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# Nottingham Maternity Research Network

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Nottingham Maternity Research Network aims to include the views of a range of local maternity service users. If you know anyone who might be interested in joining us, you can give them our email address or direct them to the website. We'll be happy to hear from them!



Join us on Facebook - just search for Nottingham Maternity Research Network and hit the like button!

## Welcome!



A warm welcome to the latest issue of our regular network newsletter. In this edition, you'll find a summary of our latest meeting, information about two forthcoming pieces of work, and a call for involvement in a study of video calls in early labour. We're also introducing our new Associate Professor, Phoebe Pallotti.

## REPORT ON THE JULY NETWORK MEETING

Network members met at the Embankment pub on July 11th. We enjoyed this new venue, although the heavy rain on the glass ceiling did curtail discussion briefly!

We introduced our recent 'talking heads' video, which you can see on our website, and discussed further media to be added to the website over the next few months. Network members felt these additions give a real flavour of what Notts Maternity involvement looks like.

We shared the findings from our recent small study of women's views and experiences of writing and using birth plans, and network members came up with some great ideas for further research in this area.

Our new associate professor, Phoebe, introduced forthcoming work we're involved in around developing guidance on care in labour—see below for more details.

Our colleague Jane Morrell attended the final part of the meeting, to discuss a proposed project around perinatal mental health. Network members were invited to offer their opinions about levels of interest in the study area, the development of a risk assessment tool, and a subsequent intervention based on this tool.

## Developing guidance in relation to care in labour: a project commissioned by the Royal College of Midwives

The Maternal Health and Wellbeing research group has been asked to produce new guidance about care in labour. Notts Maternity members Sam Foulke and Rose Norman have produced a summary of what this project is all about:

These new guidelines are being produced by the University of Nottingham for the Royal College of Midwives (RCM), to enable midwives to provide individualised care for women in labour in the UK, across all birth settings and in all personal circumstances. The guidelines will be written in collaboration with a range of organisations and individuals, including professional bodies, charities and mothers.

First, existing evidence and guidelines will be reviewed, and areas needing further reviews of research or updating of guidelines will be identified - especially for women who have potentially more complicated pregnancies.

The aim is to provide guidance to ensure all women receive care that is unique to their needs. Once the guidelines have been written, there will be a short period of time for testing and consultation with a range of organisations and service users. The final guidance will include a guide for professionals, and a reference guide for women outlining what to expect during the birth of their baby.

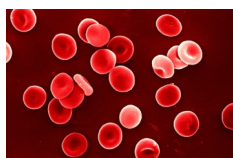
The project is now underway, and we'll be giving regular updates as it progresses over the next year.

## Get involved in a new study: (Video)call the midwife!

**We're looking for network members to get involved in one of our research projects.** We're currently doing some work looking into the use of Skype and other video-calling platforms in early labour, in the context of how women and their birth partners communicate with midwives during this time. To progress this work, we're applying for research funding so that we can better understand whether this type of technology might lead to improved outcomes for women. We need your help to ensure that we'll be capturing the things that are most important to women and their birth partners in the proposed research.

**Does this sound like something you'd be interested in getting involved in?** If you'd like to meet with the research team to discuss and shape this work over the next couple of months, or if you'd just like to share your views or learn more about the project, please contact Gina Sands. Gina has recently joined the Maternal Health and Wellbeing Research Group here at the university, while Julie Roberts is on maternity leave. Gina's background is in health services research, and she's excited to be working on this project during her time with us. You can email Gina at [gina.sands@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:gina.sands@nottingham.ac.uk), or you can call her on 0115-823-0243.

## Forthcoming project: pregnancy and anaemia

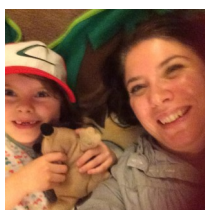


A group of researchers (including specialists in maternity care and in anaemia) are interested in finding out whether there are ways to prevent anaemia during pregnancy. Anaemia is where the haemoglobin, or red blood cells, in the blood are reduced, and is most commonly due to low levels of iron. It's common during and after pregnancy, although not an issue for every woman. Some women with anaemia can feel very tired and often look pale during pregnancy. They may need to finish work earlier than they had planned, and it may mean a slower recovery after giving birth. Anaemia may also affect the growth of their baby. Women with anaemia during or after pregnancy may be advised to take iron tablets, but these do not suit everyone.

Rather than waiting for anaemia to develop during pregnancy, these researchers are interested in how it could be prevented in the first place, and in whether women feel this is an important area to study. We'll be discussing this in our next network meeting in October. If this subject interests you, keep an eye on our homepage at [www.nottsmaternity.ac.uk](http://www.nottsmaternity.ac.uk) for details of the meeting.

## Meet a Member of the Network

### Phoebe Pallotti, Associate Professor in Midwifery



I started out as an anthropologist, but soon retrained as a midwife because I wanted to do something both useful and grounded. I thought, when I started my training, that the battle for birth was the last great fight for feminism, but I'm now more inclined to see it as the first, and one still to be won. But if women can regain control over their amazing child-making selves and over the care they receive, whatever care it is that they happen to need, then we can change the world.

As a new associate professor here at the university, I'm beginning to develop research in global maternity, as the challenges in maternity on this scale interest me greatly, and I'm also working on the RCM project to support women in labour in the UK. One of the things that drew me to work at Nottingham was the commitment to research grounded in the people we're producing the science for: mothers and their families. It has been a real pleasure to get to know some of the Notts Maternity network, and I look forward to collaborating on many exciting projects in the future!

I have a daughter, Lyra, who is six and fierce, and we do a lot of cycling, walking, and of course lots of Italian cooking. I'm also learning to play the piano, as a complete novice, at the age of 38. I'm now nearly better than a 5-year-old and very proud of that!

Get in Touch, Spread the Word!

Visit our website: [www.nottsmaternity.ac.uk](http://www.nottsmaternity.ac.uk)

Email us at: [HS-nottsmaternity@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:HS-nottsmaternity@nottingham.ac.uk)