



The University of  
Nottingham

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#### NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday 28th April

6.45-9.30pm

Tower Building

University of Nottingham

NG7 2RD

Light refreshments provided

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!

# Nottingham Maternity Research Network

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

MARCH 2015

## Welcome!

A warm welcome to the first issue of our regular network newsletter. We'll be sending this out every three months, and in here you'll find summaries of recent panel meetings, details of our current work, opportunities for involvement, and links to other websites you might find useful.



Spring is coming!

## JANUARY'S NETWORK MEETING

Members of the network met on the University of Nottingham's main campus in mid-January, and we discussed progress so far:

- ◆ The domain name for the network, 'nottsmaternity.ac.uk', had been approved at university web team level, and registration was awaited. Registration has now been completed, and we're currently designing the site. There has been lots of input from network members, and this will continue in the next meeting;
- ◆ Publicity postcards were about to be printed, the design having been approved by network members. These are now printed, and will be distributed around Nottingham and beyond over the next few months;
- ◆ We discussed methods of communication with network members. It was decided that four meetings per year would work well, with evenings favoured. The group felt regular communication was important, via email and newsletter, with updates on studies underway, events coming soon, and any new opportunities.

## New Topic under Discussion

The research group is currently looking at birth plans as an area for future research.

We've been exploring studies that have been done in the past, and we think there are some important points to be addressed:

- ◆ Do women think birth plans are important?
- ◆ If women are completing birth plans before labour, where do they go to find information they might need?
- ◆ Do birth plans have any impact on women's expectations and experiences of pain or fear of childbirth?

Have you used birth plans in the past, or would you consider doing so in the future? Do you think it had any impact on your labour and birth experience? We'd love to hear from you, so drop us an email to let us know what you think - our address is on the next page.



## Women's Experiences of Being 'overdue' in Pregnancy

We are at the beginning of a new study about women's experiences when they are pregnant beyond their estimated due date. The limited research available suggests that this may be a difficult time for some women and that women may need additional support. We will interview women who have given birth at 41 weeks or later as well as running an online focus group. We have funding from the Nottingham Hospitals Charity and we are preparing an application to the ethics committee. Two members of the Maternity Research Network have given advice about the research design, including whether the administrative steps needed to give access to a secure online discussion will be acceptable to women, and how to make the interview study more attractive to potential participants. To find out more, contact Denis Walsh or Julie Roberts on our usual email address.

*'If we want medical and health research to be of real benefit to patients and their families then we must strive to involve them more in setting the questions to which we are seeking answers, the way in which research is conducted and, finally, how it is disseminated and put into practice'*

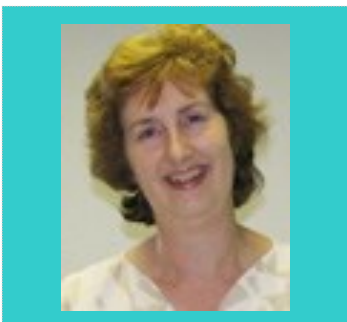
- Simon Denegri, INVOLVE

## Why get Involved in Research?

Lots of work has been done looking at why it's important to involve service users in research. Some of the benefits identified include:

- ◆ Giving researchers a different perspective on the work they do;
- ◆ Gaining insight into the lived experiences of service users;
- ◆ Shaping research according to the needs and views of service users as well as researchers;
- ◆ Exposing service users to new opportunities and experiences;
- ◆ A sense of empowerment for service users and their carers;
- ◆ An increased sense of ownership for service users;
- ◆ Assistance with the recruitment of study participants.

If you'd like to find out more, [www.invo.org.uk](http://www.invo.org.uk) is a good place to start. That's the website of INVOLVE - funded by the National Institute for Health Research, they support active public involvement in NHS, public health and social care research. The website holds a wealth of resources for people interested in public involvement.



## Meet a Member of the Network

### Helen Spiby, Professor in Midwifery

I became a researcher because, as a midwife, I believe that it is essential that women and families receive high quality maternity care and that maternity policy and services should be based on research. My areas of interest include the organisation of maternity care; the role and contributions of midwives and other members of the maternity team; preparation for and care during labour and women's experiences of maternity care.

I believe that involving service users in research is vital if we are to answer questions that are important to women in ways that are appropriate. As researchers, we need to work with service users at all stages of the research process, from shaping research questions to sharing findings.

**Get in Touch, Spread the Word!**

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

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