

# IMPACT Report

2021/22



# Introduction

**One in five mums may experience mental health issues in the first year after childbirth. If untreated these difficulties can have a life-changing impact on mums and their families.**

Demand for maternal mental health services has increased exponentially over the past few years and following the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to remain high. In a report from the Maternal Mental Health Alliance (MMHA), 'Maternal Mental Health During a Pandemic', 61% of the 5,000 respondents expressed concerns about their mental health and just one third were confident that they could find help if they needed it (Best Beginnings, Home-Start UK, and the Parent-Infant Foundation, 2020).

The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) stresses the importance of early detection and management of perinatal mental health issues, but access to resources is currently inadequate. Investment is being made, however substantial gaps remain and there are regional variations in provision. MMHA and the Royal College of Psychiatrists found that 26% of NHS areas had no professional maternal mental health services at all. For this reason, local services like ours are of vital importance.

**£8.1bn**

the economic cost of maternal mental health conditions in the UK

**As pioneers in the development and delivery of maternal mental health services, MumsAid has provided over 5,000 pregnant and new mums with highly specialised free and low-cost perinatal support.**

Since MumsAid was established in 2012, we have grown from a small start up to an award-winning charity that has achieved national recognition. Dedicated to removing barriers that prevent women seeking help, we challenge the stigma that surrounds maternal mental health and advocate for mums across all ages, socio-economic backgrounds and cultures.

When MumsAid began, we were offering a generic perinatal mental health counselling service, delivered in two children's centres in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. MumsAid has now grown into a team of employees, volunteers, trustees and ambassadors working across Greenwich and beyond. In addition to 1:1 counselling, we have introduced an innovative service for very young mothers that includes advocacy and practical assistance, as well as a broad range of provisions, including out-of-hours services, couples counselling and group therapy.

The past few years have seen us achieve a number of standout successes. In 2018 we won both the Maternal Mental Health Alliance (MMHA) Award for Inclusivity and Diversity and The Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) Award for Mental Health and Wellbeing. In 2020, the Mayor of Greenwich awarded us the Civic Award in recognition of our contribution to local community needs, and in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic we were chosen from over 350 charities across the UK as the winners of the 2021 GSK IMPACT Award in partnership with The King's Fund.

These awards, alongside government grants and dedicated fundraising efforts by our team, have enabled us to maintain and grow our services to support more women across South-East London, but we don't want to stop there.

**In 2022, as we at MumsAid enter our next decade, we remain steadfast in our belief that providing the right perinatal help at the right time for mums is essential to millions of families across the UK.**

In celebration of our 10-year anniversary, we are proud to be launching our STARK model to the UK-wide health and social care community. To date, we have trained more than 50 specialist counsellors using this model, many of whom have gone on to work in the NHS and private practice, creating a ripple effect of delivering best practice care.

We aim to shape and improve the UK-wide maternal mental health provision by training hundreds of health and social care workers to better identify the signs and make significant improvements in mums' mental health.

This investable plan is the next step in MumsAid's continued mission to ensure more mums get the right care, at the right time, so that more families can flourish and thrive.

**We would really appreciate your support as we embark on our ambitious plans for the next 10 years.**

## STARK Model

Published this year, MumsAid's evidenced-based therapeutic model, STARK, is a relational and trauma-informed model of counselling, devised by MumsAid's CEO and founder, Dr Miriam Donaghy, based on her knowledge and experience of developing perinatal support over more than 20 years. The acronym refers to the **Structure, Themes, Approach, Resources and Knowledge** that underpin this effective model, whilst also acknowledging some of the 'stark realities' of the transition to motherhood, contrasting with the positive lens through which it is usually viewed.

The STARK model aims to alleviate mental health difficulties, improve emotional wellbeing, mother-infant bonding and confidence in parenting ability, reduce social isolation and strengthen support networks. This in turn helps to reduce any potential negative impact on babies' development.

The model allows for adaptation for specialist, targeted services to extend the length of support, offering practical help as well as up to 6 months of counselling. The flexible approach can be adapted to meet the individual needs of mums and babies.

# Who We Are

**MumsAid is a multi-award-winning charity that strives to provide life-changing support to pregnant women, mums and their families through free and low-cost specialist perinatal counselling, therapeutic group work and advocacy support.**

## **1:1 Counselling**

Pregnant women and mums with children up to the age of 2 years are offered 12 free sessions of perinatal counselling, based on the proven STARK model. Counsellors are clinically trained and supervised, and childcare provision is available for those who need it. We then offer two follow up sessions at 3 and 6 months post counselling and assist women in accessing other perinatal services if needed.

MumsAid also offers a specialist trauma therapy service, including 6-12 weeks of Eye Movement Desensitisation Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy for women who have experienced a traumatic birth.

## **Private Counselling**

We also offer a private service for women who fall outside of our current regional provision or who are looking for out-of-hours support. Women are connected with a MumsAid accredited counsellor who provides therapy for a fee, with 50% of the fee donated to us to support our services.

## **Group Work**

Our group work offers perinatal women an opportunity to bond with other mums whilst receiving professional guidance to better their maternal experience. Through a range of creative activities, from art and yoga classes to singing and journaling groups, our group provision helps to enhance mums' wellbeing and makes a significant impact to combating isolation.

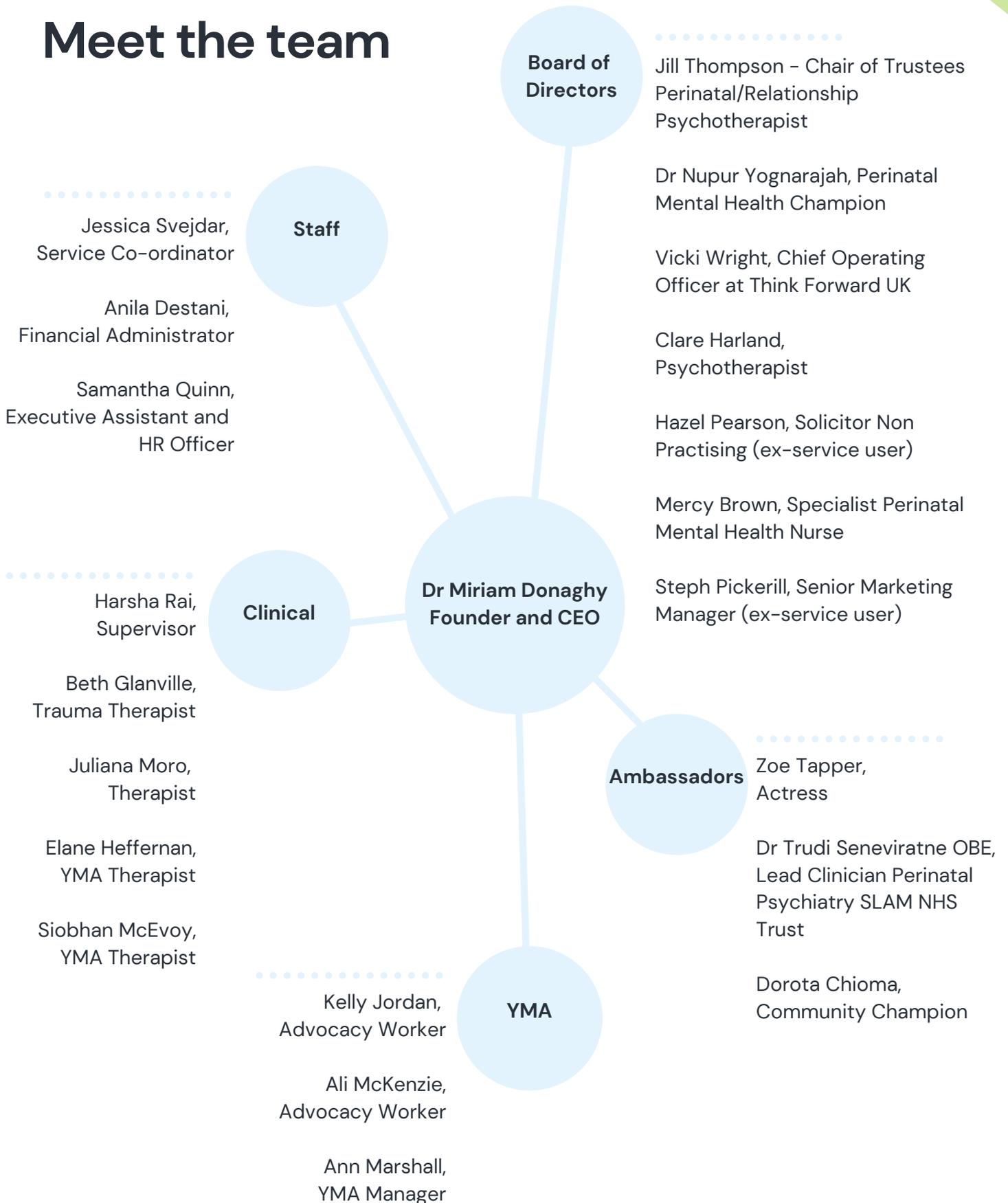
## **YoungMumsAid (YMA)**

YMA is an accessible, trauma-informed and specialist service tailored to the needs of teenage and young mums aged 14-21 years. The programme offers more intensive support for young mothers involving advocacy work, home visits, regular contact from YMA staff and up to 24 sessions of individual therapy. Much of our work with young mums involves teenage women who suffered neglect or abuse as a child, domestic violence as an adult, and/or have a baby who is subject to a child protection plan.

## **MumsAid PMH Clinical & Awareness Training Programme**

MumsAid provides specialist clinical training and continued professional development for counsellors, GPs and nurses, as well as awareness training seminars and workshops for frontline health and social care workers. The programme aims to improve the effective identification and treatment of perinatal mental health issues by creating a better understanding of symptoms and how to recognise the signs.

# Meet the team

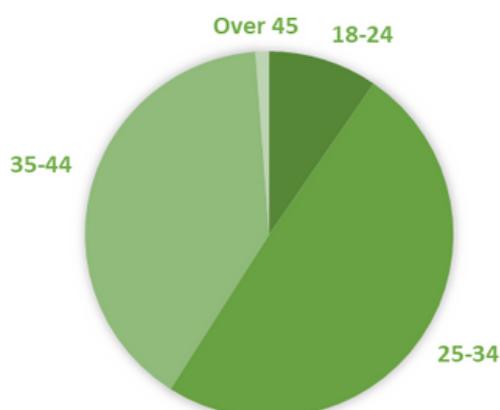
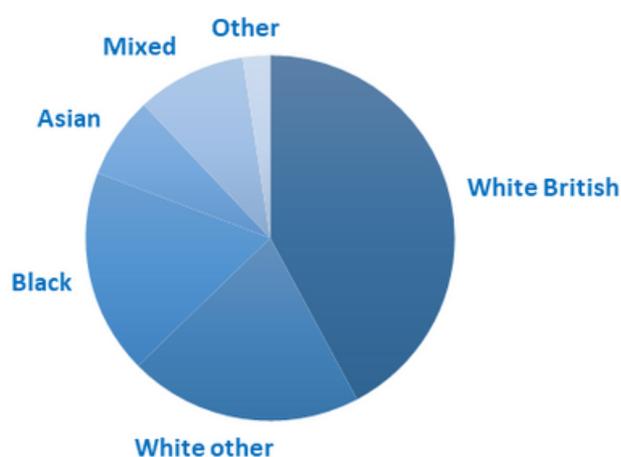


# Who We Serve

## MumsAid is founded on inclusivity.

Mental health difficulties can affect any woman in pregnancy, birth and the early infant years. We have a deep-rooted commitment to support mums from all socio-economic backgrounds and cultures, and work with some of the most marginalised communities in South-East London.

## Client Demographic



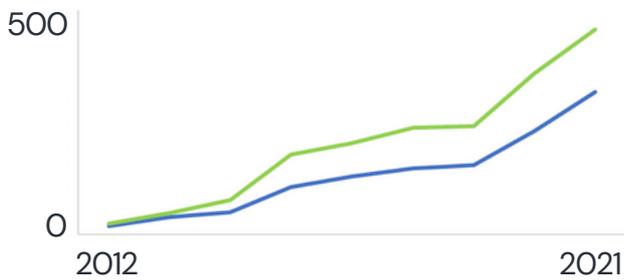
"MumsAid has had a massive impact on my life. Having MumsAid definitely benefited and still benefits me in many ways. It has helped me to get out more, socialise with more people and come out of my bubble in regards to not always staying in my own company. I've had loads of support with baby stuff and even stuff for myself to help with motherhood. The play groups are very useful and fun for children and are a nice way to bond with my baby and other babies.

My advocacy worker always goes above and beyond for me, I honestly feel as if I've finally met somebody in my life I feel safe with and that I can trust. She always goes that extra mile and will find a solution to whatever problem I may be experiencing and helps me solve whatever it is. She is like a mother figure to me. If I can change one thing about MumsAid it would be that I can stay with the service forever as I finally feel comfortable going to a place where I feel has my best interest at heart. MumsAid is amazing."

-YoungMumsAid service user

## YoungMumsAid Profiles

- 35% have a baby in Child Protection (CP)
- 85% have a past history of CP/child mental health services
- 65% have had care in the past
- 80% have history with domestic violence
- 69% have a history of childhood abuse
- 95% have a mental health history
- 28% have suffered bereavement



The number of **women** and **children** we support has grown significantly year on year

In 2021 we provided approximately 50 sessions per week across our range of services, totalling over 2,350 sessions throughout the year.

Mums receiving counselling completed pre- and post-service questionnaires, which used recognised clinical measures to evaluate mental health improvement, stress levels, and relationship quality with partners. We used self-report scales to determine confidence in parenting and the bond between mother and baby.

**82%**

showed improvement on social connection scores

**85%**

showed improvement against the bonding scale

**100%**

showed improvement on the Edinburgh Depression Scale

**100%**

of clients would recommend our service

### Case Study

New mum Rachel came to MumsAid with anxiety around parenting and feelings of anger and self-loathing. She had several physical symptoms, including muscle fatigue and recurrent headaches, as well as difficulty sleeping which was causing low mood and lack of motivation.

As for many new mothers, Rachel had a lot of anxiety around Covid-19. She was impacted by thoughts of the risk of harm to her baby and other family members, and fears around germ contamination.

Through counselling, Rachel realised she spent a lot of time worrying. Her worry extended to excessive research and procrastination in decision making. She was often late for appointments and was very self-critical when things went wrong, leaving her with negative thoughts about herself as a mum.

Rachel learned to apply Cognitive Behavioural Therapy techniques to address and manage her worries. She appreciated having space to discuss her worries and the impact they were having on her experience of motherhood, which she found hard to tell her family.

Over time Rachel was able to get back to things she used to enjoy. Her physical symptoms improved and by recognising her strengths as a parent, her confidence as a mum also grew. Counselling made Rachel a strong advocate for herself and her baby and she noticed an improvement in her communication with her partner and family.

# A Year at MumsAid



Dr Miriam Donaghy named as an Inspiring Woman of Greenwich in celebration of International Women's Day

Announced as winners of the 2021 GSK Impact Award



Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week: Dorota Chioma and Tanaz Assefi put on an online art exhibition, Zoe Tapper recited poetry on our social pages and therapist Ali Graves hosted an online talk on motherhood



Partnership to offer antenatal classes for young mums



YoungMumsAid mums and their babies treated to a farm trip

## January



Launch of Maternal Wellbeing Groups providing online peer support for pregnant and new mums during the pandemic



Discussion on women's wellbeing in a Facebook Live with Black Female Entrepreneur Greenwich



£1,800 raised through influencer partnership for Maternal Mental Health Month



Fundraising partnership with ticket sales from a film evening donated to MumsAid



Appointment of our first dedicated advocacy worker for YoungMumsAid, Kelly Jordan



Secured a grant for a one-year pilot to have an EMDR specialist deliver trauma therapy



Support for the campaign calling on the Chancellor to put babies, children and young people at the heart of the spending review



Fundraiser to take YoungMumsAid mums and their babies on a trip to the swimming pool



Expansion of our advocacy team with the appointment of Ali McKenzie



Awareness drive for Black Maternal Mental Health Week



Young Mums Together partnership offering weekly sessions to help young mothers build their confidence and reduce the risks to their mental health

## December



Re-launch of in-person art sessions led by Tanaz Assefi for mums and babies



## MailOnline

Dr Miriam Donaghy quoted in article about maternal mental health during the pandemic



YoungMumsAid mums and babies visit Santa's grotto thanks to the generosity of The Bridge



Co-Op Local Community Fund donation of £2,900



Funding secured for Out-of-Hours Text Service for young mums in Greenwich

# How We're Funded

**As with many small charities, one of our key challenges is long-term financial sustainability.**

Our income has increased significantly in recent years thanks to our success winning a number of awards and grants, but work needs to be done to safeguard our future.

We currently maintain our minimum target free reserves level of three months' operating costs, but we lack the resources needed to address emerging needs or innovate within our work.

We have worked hard to transition to a more sustainable funding model with a mix of income streams and developed programmes with partners to broaden the specialist perinatal mental health offer locally. However, much of our funding is restricted.

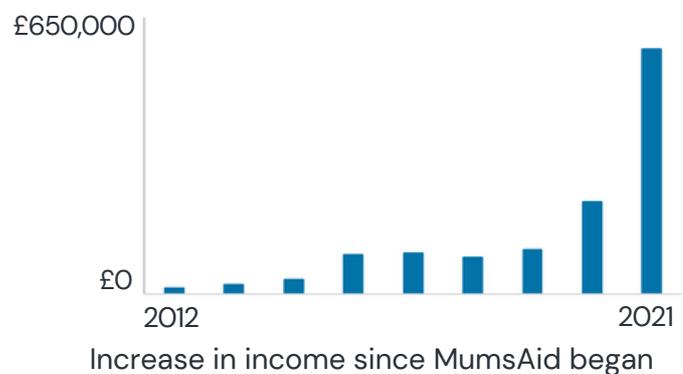
For 2020/21, our total income was £619,022\*. Our expenditure was £287,874, of which £253,142 was restricted.

*\*This included £300,000 from CGCC which is earmarked to be spent over the next 3 years.*

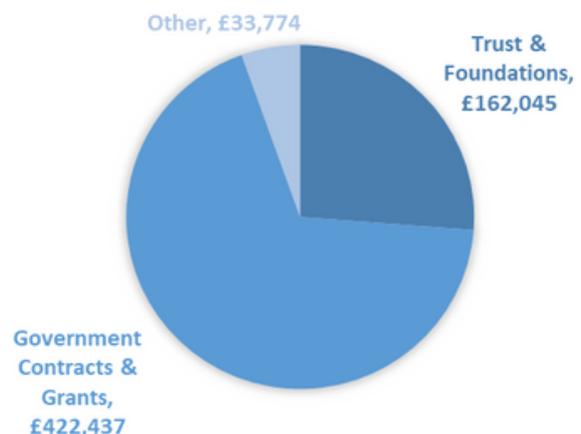
We would like to do more to increase unrestricted income to enable flexibility in our delivery approach.

Over the coming years, we will continue to focus on increasing income from low-cost and private fee-paying counselling services for those who can afford it, and finalise the codification of our STARK service delivery model to support the development of an enhanced training offer.

We are continuing to develop new income streams and are looking to diversify our funding mix through new and existing partners to enable us to reach more mums than ever before.



- Other:
- Charity partnerships
  - Community fundraising
  - Corporate & one-off donations
  - Private & low cost counselling
  - Consultancy services
  - Training services



Sources of income

## 2021 Key Funders (restricted funds)



£300,000 for Greenwich-based counselling work over 3 years



£97,119 for core counselling services in Greenwich



£47,829 for our YoungMumsAid service



£42,422 for our YoungMumsAid service



£25,629 for business and infrastructure development



£9,630 to support the transition to safe online and phone counselling



£4,713 for provision of essential items to mums during the pandemic



£4,410 to help with costs that impact the sustainability of the charity

We also have a number of smaller grants underpinning our work, helping extend the reach of our services to new areas as well as supporting the delivery of peer support and therapeutic groups. These have been provided by:



## Charity Partnerships



1% of local Co-Op members' spend on selected own-brand products and services goes to help fund our service thanks to the Co-Op Local Community Fund. Money raised for shopping bags is also donated.



Amazon donates 0.5% of the net purchase price of eligible items on behalf of shoppers who choose MumsAid as their nominated charity.

# £67

the cost of one MumsAid counselling session for one mum

# Decade of Delivery

## How We Began

MumsAid was founded by Dr Miriam Donaghy, an experienced psychotherapist specialising in supporting new mothers in response to what she saw was a dearth of services to help perinatal women. Dr Donaghy set up the organisation as a CIC with a start-up grant of £3,400 from UnLtd. Having run a successful pilot delivering counselling with volunteers in two children's centres, in 2013 the Royal Borough of Greenwich offered MumsAid £20,000 to extend our services. The continued support of the local authority has enabled us to expand our service in children's centres and other community venues across the borough, and to offer out-of-hours support.

Reliance solely on volunteers continued until 2014, when we received a small grant to work with Greenwich Home-Start to offer peer support through home visits. This £8,000 from the City Bridge Trust saw us employ our first part-time administrator. At the end of 2014, following a rigorous application process, we received £33,000 p.a. for two years from BBC Children in Need, enabling us to employ our first psychotherapy staff and set up the innovative YoungMumsAid service.

Following a difficult two years as austerity hit the charity sector, 2019 began with a new sense of security. Commissioned by the local authority with a four year contract, we grew

our staff team and developed the Trustee Board. Additional funding in the form of an assets based transfer from CGCC, a local charity that was winding up, has allowed us to increase our Greenwich-based counselling work and begin to strengthen the core staff team while the Young Londoners Fund facilitated the expansion of YoungMumsAid and began a new era of growth. Lloyds Bank Foundation has supported us significantly through this growth by providing funds to aid development of our business and infrastructure.

Last year the 2021 GSK IMPACT Award provided us with £40,000 in unrestricted funding as well as expert support and leadership development from health and care charity, The King's Fund. In addition we secured funds from the Rosa Thrive grant for a one-year pilot to have an EMDR specialist delivering trauma therapy. At the start of 2022, Rosa also backed the Big Give, a match-funding initiative which provided us with £5,000 to support YoungMumsAid.

Applying for grants, and seeking to secure partnerships and source funding from a variety of avenues to maintain and grow our service is essential to sustain the organisation and we are seeking to employ a fundraiser to assist with this in the coming year.

## Awards & Recognition

2014 Full validation by the Centre for Excellence and Outcomes (C4EO)

2016 Featured by Public Health England as best practice for perinatal counselling

2018 Maternal Mental Health Alliance (MMHA) Award for Inclusivity and Diversity

2018 The Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) Award for Mental Health and Wellbeing

2020 Civic Award from the Mayor of Greenwich

2021 GSK Impact Award

## Services

From day one, we have provided an inclusive and accessible 1:1 counselling intervention for mums who are struggling to cope during the perinatal period.

Having identified teenage mothers as a key demographic in need of targeted support, we set up YoungMumsAid in 2014 as a service dedicated to mums under 21 years, delivered by trained psychotherapists. Recognising the complexity of issues faced by many young mums, we have since extended the service to include advocacy workers, an additional therapist, a weekly support group and an out-of-hours text support service.

In 2014 we also started offering specialist training in how to identify the signs of, and provide support for, maternal mental health issues. This began through our partnership with Greenwich Home-Start and has since expanded into our MumsAid PMH Clinical & Awareness Training Programme.

Over the years new opportunities have arisen. Since 2019, we have hosted a range of peer support and creativity groups. Team expansions have also allowed us to provide more practical support to complement our therapeutic offer, such as delivering provisions for babies and providing data bundles so mums could stay connected.

The impact of Covid-19 evidenced heightened demand for trauma support, so during the past year we have also started providing specialised support for women who experienced a traumatic birth.

## Advocacy

We prioritise staying on top of clinical and policy developments relating to maternal mental health and do so through our involvement in national forums and associations, as well as through meaningful partnerships. We form these partnerships to work together to provide and campaign for the provision of high quality, inclusive and accessible maternal mental health services.

We are part of the Maternal Mental Health Alliance and an organisational member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). We have also developed partnerships with other organisations, including Best Beginnings, Barnardos, The Motherhood Group (a CIC working with black mothers), Coram and the Mental Health Foundation.

In 2020 we began to think more widely about our research role and tendered for a commission by NHS England to report on the barriers that prevent women experiencing PMH difficulties from seeking help.

As a commitment to our future advocacy and outreach work, we are in the process of expanding our in-house advocacy team, who will have a specific focus on the needs of young mothers. For example, we hope to recruit a link worker whose role will include supporting mums to access other services, including health services, children's centres and nurseries, and educational and employment opportunities.



**"MumsAid has been such a huge help to me. I cannot find the words to express my gratitude for this service. My counsellor supported me in exactly the way I needed and I feel very positive about myself moving forward having had her support."**

**"I feel so lucky to have been offered such a wonderful service and an incredible counsellor. I feel much better equipped to manage things in the future as a result."**



**"I can't recommend MumsAid highly enough - it was a lifeline when I really needed it and I'm so thankful and impressed by the work you do."**





**"Thank you for offering this service as it can make a big difference in a woman's life with a newborn. It is a very supportive and helpful service that can improve a family as a whole."**



**"My counsellor has been amazing and I am extremely grateful to her professionalism, compassion and empathy throughout my journey."**



**"I found this very helpful and would be in a very different place if it wasn't for MumsAid."**



# The Next 10

As we mark our ten-year anniversary we know thousands of women are not receiving the support they need in early motherhood and so we want to be more ambitious than ever in order to address this need.

To date, MumsAid's services have primarily focussed on providing support for mothers and families in Greenwich and surrounding areas. Our vision is to extend MumsAid's influence and reach across the UK to ensure pregnant women, mums and their families, from all cultures and socio-economic backgrounds, have access to the right specialist care, at the right time.

## Our Priority Pillars



- Expand young mums' support service
- Increase trauma specialist support
- Launch provision for parents of children with complex needs
- Expand private counselling services



- Develop a training program for counsellors based on the STARK model
- Expand delivery of our PMH clinical & awareness training
- Deliver specialist trauma-informed therapy for young mums



- Integrate advocacy into other specialist service provision
- Support mums to access and link into other services

## Supporting Us

We're looking to form meaningful partnerships with local and national organisations to achieve our goals for the next 10 years and beyond.

To discuss how you can support us, get in touch.

184-186 Westcombe Hill  
Blackheath  
London  
SE3 7DH  
07758 763908  
mums-aid.org  
info@mums-aid.org