



whittington health maternity voices  
listening to parents:  
change through partnership



Whittington Health  
NHS Trust

# Whittington Health Maternity Voices Partnership

## Annual Report 2017-18



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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.

This year we had a number of extra meetings to work on our caesarean birth information leaflet which is being co-produced by the MVP and Whittington Maternity.

Whittington MVP has a strong national reputation. We were featured in a recent RCG article about MVPs in which our outgoing Director of Midwifery enthused about the MVP and how it helps the Whittington to run a responsive service that is fit for purpose. We were chosen to be the inner-city pilot site for NHS England's 'Fifteen Steps Toolkit' and I gave a presentation about this experience at the annual MVP National Event.

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

My particular thanks go to Agnes and Victoria who very much co-drive this group. I hope that we can formalise these roles in 2019.

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](mailto:maternityvoices.whitthealth@nhs.net)

Author: Roz Webb, Lay-Chair, Whittington Health Maternity Voices Partnership December 2018

## **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. This year we chose caesarean birth as a particular focus area.

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.

The Chair, with volunteers, also carries out '15 steps' (first impressions) reports, as well as attending North Central London Maternity Voices and other meetings as appropriate. The Chair liaises regularly with other MVP leaders on a national forum and is supporting other local, emerging 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 the Director of Midwifery presents an update and we also have a Better Births update.

In **February 2018** we looked at the FFT (Friends and Family Test) survey questions and discussed how informative they were. This led to the creation of some maternity-specific questions. NHS England has just begun a national review of FFT.

In **May 2018** we looked at information and how it is presented. As a result a lot of useful information and links have been added to the maternity microsite. The meeting was attended by the Team Manager for Maternity and Women's Health Policy Team NHS England.

In **September 2018** we presented the final draft of our 'doulas and health professionals working together' document which was welcomed by all. The workshop focussed on support, asking women and their supporters if it was timely and right. The overwhelming message was that women feel really well cared for by excellent staff. There have been some very positive developments since this meeting, such as changes and improvements to information giving on the postnatal ward and a new workshop about epidurals. A number of issues were raised about induction of labour and we plan to make this a focus in 2019. This meeting was attended by the Chief Nurse and Director of Patient Experience and the Director of Operations.

In **December 2018** we explored the use of language and its impact on women and their supporters. This was a powerful and interesting meeting and we look forward to sharing the findings with health professionals.

### **Other work in 2018**

Jan 18 liaison meeting with PPI lead

Feb 18 15 steps Inner City Pilot site with National MVP and NHS England. Full day.

28/3/18 RW attended London MVP meeting

18/4/18 RW met with James Connolly and MWs to discuss tidying up of noticeboards and handing over to volunteer

19/4/18 RW attended London MVP strategy group meeting

May-June 18 AL created birth centre welcome poster and 'personalising your room' poster as part of 15 steps actions

17/5/18 development meeting for caesarean birth working group – ongoing throughout year

19/6/18 RW met with two user reps – planning meeting

July 18 AL met with Research team, and Oti Egole. MVP involved with the creation of a patient video on gestational diabetes

4/7/18 users, user reps and Labour Ward Lead – caesarean working group 1 and ongoing

18/ 9/18 AL and RW looked at new postnatal ward plans with Postnatal Ward Lead

2/10/18 RW, AL, and VL attended MVP co-production day – RW presents Whit's experience of 15 steps

Nov 18 RW was consulted on twins leaflet and labour ward welcome pack

Nov 18 AL lectured and ran workshop at Middlesex with student midwives

Nov 18 Whittington MVP featured in RCM magazine

Nov 18 RW provided feedback to obstetrician about epidural workshops for expectant parents

Dec 18 RW, AL and VL 'walk the patch' to collect feedback on language for workshop

Dec 18 rewriting postnatal information (postnatal schedule of care, information leaflets and poster) – ongoing work by AL and Postnatal Lead

Dec 18 penultimate draft of CB leaflet out for consultation

Dec 18 RW presented doula document at Interlink and shared with national MVPs

Dec 18 RW attended UCH to offer support and advice on setting up MVP

Dec 18 RW baked and delivered thankyou ginger biscuits to staff

Throughout year – VL curating and fundraising for photo project, Pulse Arts receive funding for music on wards (contact enabled through MVP)

## **Review of plans from Annual Report 2016-17**

- support Whittington Maternity to implement Better Births through liaison with workstream leads and PPI lead *Done*
- continue to monitor 'quick wins' and other recommendations *Done*
- continue to work closely with local groups and users *Done*
- reach out to seldom heard groups and hear their voices – link up with PPI user lead *Done although PPI user lead post has finished*
- continue to achieve good numbers of parents attending the meetings *Done*
- continue to collect feedback at children's centres and get more volunteers on board to assist with this *Done*
- carry out regular 'walk the patch' and '15 steps' with the help of more volunteers *Done*
- consider ways to achieve a higher profile, possibly through social media *Ongoing*
- review funding options following report from CCG *Ongoing – discussions at NCL level*

## **Future plans 2019**

- complete photographic project
- complete caesarean information leaflet and launch on website
- collect feedback about experiences of induction of labour and develop project to support IOL – co-production 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'
- continue to work with CCG concerning funding options

## **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 2019.

Roz Webb, Lay Chair