



Boram Postnatal Retreat

Boram Postnatal Retreat's co-founder Boram Nam in one of the retreat's guest rooms.

## Postnatal care slow to enter the city's healthtech scene

As fertility healthtech firms have proliferated across the city, postnatal care remains a facet of women's health that has grown much more slowly.

Flatiron-based fertility clinic Kindbody has expanded nationally, and so far it has raised more than \$155 million, according to figures from Crunchbase. Progyny, which is headquartered in Midtown and helps employers build better fertility benefits packages, [reported 40% revenue growth](#) since last year. And SoHo-based Maven, which provides telehealth services to women and families, reached unicorn status in August 2021

There's one women's health space, however, that most tech firms haven't traversed yet: postnatal care.

Postnatal care is important in treating perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, a group of symptoms that include postpartum depression and anxiety, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder and psychosis. Symptoms could be present during pregnancy as well. These disorders affect approximately 1 in 5 women—and that number could be much higher in actuality, because many women may not report their symptoms. While there's a large need for postnatal care, many women do not receive it.

Boram Nam, the founder of the Boram Postnatal Retreat based in Midtown, is attempting to close that gap. The retreat, which opened May 5, offers comprehensive postnatal and baby care for mothers up to six weeks post-delivery. The clinic offers services such as evidence based healing practices, nutrition and community building. Registered nurses are available to monitor vitals for new mothers. Nam, who self-funds the clinic with her husband, Suk Park, created the retreat after hearing about the comprehensive, lengthy postnatal care friends in her native Korea experienced.

The retreat is in a 20,277-square-foot space. The founders have invested \$1.5 million of their own money, using proceeds from a previously founded company that was sold to SoftBank. The retreat employs about 20 associates who provide around-the-clock service for guests. It has three managers and a director.

So far, the retreat has serviced more than 20 mothers. It has 16 guestrooms, and Nam hopes to have a waitlist.

She said it is impossible to work with insurance companies right now because what the retreat provides—care that is at the intersection of nonmedical service and hospitality—isn't covered. Rates range from \$1,450 to \$1,950 per night.

The retreat, however, is working toward partnering with insurance.

“From the moment the baby arrives, the mom is placed on the back burner. We're giving moms time to focus on themselves,” Nam said.

While the Boram retreat opened recently, there have been other resources across the city for postnatal care, but the programs are few and far between.

The Motherhood Center, a postnatal care startup based in NoMad, has been open for five years and says it was the first of its kind in the city. The center offers a day program for moms, outpatient services, and support and education programs. Clinicians include perinatally focused social workers, psychologists, nurse practitioners, psychiatrists and reproductive psychiatrists. Moms can receive help with medication management, bonding and attachment therapy, anxiety and depression coping skills, couples' counseling and partner support.

“New stressors have ravaged the perinatal population. PMADS [perinatal or postpartum mood and anxiety disorders] are the No. 1 complication associated with childbirth,” said Paige Bellenbaum, founding director and chief external relations officer of the Motherhood Center. “And we still don't have mandatory screening for PMADs.”

“[This is] an intensive level of care that helps women feel better faster,” Bellenbaum continued, adding it is advantageous that the center exists outside of any hospital system because the system can be “siloeed.”

The center's day program accepts all insurances and accepts Medicaid

patients for free. Outpatient services are fee-for-service.

The city's Health + Hospital system launched the 3-2-1 Impact program in 2018. The program's goal, said Dr. Mary McCord, the clinical lead for the project, is to provide care to children and their mothers and support kids' social and emotional development to improve their long-term health trajectory.

The full 3-2-1 program is available at Bellevue, Gouverneur and Queens hospitals. Parts of the program have been extended to all other H+H sites, and maternal medicine is available at all 11 hospitals.

Health+Hospitals also operates the Maternal Home program, which provides social determinants of health screening for women and identifies providers for them to use. Mothers also receive "wraparound" care from social workers and other service coordinators, said Dr. Wendy Wilcox, the chief women's health officer for H+H.

Any mother who comes to H+H for pregnancy care is covered regardless of insurance or immigration status. Gov. Kathy Hochul is pushing for women to be covered through their first postpartum year, Wilcox said, to address the idea that pregnancy complications and PMADs don't end soon after birth.

McCord and Wilcox want to make the 3-2-1 program the model of care at every H+H site.

H+H provides half of the funding for the 3-2-1 program; the other half comes from a grant.