Postpartum Support International

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David Kupfer, MD
Chair, DSM5 Task Force
American Psychiatric Association
1000 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 1825
Arlington, Va. 22209-3901

Dear Dr. Kupfer,

Thank you for inviting Postpartum Support International to send a representative to the briefing meeting for DSM 5 at the American Psychiatric Association meeting in May.

We continue to support the recommended addition of a specifier, as it is stated on the DSM 5 website, "With Postpartum Onset," that can be applied to a current or most recent Major Depressive Episode, Manic, or Mixed Features in Major Depressive Disorder, Bipolar I Disorder, or Bipolar II Disorder, or to Brief Psychotic Disorder, and that the onset of the episode be extended to ***within 6 months postpartum***.

We would also recommend, very highly, the addition of ***the 6 month onset specifier*** to ***the Mixed Depression and Anxiety Disorder*** *and* ***Obsessive Compulsive Disorder*** as well, for the following reasons:

In general many postpartum women present with a mixed depression and anxiety picture so the Mixed Depression and Anxiety Disorder seems to be a recognizable diagnosis for primary care doctors and obstetricians who will see many of these women in their practices. In addition, it is important for doctors and other mental health professionals to be trained to diagnose postpartum depression, anxiety, OCD and psychosis to insure the proper treatment and education of their patients and their families. Many families do not understand the nuances of these conditions in the Perinatal time period and depend on solid information and diagnosis to help them know how to support their loved ones. In addition, many women who develop OCD in the postpartum period often have intrusive thoughts about hurting themselves and/or their infants. General practitioners and obstetricians will utilize the DSM 5 to help them recognize this OCD in the context of postpartum depression and anxiety.

As you know Postpartum Support International is a worldwide organization made up of over 600 professional and non-professional members, both individual and institutional. Our membership vocalized their concerns about the DSM 5 and the importance of recognizing the 6 month onset of this condition in affective disorders at the International Marce/PSI conference in Pittsburgh. We are grateful that our voices were heard in this matter. We hope you will consider our additional recommendations in this letter.

Sincerely,

Lucy Puryear, MD
President, Postpartum Support International