

[Your name & address]

[Their name], MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

[Date]

Dear [Their name], MP

Congratulations on your [election / re-election] as MP for [constituency]. As one of your constituents, I wanted to share a little information regarding maternal mental health care in the UK, a crucially important area of health affecting the lives of more than 1 in 5 new and expectant mothers and their families.

The case for action in this important area of health care couldn't be clearer:

- Suicide remains the leading cause of maternal death between 6 weeks and a year after giving birth.
- Black and minority ethnic women, young mothers and those facing domestic abuse or multiple disadvantages experience poorer care outcomes.
- 78% of health visitors noted increasing levels of perinatal mental illness, and 93% have seen increasing poverty for families.
- There is also a huge economic cost to society. [Research](#) shows that untreated maternal mental illness costs £8.1bn each year in the UK, or £190m a year for an average sized Integrated Care System.

**However, there is a real story of hope and potential here.** With the right support, women can and do recover. Therefore, it is crucial we do everything we can to ensure that ALL women and their families can access the right care at the right time.

In the last 10 years, thanks to national investment and commitment, there has been welcome progress in the availability of specialist perinatal mental health services for women with the most severe and complex issues. However, there is no routinely funded provision for women with more common maternal mental health problems (such as depression and anxiety).

These 'more common' conditions can have a devastating impact on the lives of women and their families.

- If postnatal depression is left untreated, mental ill health continues for a further 11 years on average.
- There can be an intergenerational effect, with mental health problems in mothers increasing the risk of long-term emotional and behavioural problems for children, which often persist into adulthood.

This is neither irreversible nor inevitable. I am asking for your support so that women, babies and families' mental health is prioritised.

[Add a line about your specific involvement / role in perinatal mental health, if you feel comfortable to do so and about the current situation in your local services]

The [Maternal Mental Health Alliance has identified a number of priority areas](#) where action could deliver positive change for the mental health of our society, now and for future generations.

1. Equipping maternity and health visiting services to provide high-quality, compassionate mental health care
2. Closing the gaps in specialist perinatal mental health service provision across the UK
3. Joining-up care for women and families across statutory services and the voluntary sector
4. Addressing health inequalities in perinatal mental health and maternity care
5. Improving data collection and transparency.

I believe action on these areas would help the mental health of new and expectant mothers, their babies and families both locally in [\[constituency\]](#) and across the country. I hope you will join me in supporting action on this issue. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss these issues further.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

[\[Your signature and name\]](#)