e mail us at [awp.bsmmmhs-referrals@nhs.net](mailto:awp.bsmmmhs-referrals@nhs.net).