

Jersey Shore Get NJ's First PPD Treatment Center



THE WILDERMAN FUND
FOR MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH

Studies from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention say 1 in 7 new mothers suffer from maternal depression. WBGO's Ang Santos takes us to the Monmouth Medical Center on the Jersey Shore, where a team of experts are operating the state's first treatment facility for perinatal mood and anxiety disorders.

Over ten years ago, New Jersey became the first state to enact legislation requiring every new mother to be screened for postpartum depression and anxiety before leaving the hospital.



But only fifteen percent of women are reaching out for help after being discharged.

“The stigma, the shame, the failure you’re

already feeling while in the throes of this illness prevents you from admitting and asking for help,” said Lisa Tremayne, Program Director at The Center for Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders at Monmouth Medical Center.

Tremayne suffered from PPD in 1998 and says it took nearly eleven years to come to terms with it.

“For years it was seen, if at all, in the psychiatric hospitals because we would get so sick and go into psychosis instead of handling it when it was depression, anxiety, or panic attacks. It would be all in the psyche community,” Tremayne said. “When I presented it and said don’t you un-

derstand, we deliver 6,000 moms, we take care of their preeclampsia, high blood pressure while you’re pregnant, we take care of gestational diabetes, diabetes while you’re pregnant. So why on Earth wouldn’t we treat a moms’ maternal mental health? It’s the same illness, in the same department, just a different part of the body. That was when we got pushed through.”

Since 2011, the expanding PPD program at Monmouth Medical has screened over 800 women and treated more than 500 patients.

“We initially talk or text over the phone and find out what’s going on and what you’re feeling.

Then we bring you in and do a true intake, in depth about what your pregnancy was like, what your delivery was like, where you are now, and what are your feelings about yourself and the baby to make sure that there’s no issues with suicidal ideations or self-harm. So then we know we can treat you here and not have to refer you to the emergency room. That really does happen more than we think,” Tremayne said. “Peer support, a mother who has been there sharing her story and experience with a mother who is just starting her journey is just as important as any treatment.

The Center for Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders at Monmouth Medical Center has officially cut the ribbon. Tremayne believes they can set the tone for national standards.