

Midwifery Panel

Date: 8th February 2021
Time: 14:00-17:00
via GoToMeeting

Meeting notes

| <i>In attendance</i> | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Name | Title |
| Andrea Sutcliffe CBE | Chief Executive and Registrar, NMC |
| Anne Trotter | Assistant Director Professional Practice, NMC |
| Beth Faircliffe | Events Manager, NMC |
| Bethan Lethbridge | Events Officer, NMC |
| Dalie Mumba | Team Administrator, NMC |
| Dr Dale Spence | Midwifery Officer, Department of Health NI |
| Dr Anna van der Gaag CBE | Chair |
| Dr Jacqui Williams | Senior Midwifery Adviser (Education), NMC |
| Dr Janet Hirst | Head of the School of Healthcare, University of Leeds |
| Edward Welsh | Executive Director Communications and Engagement, NMC |
| Gabrielle Jones | Stakeholder Relations Manager, NMC |
| Gill Walton | Chief Executive, Royal College of Midwives |
| Karen Jewell | Nursing Officer for Maternity and Early Years, Office of the CNO Wales |
| Logan Van Lessen | Consultant Midwife (Public Health) |
| Nicky Clark | Chair of Lead Midwives for Education Strategic Reference Group |
| Professor Ann Holmes | Chief Midwifery Advisor and Associate Chief Nursing Officer, Scottish Government |
| Professor Geraldine Walters CBE | Executive Director Professional Practice, NMC |
| Professor Gwendolen Bradshaw | Professor in Health Service Education at the University of Bradford |
| Professor Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent OBE | Chief Midwifery Officer, NHS England |
| Professor Janice Sigsworth CBE | Director of Nursing, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust |
| Professor Mary Renfrew FRSE | Professor of Mother and Infant Health, University of Dundee |
| Sally Ashton-May (observing) | Lead Midwife, Health Education England |
| Sascha Wells-Munro OBE | Deputy Chief Midwifery Officer, NHS England |
| Verena Wallace MBE | Senior Midwifery Adviser (Policy), NMC |

| Apologies | |
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| Cath Broderick Donna Ockenden Professor Fiona McQueen Professor Jean White CBE Ruth May | Lay member Senior Midwifery Adviser, NMC Chief Nursing Officer, Scottish Government Chief Nursing Officer, Welsh Government Chief Nursing Officer, NHS England |

Handouts

- NMC Update for Midwifery Panel (February 2021)
- October 2020 Midwifery Panel Notes
- Ockenden Report: Paper 1 Ockenden review recommendations, maternity safety and the NMC Future Midwife standards

Agenda items covered

1 Welcome from Chair

- Anna welcomed attendees to the meeting, making opening reflections and outlining the agenda, instructions for break-out sessions, and housekeeping points.
- Anna welcomed Sally Ashton-May, Lead Midwife at Health Education England to the meeting as an observer.
- Anna shared her thanks to Jean White, who is retiring from her position as Chief Nursing Officer for Wales in March, for her contributions to Midwifery Panel and nursing and midwifery more broadly.
- Anna noted the new inquiry into disparity in maternal care for ethnic minorities led by Shaheen Rahman QC, highlighting the importance of this work.

2 Update from Chief Executive

- Andrea gave an overview of key updates from the update paper distributed ahead of the meeting, including giving evidence to the Health and Social Care Committee inquiry into maternity services safety in England and the NMC's covid-19 response.

Comments and questions from panel members

- The RCM is carrying out research to explore in breadth and depth the narrative on normal birth. This is being done in collaboration with partners.
- We clarified that the recruitment for our new Chair will remain open until 9 March and we are hoping to have someone in post by summer.

- We agreed to explore making our equality, diversity and inclusion work more prominent on our website homepage.

3 The Ockenden report

- Andrea presented an overview of the background, emerging findings and recommendations of the Ockenden review and set out the format of the later discussion session; to explore what the NMC as a regulator can do to help support the implementation of the recommendations and to input into the second report.

Comments and questions from panel members

- The role of regulators in the oversight and scrutiny of multidisciplinary team working was raised.
- The role of collaboration was welcomed, and further joint work between the NMC and GMC encouraged. Learning from Cwm Taf highlighted the importance of shared accountability and working across professions to address problems.
- There was wide support for the suggestion that reports across all four countries on maternity services safety be triangulated. This is already happening in some areas.
- The importance of the NMC focusing on its regulatory role was highlighted.
- There was support for an evidence based approach, and the Future Midwife standards was given as an example of where we have a large positive evidence base on what works.
- There was support for the inclusive language used in the Future Midwife standards and a suggestion that this could be mirrored in future reports.
- Involving education partners, including the Council of Deans of Health, was raised as key when thinking about implementation of the Future Midwife standards.

4 Four-Country Update

- Midwifery leads from each of the four countries gave a presentation on their recent work, particularly focusing on the response to Covid-19 and maternity services safety.

5 Discussion session

Attendees split into groups to discuss the Ockenden report and recommendations, how can the NMC use its regulatory role to improve maternity safety and influence positive experiences for women, babies and families.

- Feedback from panel members covered a range of themes:

- **The role of the Future Midwife standards.** Panel members felt that the standards have an important role in addressing the emerging findings and recommendations from both the Ockenden report and previous reports. Embedding them fully in education and practice is therefore important. Panel members made suggestions relating to this including:
 - Using CPD funding to focus on Future Midwife implementation.
 - The role of revalidation in supporting existing midwives to engage with the standards.
 - Promoting and taking forward the transformative aspects of the standards.
 - The importance of partnership working between Universities and placement providers to support effective implementation.
 - The potential future impact of our exit from the European Union and the removal of the EU Directive on the standards (explorative research is currently underway to scope this out and panel members are encouraged to share their views to inform this research).
 - There was agreement that the NMC should write to Donna Ockenden about the role of the standards, reflecting the points made in the discussions.
- **Promoting the positive role of midwives.** Panel members felt that it was important to promote the positive difference midwives make to women, babies and families: 'a midwife improves outcomes and saves lives'. Panel members are supportive of the NMC using its role and voice to promote the good work and impact of midwives.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion.** Panel members felt that embedding EDI was crucial to embed across all work on maternity services safety.
- **Considering all reports and evidence.** Panel members welcomed the discussion and the importance of reflecting on the Ockenden review findings and recommendations across all four countries. They also supported using all reports and evidence on this issue and noted the importance of considering each UK country equally.
- **Culture.** There were discussions on the importance of culture, and reflection on the joint work happening in this space across professions and organisations.

6 Feedback from discussions

- The groups fed back to each other on their discussions, as summarised above.
- Andrea reflected on the discussions and thanked panel members for their contributions, confirming that the NMC will use the discussions to frame how we write to Donna to talk about the important role that the Future Midwife standards have in addressing the issues raised by her review. Andrea said that the NMC would now consider how to take this forward and would keep panel members updated.
- Andrea also updated on two matters:
 - **EU Directive research.** There is work underway to look at what we may need to do as a result of the EU Directive falling away. We are carrying out exploratory research of the evidence and of views on this, looking at midwifery and nursing separately. If panel members wish to engage with this please let us know.
 - **Midwifery and the NMC.** Jacqui and Verena have been taking forward work, following the previous meeting discussion, on our ongoing engagement with midwives. There will be a draft paper shared with panel members on this soon and we welcome contributions and reflections.

7 Questions or comments from Panel members

Sally thanked the panel for inviting her to join and said she had found the discussions extremely helpful to be a part of.

8 Meeting close

- Anna closed the meeting, thanking all for their participation and contributions. The next meeting will be held on 3 June 2021.

Summary of action items

| Action item | | Responsibility | Due date for update |
|-------------|---|----------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Explore making our EDI work more prominent on the website homepage | Edward Welsh | Next meeting |
| 2 | NMC to write to Donna Ockenden regarding the role of the Future Midwife standards | Gabi Jones | Next meeting |