

Midwifery Strategic Advisory Group (MSAG)

Meeting held in person Tuesday 2 December 11.00 – 15.00

Meeting notes

MSAG members in attendance		
Name	Role	Organisation
Angela McConville	Chief Executive, NCT Service user voice	NCT (National Childbirth Trust)
Angela Graves	Head of School Healthcare, University of Leeds	Council of Deans of Health
Caroline Keown	Chief Midwifery Officer	Department of Health Northern Ireland
Carmel Bagness	Professional Lead for Midwifery & Women's Health	Royal College of Nursing (RCN)
Gill Walton	Chief Executive	Royal College of Midwives (RCM)
Gwendolen Bradshaw	Professor Emerita Former Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Quality) Led the NMC midwifery programme standards (2019).	University of Bradford
Imelda Smyth	Midwifery service user voice	Patient and Carer Education Partnership (PCEP) Forum Queens University Belfast
Jacqui Williams	Senior Midwifery Advisor (Education)	Nursing and Midwifery Council
Jenny McNeill	Reader in Midwifery Research	Queen's University Belfast
Julia Sanders	Professor of Clinical Midwifery	Cardiff University

Karen Jewell	Chief Midwifery Officer	Welsh Government
Lisa Boat	Chair of the Swansea Bay Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP)	Swansea, Wales
Naomi Delap	Director of Birth Companions	Birth Companions
Rachel Best	Chair of Lead Midwives for Education Strategic Advisory Group (LMESAG)	Sheffield Hallam University
Stephanie Pease	Director of Midwifery and Nursing for the Maternity and Jenny Lind Children's Hospital Care Group	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital
Thomas McEwan	Principal Educator	NHS Education for Scotland (NES)
Tracey MacCormack	Assistant Director for Midwifery	Nursing and Midwifery Council
Verena Wallace	Senior Midwifery Advisor (Policy)	Nursing and Midwifery Council
Apologies		
Name	Role	Organisation
Alima Ashfaq	Service user voice	MNVP England
Arezou Rezvani	Consultant Midwife representative	Provider and LMNS clinical perspective
Benash Nazmeen	Midwifery and EDI	Association for South Asian Midwives (ASAM)
Clotide Abe and Tinuke Awe	Co-Founders	FivexMore
Clea Harmer	Chief Executive	Sands
Jamie Morris	Maternity and Neonatal Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager	NHS Wales Performance and Improvement

Kate Brintworth	Chief Midwifery Officer	NHS England
Kerry Phillips	Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Midwifery Development	Cardiff University
Kimberley Salmon-Jamieson	Chief Nursing Officer	Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust
Hazel Williams	CEO	Birthrights
Nafisa Anwar	Midwifery and EDI	Association for South Asian Midwives (ASAM)
Sophie Dodd	Student midwife representative	Swansea university
External Observers		
Name	Role	Organisation
Stephanie Marriott	Midwife Advisor	International Confederation of Midwives (ICM)
Alison Talbot	Deputy Chief Midwifery Officer	NHS England
Margaret McGuire	Registrant Council member	Nursing and Midwifery Council
Nadine Pemberton Jn Baptiste	Registrant Council member	Nursing and Midwifery Council
Laura Mullarkey	Legal Lead	Birthrights
Victoria Cochrane	Deputy Chief Midwifery Officer	NHS England
NMC colleagues in attendance		
Name	Role	Role in the meeting
Carole Haynes	Senior Policy Officer	Attendee

Donna O'Boyle	Acting Executive Director of Professional Practice	Attendee
Rakhee Mistry	Executive Assistant	Attendee
Paul Rees	Chief Executive and Registrar	Presenter
Sophia Hunt	Head of Education and Quality Assurance	Presenter
Aditi Chowdhary-Gandhi	Head of Standards	Presenter
Olamide Odusanwo	Senior Safeguarding Advisor	Attendee

Papers

- Agenda
- Notes of meeting held 18 September 2025

Agenda items covered

1. Welcome from the Chair

The Chair of MSAG, Birte Harlev-Lam, welcomed everyone to the meeting, including observers.

Introduced Stephanie Marriott from ICM

2. Matters arising from notes of September's meeting

Chair has confirmed minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Discuss Midwifery education and overview of QA processes

- Our role is to regulate, set standards, maintain a register and investigate concerns.
- Our education standards ensure individual nursing, midwifery and nursing associate students have access to high quality education and training, including practice learning experiences.
- EdQA is essential to ensure students learn to deliver safe, kind, effective care by experiencing high quality, collaborative education programmes that prepares them for registration and their future careers.

- There are 99 approved education institutions.
- EdQA is about the strength of collaborative partnerships, our focus is on the safety and experience of people who use services of nurses and midwives.
- We use data and intelligence to inform everything we do within EdQA, this ensures we can undertake proportionate and targeted actions.
- Students raising concerns we're open and transparent, respecting the student's wishes where possible, but we may choose to use our influence to support positive changes
- Gwendolen Bradshaw (GB) emphasised the NMC standards are at the centre of care and education.
- Standards have been mapped with high level language, evidence and review. Standards have been updated twice.
- So far preliminary findings from the curriculum mapping are showing programmes are meeting the standards.

4. NMC / Midwifery update

- NMC Midwifery action plan has been published online in November 2025.
- The plan outlines our ongoing midwifery work to ensure safe, equitable and person-centered care and education across the UK.

Examples of midwifery work are below:

- Our [principles for supporting women's choices in maternity care](#) – developed in collaboration with women, midwives and our partners across the UK
- Our joint campaign with GMC – '[Good teamwork means better maternity care](#)' – which showcases real examples of effective multidisciplinary teamwork
- Our [review of practice learning](#), will help to ensure practice learning requirements equip midwifery students with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to deliver high-quality care across all settings.
- Midwifery FTP dashboard data will be presented on each of the 4 countries.
- The data goes back to concerns raised, screening decisions, further hearings and allegation that have been recorded. New data will be published from range of referrals and key themes of data.

5. Q&A with CEO

- Paul Rees (PR) mentioned challenging times and the importance of the midwifery action plan. The mapping exercise will inform practice learning review consultation which will be launched in Spring 2026.
- Currently a lot of midwives feel stressed due to the lack of funding and resources.
- Midwifery reviews are still ongoing, journalists want to promote negative media. Our role as a regulator is to promote confidence in midwifery care.
- Rachel Best (RB) commented consultation with MSAG - education midwifery educators are not being spoken to.
- There are midwifery curriculum concerns, standards of training and students being delayed in training.
- **Action:** PR committed to having a conversation with the GMC about maternity. This was following the point from Karen Jewell (CMidO Wales) that 'need the NMC to stand with the GMC.'
- There were then several offers of using MSAG to help/advise from Birt Harlev-Lam (BH-L), Angela McConville (AMcC) and GB – all willing to help.
- [Following the meeting Lisa Boat sent a letter to share with the MSAG members and CEO Paul Rees]

6. Code and Revalidation workshop session

- We are looking at May 2027 Council meeting to provide changes to the Code and Revalidation process.
- New advisory groups are being created:
 - Breadth of Practice Advisory Group - will help to ensure we hear from a wide range of professionals across scopes of practice and work settings.
 - Student/Newly Registered Advisory Group: will help to ensure that students and new professionals, including internationally educated professionals.
 - Public Advisory Group: will help to ensure this work is centred on the views and experiences of the public, patients and service users, including across the four nations.
 - NMC to seek applications for co-chairs from each group who will join the independent steering group.
- There have been 27 public enquires over the past 10 years, topics of enquires include patient safety, maternity, COVID-19, leadership, medicines, children's services, gross

negligence/manslaughter, social care and serious misconduct.

- Themes emerging from stakeholder engagements: Anti-racism and anti-discrimination, behaviour outside of professional practice and ethical issues in practice.
- Next steps in the Code review are to continue the engagement across sectors and four countries.
- We are reviewing revalidation as it was introduced back in 2016. The reason for reviewing is advances in technology and its use in practice, changing role of professionals, including advanced practice and leadership roles, systemic issues, including staff shortages, long wait times, poor cultural sensitivity and learning from public inquiries.
- Feedback from Code and Revalidation:
 - An anonymous survey was sent out to understand people's thoughts on the two topics. The survey was launched on 10 September to those on the register.
 - In total 12,513 valid responses were received to the survey in September.
- Links to other consultations:
 - [Consultation on proposals to increase our registration fees - The Nursing and Midwifery Council](#)
 - [Consultation on improvements to our Fitness to Practise process - The Nursing and Midwifery Council](#)

Closing remarks

- The Chair BH-L closed the meeting, thanking members for a valuable and in-depth discussion.
- BH-L thanked Carmel Bagness on behalf of MSAG and wished her well on her retirement. Carmel's successor at RCN is to be confirmed.

Next MSAG meeting:

- Thursday 12 March 2026 10.00 - 13.00 (on teams)

2026 MSAG meeting dates:

- Thursday 4 June 13.00 – 16.00 (on teams)
- Wednesday 16 September 10.00 – 13.00 (on teams)
- Tuesday 1 December 11.00 – 15.00 (In person)