Launch of the Perinatal Mental Health Mother and Baby Unit (MBU) and Outreach Service

Women living in Cumbria and Lancashire who are experiencing perinatal mental health problems can now access care, support and treatment through a new Mother and Baby Unit and Outreach service which has opened in Central Lancashire.

Ribblemere is an eight-bed Mother and Baby Unit (MBU) for mothers who are experiencing severe mental illness during the latter stages of pregnancy or in the year after giving birth and who cannot be treated safely in their own home. The new MBU is based at Chorley Hospital and will provide a safe place for women to be supported and treated alongside their babies, allowing for their relationship to be maintained and nurtured alongside their recovery.

The Trust is also developing a community service for new and expectant mums with moderate to severe perinatal mental illness who live in Lancashire and South Cumbria. The service will provide women in the area with timely access to specialist advice, treatment and support in the community to help them to recover whilst supporting their relationship with their infant. The service will provide pre-conception advice for women with a current or past severe mental illness who are planning a pregnancy.

The team will be made up of a variety of different health professionals including psychiatrists, specialist nurses, psychologists, psychotherapists, occupational therapists, social workers and dedicated administrators who will work together to provide a comprehensive service to mums and their infants, depending on their individual needs. The team will work closely with the Trust's Perinatal Mother and Baby Unit (MBU) and existing services across maternity, mental health and health visiting.

The Trust is one of 35 new sites to have been awarded funding, as part of a drive by NHS England to enable access to specialist perinatal mental health community services across the country by April 2019.

This community service is due to launch in January 2019.

For more information about this exciting development please visit www.lancashirecare.nhs.uk/perinatal-mental-health.