

BACKGROUND

Perinatal depression and anxiety (PNDA) are significant mental health issues affecting men and women worldwide, with a substantial prevalence among Department of Defense (DoD) beneficiaries^(3,4). Servicemembers and their families face unique barriers such as isolation, cultural stigmas, and acclimation issues that increase risk factors for PNDA⁽⁴⁾. This project will evaluate if implementing a PNDA support group with education and screening can effectively combat the effects of PNDA.

- PNDA affects 11.9% of women and 10% of men worldwide (a combined total of 21.9% of the population)⁽³⁾
- Providers fail to identify 75% of women experiencing PNDA⁽²⁾
- Only 50% of PNDA-identified patients seek treatment⁽²⁾
- 36% of DoD personnel are affected by PNDA⁽⁴⁾
- An annual societal cost of over \$14B.⁽¹⁾



Howland, G. (2021). Postpartum anxiety: The postnatal condition nobody's talking about. <https://www.mamanatural.com/postpartum-anxiety/>



Duszynski-Goodman, L., & Shatine, L. (2023). Postpartum anxiety vs. postpartum depression: What's the difference. <https://www.forbes.com/health/family/postpartum-depression-versus-postpartum-anxiety/>

INTERVENTIONS/EVALUATION

Extensive research was conducted to determine PNDA root causes and appropriate interventions. Once a strong need for the project was identified through research, the project implementation timeline was generated and will be followed throughout the duration of implementation. The support group will be evaluated through an iterative process for 12 months, making initial adjustments as needed, and the following evaluation methods were developed to assess project effectiveness:

- A survey will be administered at the beginning of the support group, after a participant has remained active in the support group for six months, and at the conclusion of their participation.
- The Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale will be administered during the first session to establish a baseline and during each of the following sessions to gauge changes⁽¹⁾.
- The stakeholders will review evaluation results and participation levels to identify any shortcomings and determine the effectiveness of the PNDA support group.

METHODS

An in-depth literature review was conducted by utilizing numerous databases and a combination of various keywords. A deficit was identified due to a lack of PNDA evidence-based literature. The following themes were identified:

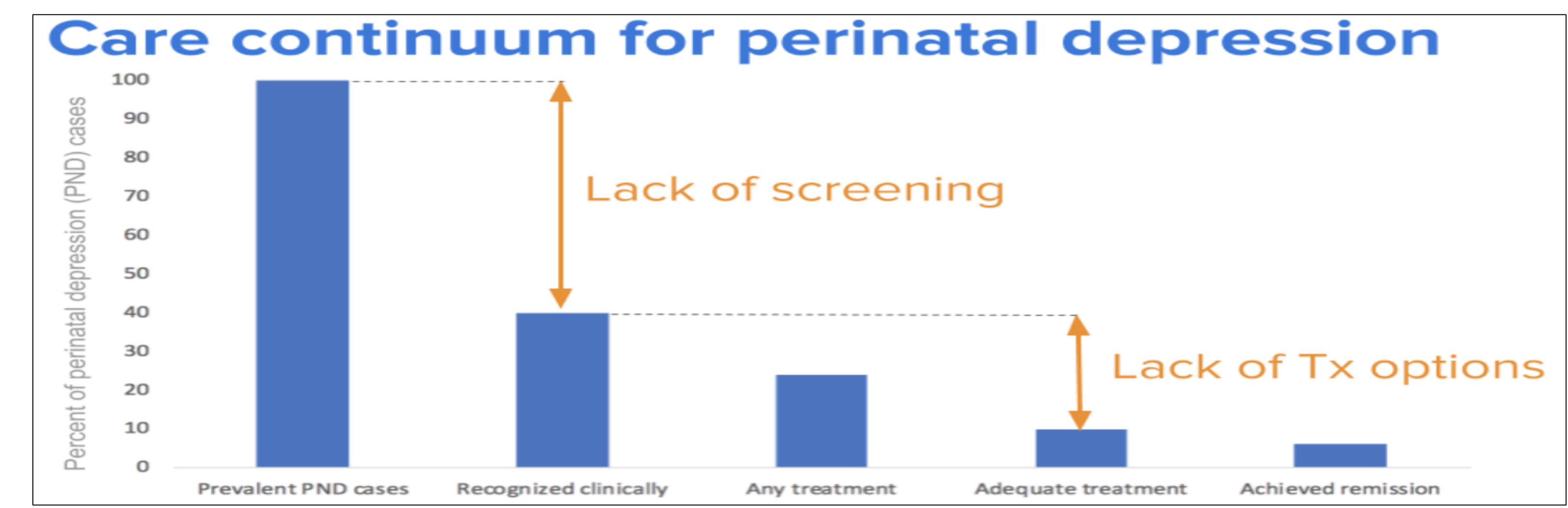
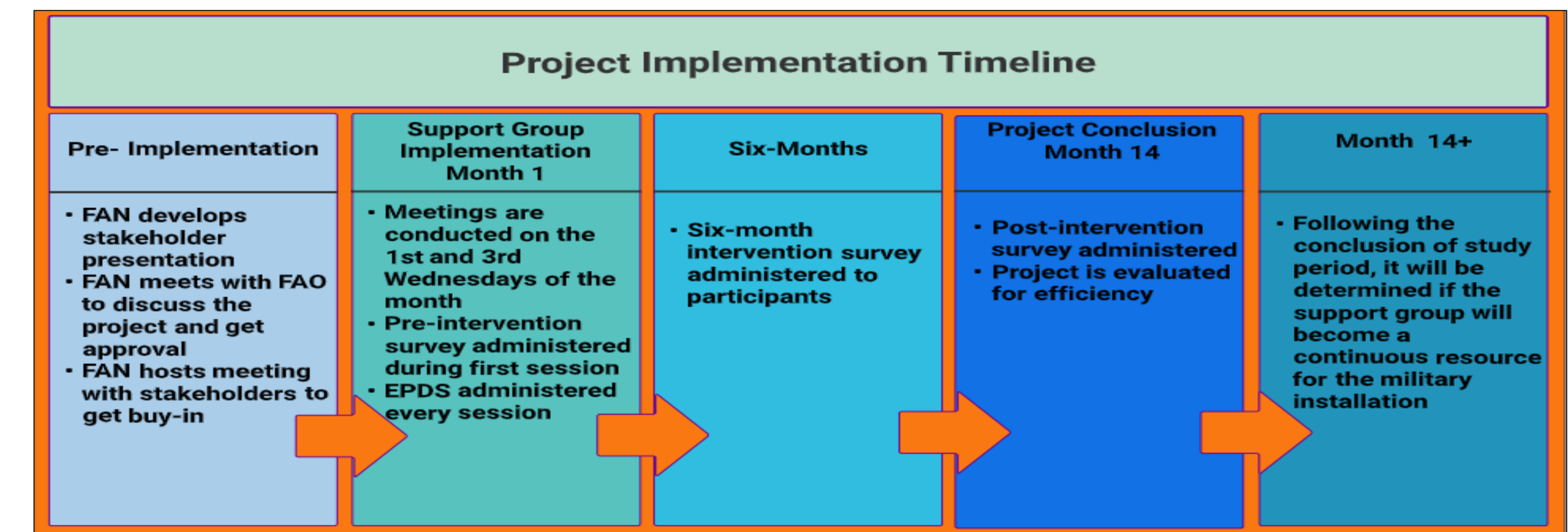
- PNDA and its effects on women in the military community⁽⁴⁾
- Integration of PNDA screeners during the perinatal period⁽¹⁾
- Importance of education and awareness in the DoD⁽³⁾
- Peer support as an effective tool to combat depression and anxiety⁽³⁾

Following the literature review, a PNDA support group was deemed the most efficient intervention method⁽³⁾. This project will employ the Rosswurm and Larrabee six-step evidence-based practice model because it applies an iterative process that the stakeholders will use as a framework to assess, synthesize, and evaluate information and outcomes⁽⁵⁾.

DISCUSSION

This MSN project is unique in that it targets a population drastically impacted by PNDA compared to non-DoD members. Through implementation, this project aims to achieve the following:

- Once reviewed and deemed effective, the support group will become a permanent occurrence.
- The project will be provided to the Air Force Medical Readiness Agency (AFMRA) who is an agency which oversees the Family Advocacy Programs across the DoD.
- AFMRA will disseminate the support group to all Air Force Bases throughout the DoD.
- Disseminating this project throughout the entire DoD will expand intervention rates and education for PNDA to all service members and their families.
- This MSN project will be published to bring further awareness to PNDA within the DoD population.



Green, E. (2018). Most people who suffer from depression don't get help. <https://uxplanet.org/healthymoms-36975a4b8c1b>

CONCLUSIONS

PNDA is a serious mental illness often overlooked, especially within the DoD⁽⁴⁾. Through this MSN project, the following interventions were discovered to effectively deter the prevalence of PNDA symptoms:

- Support⁽³⁾
- Education⁽³⁾
- Screening⁽³⁾

This project uses a multidisciplinary team well-versed in ethics and HIPAA guidelines to ensure the integrity of the project, certify that countless women impacted by PNDA will receive vital education and support, and highlight a drastic need for additional research on this issue. The success of this MSN project will lessen the effects of PNDA across the DoD and positively impact perinatal women, their families, and society.

REFERENCES

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3. Fang, Q., Lin, L., Chen, Q., Yuan, Y., Wang, S., Zhang, Y., Liu, T., Cheng, H., & Tian, L. (2022). Effect of peer support intervention on perinatal depression: A meta-analysis. *General Hospital Psychiatry*, 74(1), 78–87. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.genhospsych.2021.12.001>
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5. Rosswurm, M. A., & Larrabee, J. H. (1999). A model for change to evidence-based practice. *Image: The Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 31(4), 317–322. https://doi-org_hal.weber.edu/10.1111/j.1547-5069.1999.tb00510.x

POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION
THE NUMBER ONE COMPLICATION OF PREGNANCY

- 1 IN 7 WOMEN EXPERIENCE POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION (PPD) EACH YEAR
- AFFECTS 2X AS MANY WOMEN AS BREAST CANCER
- 365 DAYS AFTER DELIVERY PPD SYMPTOMS CAN LAST FOR 1 YEAR
- 500,000+ moms GET PPD EACH YEAR. More than the population of Atlanta, GA.
- Postpartum depression can affect THE WHOLE FAMILY
- ONLY 15% OF WOMEN with PPD or mood disorders receive medical help