

MA Special Legislative Commission on Postpartum Depression

Chairs: Representative Ellen Story and Senator Joan B. Lovely

Background

In 2010, Governor Deval Patrick signed into law “An Act Relative to Postpartum Depression” (Chapter 313 of the Acts of 2010)¹, which established a special legislative commission with different stakeholders in order to study and report on research and policy initiatives on postpartum depression and make recommendations to address postpartum depression.

Commissioners were appointed according to the law and in December of 2011 the first Commission meeting was held. Since then, the Commission has met a total of 13 times and has worked with the Department of Public Health to establish reporting requirements on postpartum depression screening.

Activities

The Commission has posted annual reports on their continued activities. Successes have included:

- Collaborating with Department of Public Health to promulgate postpartum depression screening reporting requirements
- Laying the ground work for MCPAP for Moms, an expansion of the MCPAP program, with a focus on maternal mental health
- Funding PPD Community Health Center pilot programs across the State to help establish lessons learned for screening and referral systems in women’s health and pediatric settings
- Advocating for postpartum depression screening coverage in pediatric settings
- Postpartum Depression Awareness Day at the State House

Commissioners

Rep. Ellen Story, Sen. Joan B. Lovely, Kristin Alexander, Dr. Lee Cohen, Karen Crowley, Karin Downs, Rep. Kimberly N. Ferguson, Sen. Jennifer Flanagan, Elizabeth Fluet, Liz Friedman, Mary Elizabeth Gamache, Dr. Janice Goodman, Dr. Gordon Harper, Dr. Julie Johnston, Peggy Kaufman, Kerry LaBounty, Dr. Monica Le, Dr. Claire Levesque, Sen. Thomas McGee, Dr. Tiffany A. Moore Simas, Rep. James O’Day, Rep. Denise Provost, Sen. Richard Ross, Rep. Tom Sannicandro, Dr. Alison Schonwald, Nancy Schwartz, Dr. Jayne Singer, Dr. Joshua Sparrow, Eileen Terlaga, Lisa Waxman, Commissioner Thomas Weber, Dr. Michael Yogman

Contact

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¹ <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2010/Chapter313>

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Purpose

In 2010, Governor Deval Patrick signed into law “An Act Relative to Postpartum Depression” (Chapter 313 of the Acts of 2010)¹, which established a special legislative commission ...for the purpose of making an investigation and study relative to postpartum depression, including, but not limited to:

- (i) an assessment of current research on the subject and whether there exist evidence-based, best or promising practices on the prevention, detection or treatment of postpartum depression;
- (ii) a review of current policies and practices with respect to screenings for postpartum depression, including the frequency and location of screenings and training personnel administering the screenings, the availability of reimbursement and issues relative to medical necessity and third-party coverage;
- (iii) provision of assistance to the department of public health, other state agencies and organizations in the development of professional and public educational materials and programs on postpartum depression, in the development of referral lists for postpartum depression treatment, building on existing resources and in the designation of authorized validated screening tools;
- (iv) provision of assistance to the department of public health, other state agencies and organizations relative to applications for federal funding to support efforts consistent with the mission and purpose of the commission; and
- (v) any other matters that the commission considers relevant to the fulfillment of its mission and purpose.

¹ <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2010/Chapter313>