

# RCM Maternity Voices Network Session 1

‘How have midwives supported you during COVID?’

28 September 2020

**Record of session and notes**

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# Meeting info

- This document is a visual and text based record of the RCM Maternity Voices Network session on 28 Sept 2020. This was our first session and we started by asking 'How have midwives supported you during COVID?'
- **Session aims:** To kick start the new RCM Maternity Voices Network; to give people an opportunity to share experiences of maternity care during COVID; to use these stories and quotes to share with midwives and maternity support workers at the annual RCM Conference.
- **Agenda:** Introductions. Session plan, agreement & consent. Presentations: 'RCM Maternity Voices Network' (Emily Ahmed) and 'About the RCM' (Mary Ross Davie). Q&A. Wordcloud. Break-out rooms sharing experiences of maternity service users during COVID. Group feedback, key points & discussion. Whiteboard 'Message to your midwife'. Evaluation poll. Chat & networking.
- **Actions:** Emily to share contacts for those that consented. Emily to share quotes, video clips & summary of session at the Annual RCM Conference. Emily to send draft summary of meeting for feedback.
- **Included in this document:** Attendance. Images and summary of conversations from meeting. Evaluation poll. Link to video/audio content... (to be added)

# Attendance

- This was our first RCM Maternity Voices Network session. It was open to anyone to attend. We promoted it through our networks, social media and word-of-mouth. The session was run virtually on Zoom, 28 Sept 2020 from 12 to 2pm to allow for school pick up etc.
- The main session was facilitated by the Emily Ahmed, Service User Chair, RCM Maternity Voices Network. With a presentation from Mary Ross Davie, Director, Royal College of Midwives, Scotland. The breakout rooms were facilitated by peer-researchers from Maternity Voices Matter.
- 19 people attended the session. The participants were recent maternity service users, service user representatives and VCSE groups that support maternity service users. This included: Best Beginnings, Kurdish and Middle Eastern Women's Organisation, LGBT Mummies Tribe, Maternity Voice Partnerships (MVPs), Maternity Voices Matter, Mummy's Day Out, The Ectopic Pregnancy Trust, The Pelvic Partnership.



We asked...What was good or made the difference to you?

Session participants wrote a few words in the zoom chat and these were imported into a word cloud.

# What service users have valued from the support they have received from midwives during the COVID pandemic...

- Empathy, kindness, warmth and care
- Being heard
- Time to listen
- Continuity
- Flexibility and personalisation
- The relationship with their midwives
- The recognition that midwives need to be nurtured too

# What service users want midwives & maternity services to continue doing / do more of...

- Being aware of people's anxiety and mental health
- Recognising previous trauma
- Awareness of the loss of traditional support networks (family/friends/baby groups)
- Placing importance on 'personalisation', especially for women/birthing people and communities facing multiple layers of disadvantage
- Making sure we return to and value 'choice'
- Working together across sectors and with service users
- Looking after our midwives

**Message to my midwife.....**

**thank you for working so hard,  
showing care and empathy**

You have the power to change people's lives. Thank you for changing them for the better.

Thank you for being there for us

**your warmth and kindness is appreciated  
more than ever at this time**

**Thank you for being flexible  
and willing to try new things to  
keep care great even faced with  
challenges.**

My midwife was like a Guardian Angel. I still adjust my pillow the way she did it for me

Thank you for all you do to help women, new parents

**thank you for LISTENING and  
creating SPACE for me to share  
my individual needs**

# You are valued.

Thank you for working hard during these difficult times to make sure women/birthing people are supported when they need it most.

***We appreciate you & all that you do for us, bringing our babies into the world!***

thank you for seeing things from my point of view

Your empathy makes a real difference to people's experiences and onward lives.

Thank you. At a time of change and uncertainty you made sure I received the care I needed (and you somehow made it seem normal and calm !)

Thank you for trusting my instincts when I didnt

Your warmth, support & listening ears got me through it



## A co-created message to midwives

Session participants wrote messages together on a Zoom whiteboard

# Session evaluation

At the end of this session we used a quick Zoom poll to evaluate the session.

14 out of the 19 participants completed the evaluation poll.

- Would you be interested in attending more sessions and helping us co-create the RCM Maternity Voices Network? *Yes/Somewhat/No* **14 people said 'yes'**
- Did you feel safe in the session today? *Yes/Somewhat/No* **13 people said 'yes'. 1 person said 'somewhat'**
- Did you enjoy the session today? *Yes/Somewhat/No* **12 people said 'yes'. 2 people said 'somewhat'**
- Did you feel we enabled you to share/speak/be as involved as you would have liked in the session today? *Yes/Somewhat/No* **13 people said 'yes'. 1 person said 'somewhat'**

We really value your feedback, ideas and thoughts on how we can improve these sessions, if you have any ideas please let us know. We always welcome an email or a chat and will be regularly reflecting on how it is working.