

## Book Review

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*Modern Management of Perinatal Psychiatric Disorders*. Edited by Carol Henshaw, John Cox and Joanne Barton. 2nd edn. (330 pp; ISBN 9781909726772). RCPsych Publications, London, UK, 2017

For any psychiatrist who treats women with mental health problems during pregnancy or problems associated with the *postpartum* period, the first edition of this book, published in 2009, was an invaluable resource. It was the key textbook recommended by me to all trainees. This second edition has been updated to reflect advances in practice, and more recent evidence, and is again to be highly recommended to trainees and to consultants who wish to advance their knowledge of this field.

It gives a comprehensive overview of all the common psychiatric disorders associated with pregnancy, and also how patients with pre-existing psychiatric disorders must be assessed and managed in pregnancy and the *postpartum* period. It gives up to date information on prescribing in pregnancy and in breastfeeding mothers. It also gives a good overview of psychological therapies. It addresses not just the common disorders such as postnatal depression and puerperal psychosis, but it also has excellent overviews of other disorders including anxiety, OCD, post-traumatic stress disorder post-birth, and eating disorders in pregnancy. The UK and Ireland Confidential Enquiry into Maternal Deaths, in its most recent reports, has emphasized the importance of substance abuse problems in pregnancy and this is also very well covered.

The importance of an awareness of the effects of perinatal mental health problems on the foetus in pregnancy and on the newborn baby and on the family is emphasized, and this wider context is always important when one is considering treating mothers in this situation. There is also an excellent chapter on Service Provision. It stresses the need for Mother and Baby Inpatient Units. The National Strategy for Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Services in Ireland has just been published and the lack of any such units in Ireland will hopefully finally be addressed.

Therefore, this is an excellent textbook for Psychiatrists who are treating psychiatric disorders in the perinatal period, and for any other members of multidisciplinary teams working with such patients. It is also very useful for those planning services and has excellent references. But what it does not describe so well are any case histories that might illustrate the complexities of treating women at this crucial and challenging time in their lives. Nor does it give a rich 'feel' for the subject. The second book I always additionally recommend for all trainees is '*Psychological Processes of Childbearing*' by Joan Raphael-Leff, as its emphasis on the deeper psychological and social challenges faced by women in pregnancy helps situate these psychiatric disorders in the wider context and will help those working in Perinatal Psychiatry have a broader and more holistic approach.

So, essential first reading, then deepen your knowledge : that would be my recommendation.

### Conflicts of Interest

None.

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