



CASE STUDY

Challenging Implicit Biases with Two-Way Focus Groups for Post Partum Depression (PPD)

Business Objective

ThinkGen's client had a newly approved IV in-patient treatment for moderate to severe postpartum depression (PPD) that was facing limited brand opportunity because of prescriber misconceptions.

The objective of this research was to understand the disconnect between provider and patient by providing an opportunity for shared learnings utilizing a two-way focus group.

The ThinkGen Solution

ThinkGen conducted a two-way focus group, starting with a 15-minute physician discussion to orient the physician participants to the research approach.

The physicians were then asked to view a 60-minute patient discussion from the backroom and take notes. ThinkGen then brought the physicians back for a 60-minute debrief to discuss their observations and thoughts.

Results

ThinkGen's two-way focus group revealed several significant disconnects that the client can action on.

For example, physicians believed that:

- Postpartum depression is adequately identified through use of standard postpartum screening
- Women prefer medication to talk therapy to manage PPD
- Oral SSRIs are efficacious within a few weeks, patients largely satisfied
- Moms would be resistant to an infusion therapy requiring an overnight hospital stay



AT A GLANCE



Methodology

Qualitative: Two-way Focus Group



Stakeholders Recruited

Physicians who manage PPD (OBGYNs, PCPs)/Patients with moderate to severe PPD



Countries

United States (multi-city)



Therapeutic Area

Obstetrics/Gynecology, Primary Care



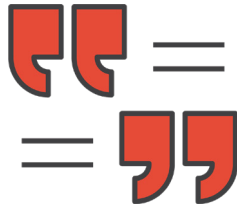
ThinkGen Client

Pharmaceutical



Meanwhile, the research revealed that the majority of patients:

- Lied on their postpartum screening questionnaire and may suffer for months before talking with a provider
- Are anti-medication and prefer talk therapy; those who did take medication often abandoned it because it took too long to take effect
- Would welcome the opportunity to receive in-patient treatment, being away from home considered recuperative



“It was so eye-opening; I think we can all say that. Spending an hour with these women, affected in such different ways. There is no provider who if had an opportunity to do this would ever take postpartum depression lightly again.”

- Physician Verbatim

Summary

As a result of the research, ThinkGen’s two-way focus group challenged implicit biases by providing an opportunity for shared learnings by bringing together different stakeholders to identify conversation barriers, communication gaps, and specific words and phrases that would effectively improve the provider-patient dialogue. ThinkGen was able to provide recommendations to the client to:

- Challenge existing beliefs around oral antidepressant efficacy in PPD and the deleterious effects of unresolved PPD
- Use unbranded education to get the conversation around PPD started sooner (peripartum) and more frequently (not just at the 6-week check up) number of sites of care
- Implement disease-state education and campaigns to motivate women to have honest and earlier conversations with providers

