

MEDIA CLIPPING

North Shore Times

Anxiety, depression signs watch for expectant mums

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EXPECTANT mothers are to be screened for signs of perinatal anxiety and depression in a new scheme to be rolled out at North Shore Private and the Mater Hospitals.

Organised by the Gidget Foundation, midwives are being trained by expert perinatal psychiatrist, Prof Bryanne Barnett, to recognise signs of depression in expectant mothers.

“Most of the time, expectant mothers are not given the chance to discuss how they are feeling,” manager of education and awareness at the Gidget Foundation, Cathie Knox, said.

“They may have a history of depression or anxiety that they never get a chance to bring up, or they may have no idea themselves that they are at risk of perinatal depression.”

A standardised questionnaire has been formulated by Prof Barnett and tested in other parts of Sydney.

If successful in North Shore Private and the Mater, it will be introduced in other hospitals including Sydney Adventist and St George’s Private Hospital.

“One in five women develop perinatal depression and there are so many other new mothers out there who have real ups and downs during that period,” Ms Knox said.

“This new program should help to put it on the radar early on in the pregnancy.”