



whittington health maternity voices
listening to parents:
change through partnership



Whittington Health
NHS Trust

Whittington Health Maternity Voices Partnership

Annual Report 2018-19



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Letter from the Chair

We have had four key meetings, with follow-up interim meetings after each. Meetings have been lively and enthusiastic, with a diverse range of health professionals, teachers, and volunteers coming together to discuss positive ways forward that will benefit everybody. At 'half time' we have enjoyed delicious cakes and tea and then been joined by local parents who have shared their thoughts and ideas with us in a workshop, with the added bonus of bringing their lovely babies to remind us of what this is all about.

We always place an emphasis on co-production, bringing together many voices who all respect each other and their work. Everyone is dedicated to improving the experience of women and their families around this exciting and vulnerable period in their lives.

I would like to thank everyone who attends and takes an interest in Maternity Voices. Your support is much appreciated.

We are very pleased to announce that the CCG is now funding the MVP which will make a real difference.

My particular thanks go to Agnes and Victoria who very much co-drive this group.

Thanks also to Archway Children's Centre for their beautiful meeting space.

We are always delighted to welcome new service users to the committee. If you have had a baby in the last three years at the Whittington, or have an interest in maternity and would like to be involved, we would love to hear from you. Our email address is maternityvoices.whitthealth@nhs.net

Author: Roz Webb, Lay-Chair, Whittington Health Maternity Voices Partnership
December 2019

The Function of a Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP)

An MVP is an independent, multi-disciplinary advisory body, made up of local parents, representatives and professionals. Our committee includes representatives from Haringey and Islington CCGs (Clinical Commissioning Groups), children's centres, HealthWatch, Home Start, midwifery managers, the NCT (National Childbirth Trust), BfN (Breastfeeding Network), Active Birth Centre, Birth Companions and doulas. At each meeting we have a number of service users who have used Whittington maternity services; some come only once and others return to further meetings. The Maternity Voices Partnership exists in order to plan, monitor, develop and improve maternity care for women, partners and families at the Whittington.

What we do

We meet four times a year to discuss key issues for Whittington Maternity, from pre-conception through to antenatal care, birth and postnatal care and recommend changes and improvements where these are needed.

Meetings are held in Archway Children's Centre, N19 5HE, which is close to the Whittington and provides a welcoming environment for parents. Around 20-25 people attend each meeting, with around 60 people on the mailing list. Many of the 20-25 attend every meeting although some may only attend particular ones to give a presentation about what they do, for example. All documents are posted on drop box, which anyone can ask to join. At least a third of attendees are user reps and we are joined for our workshops by around 5 mothers and their babies and sometimes partners each time.

When possible or appropriate the Chair, with volunteers, 'walks the patch' and attends baby clinics at Children's Centres to collect feedback and also receives and collates feedback by email. As many of our members work with pregnant women and new parents they also can provide a great deal of information about current experiences and feelings. We have links with 'seldom heard' groups and have user reps who attend meetings on their behalf. This year we have strengthened our links with Manor Gardens Bright Beginnings, visiting their groups and welcoming a mum and her mentor/ translator to a meeting and also with Birth Companions who work with women facing multiple disadvantage.

The Chair liaises regularly with other MVP leaders on a national forum and is working with and supporting the three other North Central London MVPs.

We welcome anyone who wishes to share their work with us to come to talk at our meetings. The meetings are an excellent opportunity for networking and encouraging everyone who works or volunteers with women and their families in the perinatal period to work together.

What we have done this year

'I really enjoyed the MVP meet-up last week, thank you so much, we are so lucky to have you as our chair and I love to share all the good work and initiatives among the other PMAs in London too.'

Senior Midwife

In meetings

At every meeting we have an hour to share and discuss 'headlines' and to hear from any local groups or initiatives, then we have an hour long workshop with parents on a key issue.

In **February 2019** we heard about the national work on investigating babies harmed in labour, the local Children's Centres Birth and Beyond Open Day, and targeted antenatal classes at the Whittington. We then had a workshop discussing what we should focus on for the year.

In **May 2019** we heard about Birth Reflections Clinics and the workshop focussed on getting a sense of what women understand from, and want from 'continuity of carer'. Their comments will help inform further continuity of carer models.

In **September 2019** we heard from Islington Community Children's Nursing Service and the valuable work they do. Our workshop looked at induction of labour, and the comments will inform the Induction of Labour Working Group who will begin meeting in January 2020.

In **December 2019** we heard from Cocoon, who run support groups for parents experiencing mental health issues in the perinatal period. We then had a lively workshop exploring the frequent mismatch between expectation and reality for women.

Other work in 2019

Throughout year – VL curating and fundraising for photo project, Pulse Arts play music each Monday in Iofor, Cellier/ Eddington, Murray, NICU and SCBU

Agnes Leger has completed information leaflets and posters for the Labour Ward, Murray Ward, and postnatal ward which contain useful information and have a unity of presentation and style.

Jan – RW liaising with Sara about bereavement funds

Jan – AL talks to midwifery students at Middlesex University

March- RW attends Bright Beginnings drop-in day, Hornsey Road Children's Centre

March – RW attends Bright Beginnings Annual Conference

March – RW attends Better Births Three Years On, Manchester

March – AL provides detailed review of maternity website

March – AL discusses how to involve MVP in new midwifery curriculum of Middlesex university

April – RW attends London Chairs meeting

May – RW consulted on blood transfusion leaflet

May – shared caesarean and Pulse Arts musicians as case studies with National Maternity Voices

May – RW observes Pulse Arts and will provide a report

May – RW attends Bright Beginnings drop-in day, Hornsey Road

June – RW attends LMS board

June – RW and AL attend BC 10th anniversary party

June – AL and VL print and display postnatal info leaflets and posters

July – AL completes draft of antenatal info leaflet and poster

August – RW and VL consulted on wording of bereavement letter

Sept – RW reviews and comments on patient info leaflet for UCH – Whit transfer

Sept – RW reviews neonatal outreach team leaflet

Sept – AL rewrites neonatal outreach team leaflet

Oct - RW attends London MVP Development Day

Oct – RW tours new theatre and recovery area, and Cellier Ward

Oct – RW attends UCLH MVP

Oct – RW observes Pulse Arts again and completes final report

Oct – AL liaises with Middlesex University to produce translations of the postnatal leaflet

Nov – 15 steps event

Nov – RW liaises with anaesthetists about wearing glasses and contact lenses in theatre

Nov – RW attends Co-creation collective gathering, Skipton House

Nov – midwifery students from Middlesex University begin translating information leaflets

Dec – RW attends meeting with Birth Companions to discuss further engagement with Lived Experience Team

Review of plans from Annual Report 2017-18

- consider ways to achieve a higher profile, possibly through social media *ongoing*
- review funding options following report from CCG *done*
- complete photographic project *ongoing*
- complete caesarean information leaflet and launch on website *done*
- collect feedback about experiences of induction of labour and develop project to support IOL – co-production with users *ongoing*
- create action plan following February development meeting *done*
- work with fundraising parent and Whittington to develop bereavement support *ongoing – delays whilst other work is carried out*
- continue to monitor ‘quick wins’ and other recommendations *done*
- continue to work closely with local groups and users *done – RW has attended several events at Bright Beginnings and is working closely with Birth Companions*
- continue to reach out to seldom heard groups and hear their voices *done*
- continue to achieve good numbers of parents attending the meetings *done*
- continue to collect feedback at children’s centres *not done 2018, not enough volunteers – to pick up again 2020*
- carry out regular ‘walk the patch’ and ‘15 steps’ *15 steps done, ‘walk the patch’ need more volunteers*
- continue to work with LMS concerning funding options *done*

Future plans 2020

- consider ways to achieve a higher profile, possibly through social media
- complete photographic project
- IOL working group to complete work – co-creation with users
- create action plan following February development meeting
- work with fundraising parent and Whittington to develop bereavement support
- continue to monitor ‘quick wins’ and other recommendations
- continue to work closely with local groups and users
- continue to reach out to seldom heard groups and hear their voices
- continue to achieve good numbers of parents attending the meetings
- continue to collect feedback at children’s centres
- carry out regular ‘walk the patch’ and ‘15 steps’
- ensure rewrite/ reorganisation of website is co-produced with the MVP
- ensure a clear policy is produced regarding wearing glasses/ contacts in theatre
- liaise with Birth Companions to ensure birth preferences sheet is completed
- continue to create unified information leaflets and posters across maternity
- work with Birth Companions Lived Experience Team

Conclusions

Whittington Maternity Voices Partnership is a strong and effective group. We feel very well supported and respected by HCPs at the Whittington and are grateful for their commitment and enthusiasm.

We have achieved a great deal this year, as shown in this Annual Report.

We look forward to an equally productive 2020.

Roz Webb, Lay Chair

Appendix 1

Feedback from 15 steps, November 2019 (RW's bold text)

I attended the 15 steps event at The Whittington Hospital in November 2019. Birth Companions supports women facing multiple disadvantage in the perinatal period and we have a Lived Experience Team (LET) who work with maternity commissioners to increase the voice of women facing disadvantage in the maternity system. I came along to the 15 steps with a member of our Lived Experience Team and it was her first engagement event. On arrival, there was a member of the MVP to welcome us and give directions. The room was **very welcoming**, with a round of introductions and an icebreaker which was well received and got us all chatting. We split off in groups to do the 15 steps with **clear instructions**. After we had finished, we returned for discussions. It was a productive meeting, including staff members, doulas, voluntary sector organisations and service users. **I was impressed with the facilitation and with the strong relationship between the staff and MVP**. The LET member who attended shared some of her experiences and this was dealt with in a **very sensitive and caring** way, giving her time to de-brief and then drawing us back to the subject matter. She felt this was a **positive experience and it felt very inclusive**.

Kate Chivers, Birth Companions