

# MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH

Separating the myths from the facts

Key insights into why women responding to the RCOG survey on maternal mental health didn't feel comfortable talking to healthcare professionals about their maternal mental health problems.



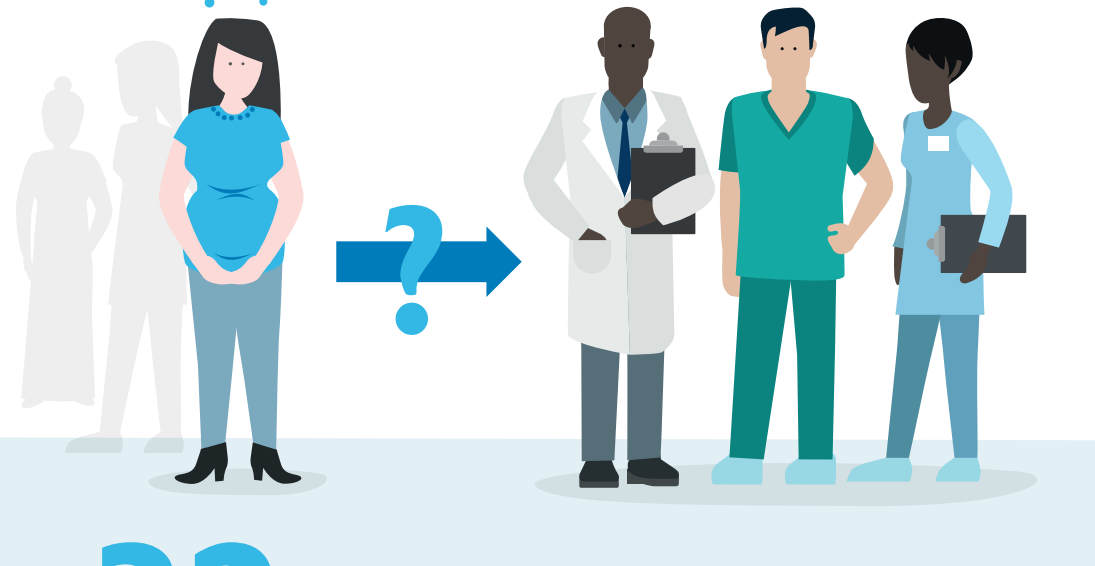
**40%**

of respondents were worried that their mental health problems would be **noted on their medical records**.

**i**

**Facts**

Making a note of any mental health problems in your medical records helps make sure that you get the support you need, so don't let this stop you from speaking to a healthcare professional. Having mental health problems is nothing to be ashamed of: it does not mean that you are weak or a bad person or bad parent.



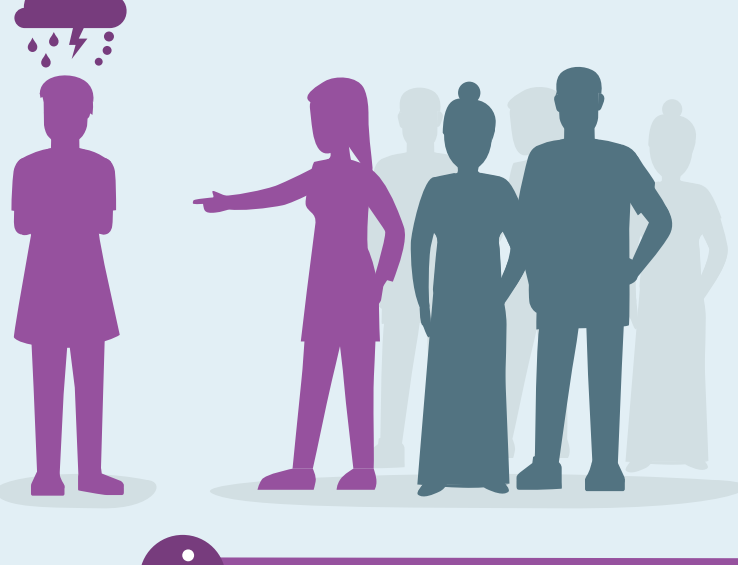
**32%**

**did not realise** that healthcare professionals could help.

**i**

**Facts**

All health professionals know that your mental health is just as important as your physical health. If you talk to any of the healthcare professionals you see about any concerns with your mental health, they can give you information, advice and suggestions about where to get more help.



**28%**

felt there was **stigma** attached to mental health problems.

**i**

**Facts**

It can be difficult to discuss mental health problems but the issue is being discussed more openly than ever before. By being more open about your problem, you are more likely to get the help and support you need.



A further

**28%**

felt **embarrassed** about their mental health problems.

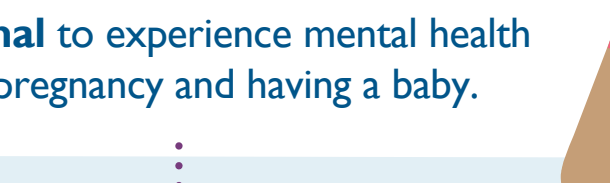
**i**

**Facts**

At first you may feel embarrassed about discussing your feelings but your healthcare team is used to supporting women experiencing mental health problems. They aren't embarrassed or judging you, because they know that mental health problems are very common and can affect any of us.

**27%**

thought it was **normal** to experience mental health problems as part of pregnancy and having a baby.



**i**

**Facts**

We all feel low or anxious sometimes, but if this is happening a lot, talking to a health professional can be the first step in helping you feel much better at this really important time in your life.



**23%**

were **unsure** what was wrong.

**i**

**Facts**

Knowing what is wrong when we feel mentally unwell can be difficult. All health professionals have experience, and many now have special training, in helping us to understand what might be getting in the way and where to get help and support.



**23%**

felt their clinicians were **unapproachable**.

**i**

**Facts**

All healthcare professionals want to help improve the physical and emotional wellbeing of patients. If you don't feel you can speak to a specific member of your healthcare team, there may be someone else that you feel more comfortable speaking to, or you can get in touch with an organisation that can help.

**19%**

were **not asked** if they were experiencing any mental health problems.

**i**

**Facts**

Healthcare professionals have got much better at asking women whether they are experiencing mental health problems, but if you are not asked, you should feel comfortable letting a member of the team looking after you know if you are concerned about your mental health.



**23%**

did not want to take up the **clinician's time**.

**i**

**Facts**

Your healthcare team want you to be in the best possible mental and physical health when you are pregnant and after you have given birth. You are not wasting their time by raising any concerns that are worrying you.

**13%**

were **worried** about the way they were feeling.

**i**

**Facts**

You don't need to suffer in silence. Raise any concerns with a member of the healthcare team looking after you during and beyond your pregnancy.



Seeking help promptly is important and could really help your recovery.

[www.everyonesbusiness.org.uk?page\\_id=438](http://www.everyonesbusiness.org.uk?page_id=438)



Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists