

## **North Carolina Maternal Mental Health MATTERS**

North Carolina was recently awarded a 5-year grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) to augment and strengthen systems for pregnant and postpartum women associated with maternal depression and related behavioral health disorders – NC Maternal Mental Health MATTERS (Making Access to Treatment, Evaluation, Resources, and Screening Better) Program. This partnership opportunity includes NC DHHS Division of Public Health, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC), Duke University, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Use Services and the Office of Rural Health. The goal of the NC Maternal Mental Health MATTERS Program (MATTERS) is to enhance systems for screening, assessment and treatment of depression, substance use and other behavioral health disorders in pregnant and postpartum women.

The program will provide: 1) outreach and education via in-person trainings and webinars for providers that care for pregnant and women up to 12 months postpartum; 2) an online screening toolkit for provider use in screening for specific behavioral health disorders; 3) a consultation line for providers to receive one-on-one, case specific discussions with a perinatal mental health specialists; and 4) a perinatal telepsychiatry clinic to serve women who need additional assessment and do not have access to adequate local resources. The MATTERS Program will also provide specialized care coordination to work with local providers' practices and patients to assist in accessing appropriate care and community resources.

The MATTERS Program's objective is to strengthen the local provider's understanding and ability to provide care to pregnant and postpartum women regarding depression, substance use and other behavioral health disorders by providing education, training and support in the integration of maternal mental health assessment and treatment, while also assisting with care for patients who need additional support from perinatal psychiatry experts. MATTERS was developed as a "whole-person" approach to integrated behavioral health and improving behavioral health resources to meet the needs of mothers during a critical time.