

OFFICIAL MEMO

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To: All who work with and serve perinatal patients

From: Ingram Screening, LLC

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Subject: The term 'postpartum'

The word 'postpartum' is being used incorrectly. Let's break this down...

Postpartum is by definition: following childbirth or the birth of young (dictionary)

Postpartum is **NOT**: an umbrella term for mental health issues after giving birth.

Stop saying, "she had postpartum."

Stop saying, "I had postpartum."

Stop saying, "they are suffering with postpartum."

Stop saying, "do you know anyone with postpartum?"

Translated:

"She had postpartum" = "She had following childbirth."

"I had postpartum" = "I had following childbirth"

"They are suffering with postpartum" = "They are suffering with following childbirth"

"Do you know anyone with postpartum?" = "Do you know anyone with following childbirth?"

Somehow, we have twisted the word postpartum to mean something completely different than its very definition and we have lost sight of simple adjectives and nouns. The word postpartum is an adjective, it names an attribute, in this case meaning after childbirth. Words like depression and anxiety are nouns, they name a person, place or thing.

It makes more sense when you put the two together:

Postpartum Depression (PPD): She has(d) depression following childbirth

Postpartum Anxiety (PPA): They have/had anxiety following childbirth

Any person who has given birth is considered **postpartum** for the rest of their life, it just means 'following childbirth' and is not a mental health condition in and of itself.

Let's start being more intentional with our descriptors!

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