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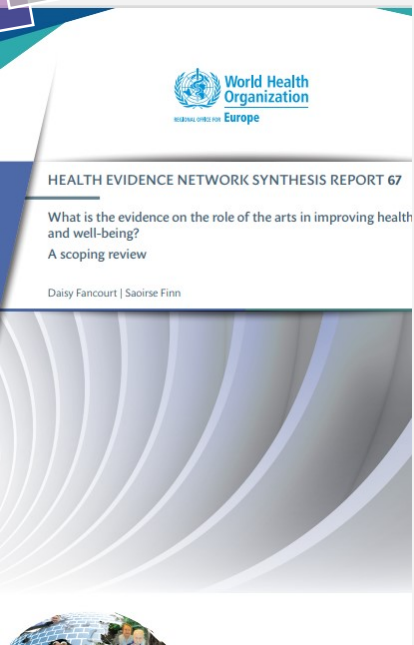


Addressing Postpartum Depression through Group Singing in the Italian Health Service

**Ilaria Lega, Ilaria Luzi, Simona Mastroeni, Claudia Ferraro, Silvia Andreozzi and
Giovanni Capelli**

National Centre for Disease Prevention and Health Promotion –
National Institute of Health

The role of art and culture in improving health and well-being



2019 WHO/Europe publishes a summary report of evidence from over 3,000 studies in the international scientific literature highlighting the **CONTRIBUTION OF THE ARTS** to prevention and **HEALTH PROMOTION** throughout the life course.

<https://www.who.int/europe/publications/i/item/9789289054553>

2022

The WHO has published a practical guide to implementing a **SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION** programme for healthcare service users

A tool enabling healthcare professionals to refer their patients to **NON-CLINICAL RESOURCES** available in the local area, to improve their health by fostering **CROSS-SECTORAL PARTNERSHIPS**

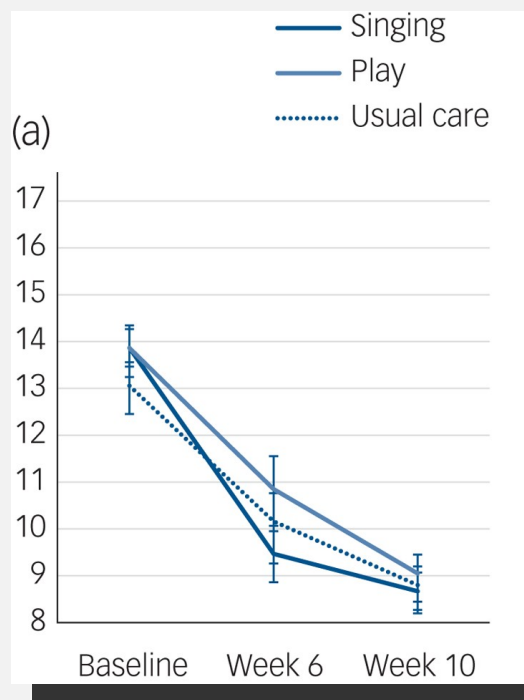
<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789290619765>



MUSIC and MOTHERHOOD, London, UK

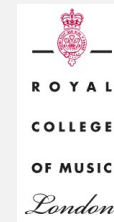
A randomised clinical trial (n=134) demonstrated the effectiveness of a **GROUP SINGING INTERVENTION** for new mothers with symptoms of **POSTNATAL DEPRESSION (PND)**, compared with control interventions.

Changes in **REDUCTION** in the **SEVERITY of DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS** were more rapid in participants in the singing group.



Fancourt D, Perkins R. Effect of singing interventions on symptoms of postnatal depression: three-arm randomised controlled trial. *Br J Psychiatry*. 2018;212(2):119-121.

Imperial College
London



2025

BJPsych

The British Journal of Psychiatry (2025)
1-10. doi: 10.1192/bjp.2025.10377



Original Article

Clinical effectiveness, implementation effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of a community singing intervention for postnatal depressive symptoms, SHAPER-PND: randomised controlled trial



GLOBUS MUSIC AND MOTHERHOOD (WHO/Europe, 2021–2023, DENMARK, ROMANIA AND ITALY)

The World Health Organisation's Regional Office for Europe has promoted and coordinated the GLOBUS MUSIC AND MOTHERHOOD project with the aim of assessing:

- 
- the **FEASIBILITY** of implementing the *Music and Motherhood* UK intervention in new cultural contexts
 - THE PERCEIVED IMPACT** of the intervention on the mental health and well-being of participating new mothers



World Health Organization
European Region



JCL

<https://www.jameelartshealthlab.org/research/research-projects/music-and-motherhood-ucl>

In **ITALY**, the adaptation was coordinated by **the NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF HEALTH** in collaboration with three **MATERNITY AND CHILD HEALTH CLINICS** selected on the basis of:

- previous collaboration on research projects
- capacity to implement the intervention using local resources
- different geographical location and territory.



CENTRO NAZIONALE
**PREVENZIONE DELLE MALATTIE
E PROMOZIONE DELLA SALUTE**

Features of the programme - Italian adaptation of the UK study

- Ten group singing sessions (8–12 participants) led by a **specialist trained musician**, supported by a **healthcare professional**
- All mothers invited to participate have a baby under 9 months old and show symptoms of postnatal depression (Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale, **EPDS ≥ 10**)

Not the 'usual' mother-and-baby music group

- The mother is at the heart of the programme
- Short, easy-to-learn songs, including in different languages
- **A welcoming and inclusive environment, including for mums with a migrant background**
- Peer sharing and support
- Use of techniques to encourage **interaction with the child**

You do not need to be able to sing or have any musical training to take part.

Music and Motherhood Italy

OCTOBER 2022 – JULY 2023

3 groups of 8–10 mothers with their children

23 participants included in the analysis

Professionals involved at local level

2 scientific coordinators

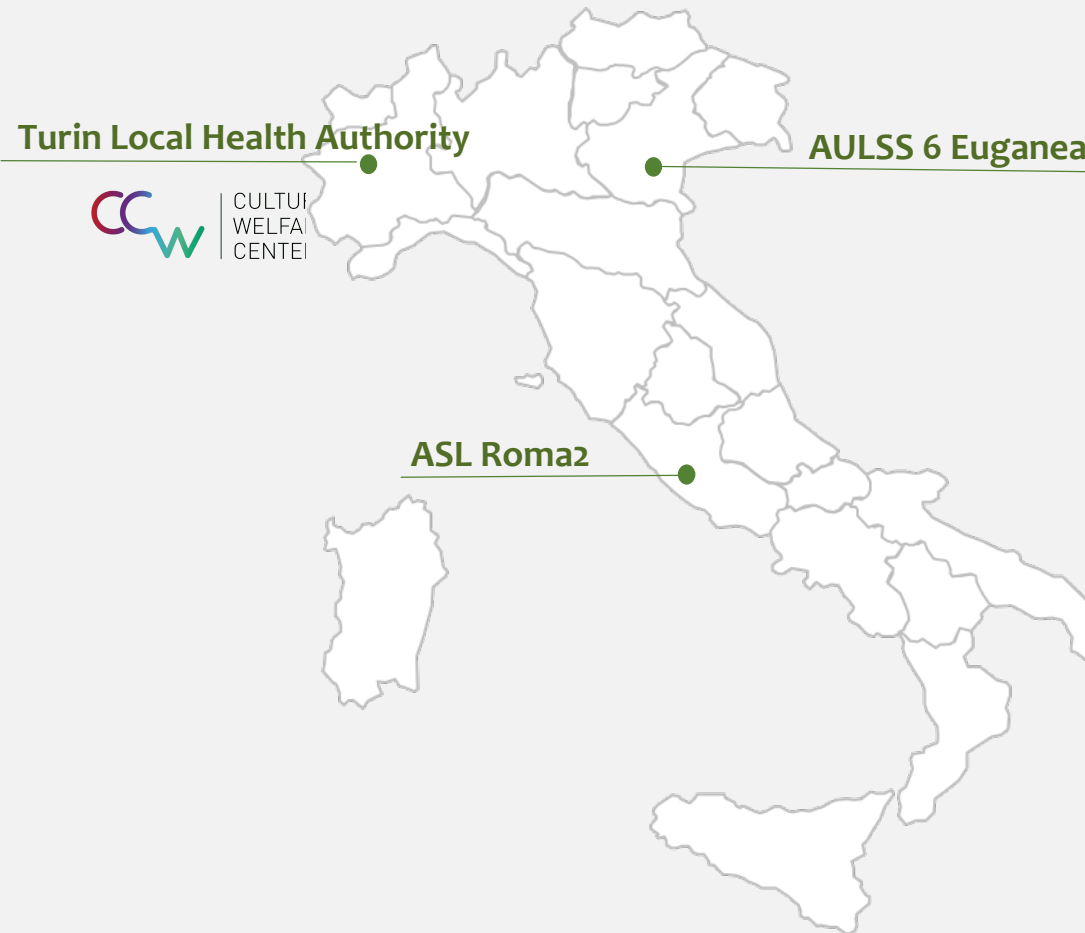
3 healthcare support professionals

(recruitment, organisation, participation in meetings)

4 mental health specialists

2 singing leaders

1 liaison officer with the third sector



Locations

ULSS 6 Euganea Local Health Authority - Este Family Care Centre



ASL Roma 2 - Administrative offices, Via del Peperino

Locations



Turin Local Health Authority –
Andrea Della Corte Music Library

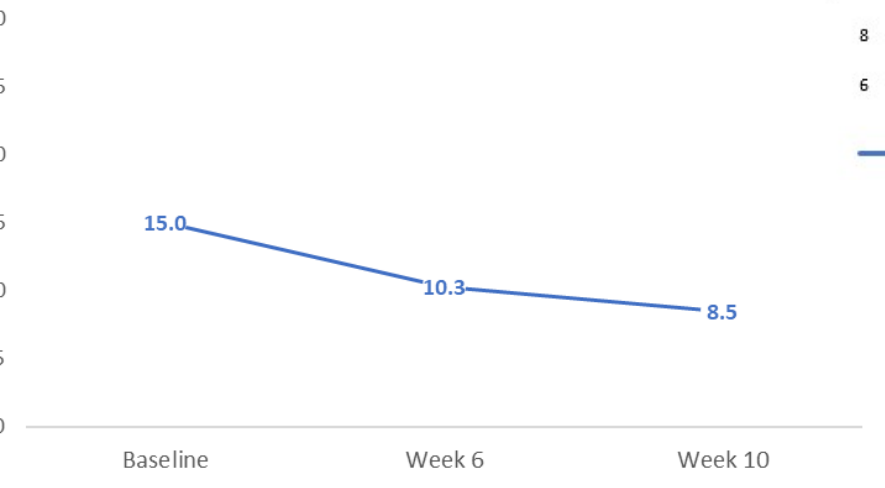
Refreshment



Music and Motherhood Italy – The results

AMONG THE WOMEN PARTICIPANTS

EPDS SCORE MEAN VALUES OVER TIME



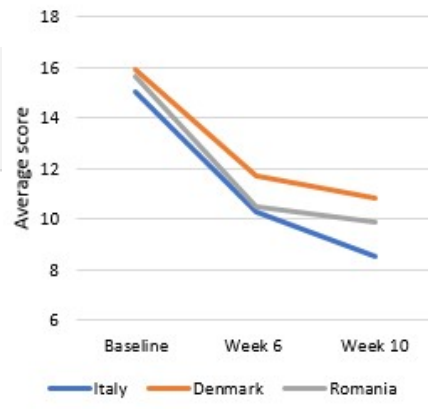
Repeated Measures ANOVA, P value < 0.0001

HIGH TURNOUT:

An average of 8.7 out of 10 sessions



Figure 1a EPDS by country



FROM THE PROFESSIONALS

• APPROPRIATENESS

The intervention appears appropriate
>95% agree

• FEASIBILITY

The intervention seems easy to use
~80% agree

frontiers | Frontiers in Medicine

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Check for updates

OPEN ACCESS

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CITATION

Implementing a group singing intervention for postpartum depression within the Italian health service

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The importance of group activities, which make the most of available resources. The importance of drawing on the local voluntary sector's resources is immense. And then the use of de-medicalisation approaches...

Local manager

I found it extremely welcoming. There was attention to detail (...) our National Health Service leaves significant gaps... in this, in these small things I have found a sort of trust in the public sector too.

Participating mother



MUSIC and MOTHERHOOD Second Edition (2024–2026) ISS Independent Research Call 2024



Development of a training package:

- online training
- video interviews
- practical guide



Training provided to 45 professionals involved in the implementation of the initiative at:

- 4 local health authorities
- 2 hospital trusts



Assessment of the costs of implementing the intervention (ongoing)



Istituto Superiore di Sanità
EpiCentro - L'epidemiologia per la sanità pubblica

Indice A-Z dei contenuti
Cerca...

Salute materno-infantile - News

6/11/2025 - Kangaroo mother care: due nuovi documenti OMS

31/10/2025 - Health4EUkids - WP4-WP5-WP6: il meeting di Patrasco

Progetto Music and Motherhood in Italia: al via la seconda edizione

Nell'aprile 2024, alla luce dei risultati positivi della prima esperienza promossa dal WHO-Europa, l'Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS) ha finanziato una seconda edizione del progetto "Music and Motherhood". Il progetto in corso si propone di promuovere su più larga scala, a livello nazionale, l'offerta di questo specifico intervento di canto di gruppo per neomamme che manifestano sintomi di depressione post partum. Il protocollo di studio, recentemente approvato dal Comitato Etico Nazionale istituito presso l'Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS), richiama il precedente e mira a rendere disponibili informazioni sia sulla fattibilità dell'intervento sia sull'impatto percepito sulla salute mentale e il benessere delle mamme partecipanti.

La prima edizione dello studio "Music and Motherhood", promosso e coordinato dall'OMS Europa, si è svolto fra il 2021 e il 2023 in Danimarca, Romania e Italia e i risultati dell'intervento realizzato in Italia sono stati pubblicati sulla rivista *Frontiers in Medicine* a ottobre 2024.



www.epicentro.iss.it/materno/music-and-motherhood-seconda-edizione

WHO IS PARTICIPATING AND WHO IS INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING

Grugliasco
ASL TO3



IRCCS San Gerardo, Monza

Family
Municipality of



Sant'Anna, Turin
ASL TO3 Grugliasco
ASL TO3 Pinerolo

Reggio Emilia Local Health Authority*
Bologna Local Health Authority

Romagna Local Health Authority

University Hospital of Alessandria

CR Foundation, Florence

Brindisi Local Health A

Lecce Local Health A

4 singing groups completed
group currently running
40 new mothers enrolled (EPDS ≥ 10)
group starting (January 2026)

- Current edition (underway and/or completed)
* Starting in 2026
- Expression of interest (starting in 2026)

So Far, So Good

- Group singing has proved to be a sustainable, effective and inclusive tool for supporting new mothers with postpartum depression, helping to **demedicalise** the care process by promoting the use of non-healthcare resources available in the local area
- This ongoing initiative represents:
 - a benchmark for the provision of the intervention on a larger scale
 - a pilot study for the development of an art & health intervention within the framework of social prescription.