

North West Regional
Maternity Strategy

2023-25 OUR VISION AND STRATEGY





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Maternity care has featured as a significant priority in healthcare since the publication of the Safer Maternity Care Next steps towards the national maternity ambition (2016), Safer Maternity Care: The National Maternity Safety Strategy - Progress and Next Steps (2017) and the Better Births Report (2016). Better Births: Improving outcomes of maternity services in England – A Five Year Forward View for maternity care’ was published in February 2016 and set out a clear vision for maternity services across England to become safer, more personalised, kinder, professional and family friendly; where every woman and birthing person has access to information to enable them to make decisions about their care; and where they and their baby can access support that is centred on their individual needs and circumstances. It also calls for all staff to be supported to deliver care, which is women centred, working in high performing teams, in organisations which are well led and in cultures which promote innovation, continuous learning, and break down organisational and

professional boundaries. The implementation of the Better Births vision has also supported the Secretary of State’s ambition to halve the number of stillbirths, neonatal and maternal deaths, and brain injuries by 2025.

The maternity workforce is the key enabler for ensuring the Better Births vision becomes a reality. There needs to be the right workforce, in the right place, at the right time to deliver safe, personal care for women, birthing people and their families. As the key enabler, workforce is a substantial focus within the North West regional maternity strategy.

Continuing to deliver the Better Births vision is reliant upon a wide range of organisations and stakeholders working together and embracing change to ensure high-quality services for women, birthing people, their babies, and families, while responding to the changing NHS landscape, the varying policy drivers and levers plus any national reports into the ongoing quality and safety of maternity services in England i.e., Ockenden (2020/2022)

East Kent (2022). The Regional team is committed to ensuring the voices of women and birthing people, as a key stakeholder in maternity services, are represented in the North West.

The North West regional maternity strategy will support our Local Maternity and Neonatal Systems (LMNS) and Maternity Providers to deliver the vision set out in Better Births (2016), the Long Term Plan (2018) the annual NHS planning guidance and the three year delivery plan for maternity and neonatal services (2023). The three year plan brings together the improvements required following the publication in 2022 of the reports on maternity services in Shrewsbury and Telford, and maternity and neonatal services in East Kent. The aim of North West Maternity strategy is to support all key stakeholders work towards the ‘North West being the safest, most personalised, and desirable place in England to give birth and work’.

[» Meet the team](#)

Better Births: personal & safe

Better Births Report (2016)

3 year plan

Safer Maternity Care (2016)

Safer Maternity Care (2017)

Ockenden (2020/2022)

East Kent (2022)



Our Vision is

“ For the North West region to be the safest place in England to have a baby, where women and their families choose to birth, and the midwifery workforce choose to work. ”

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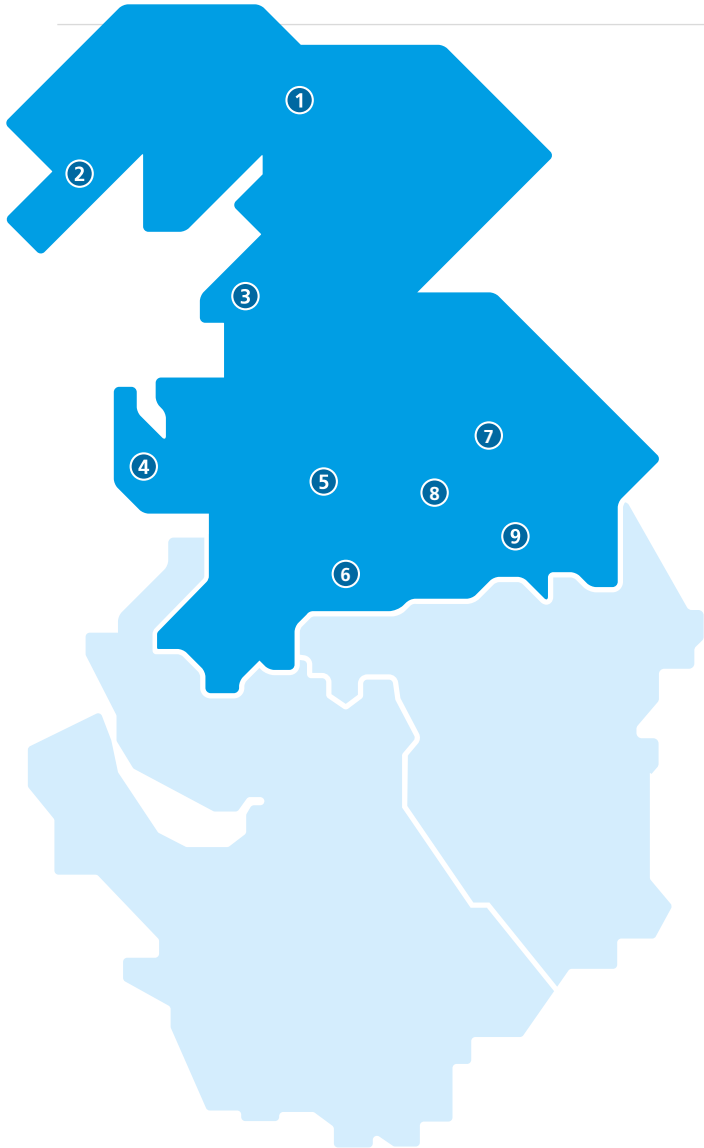
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Lancashire & South Cumbria Local Maternity & Neonatal System








University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay
NHS Foundation Trust


①	Helme Chase Midwife Led Unit, Westmoreland General Hospital, Kendal	 
②	South Lakes Birth Centre, Furness General Hospital	 
③	The Central Delivery Suite, Royal Lancaster Infirmary	 









Blackpool Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

④	Fylde Coast Birth Centre, Blackpool Victoria Hospital	 
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Lancashire Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

⑤	Sharoe Green Maternity Unit, Royal Preston Hospital	   
⑥	Chorley Birth Centre, Chorley & South Ribble Hospital	 


East Lancashire Hospitals
NHS Trust
A University Teaching Trust

⑦	Lancashire Women's & Newborn Centre, Burnley General Hospital	  
⑧	Blackburn Birth Centre	 
⑨	Rossendale Birth Centre, Rossendale Primary Care Centre	 

KEY |  CONSULTANT LED LABOUR WARD  HOME BIRTH  ALONGSIDE MIDWIFE-LED UNIT (AMU)¹  FREE-STANDING MIDWIFE-LED UNIT (FMU)²  MATERNAL MEDICINE CENTRE

¹ A place to give birth that's on the same hospital site as a maternity unit, but where care is provided by midwives and not doctors. Also known as an alongside birth centre.

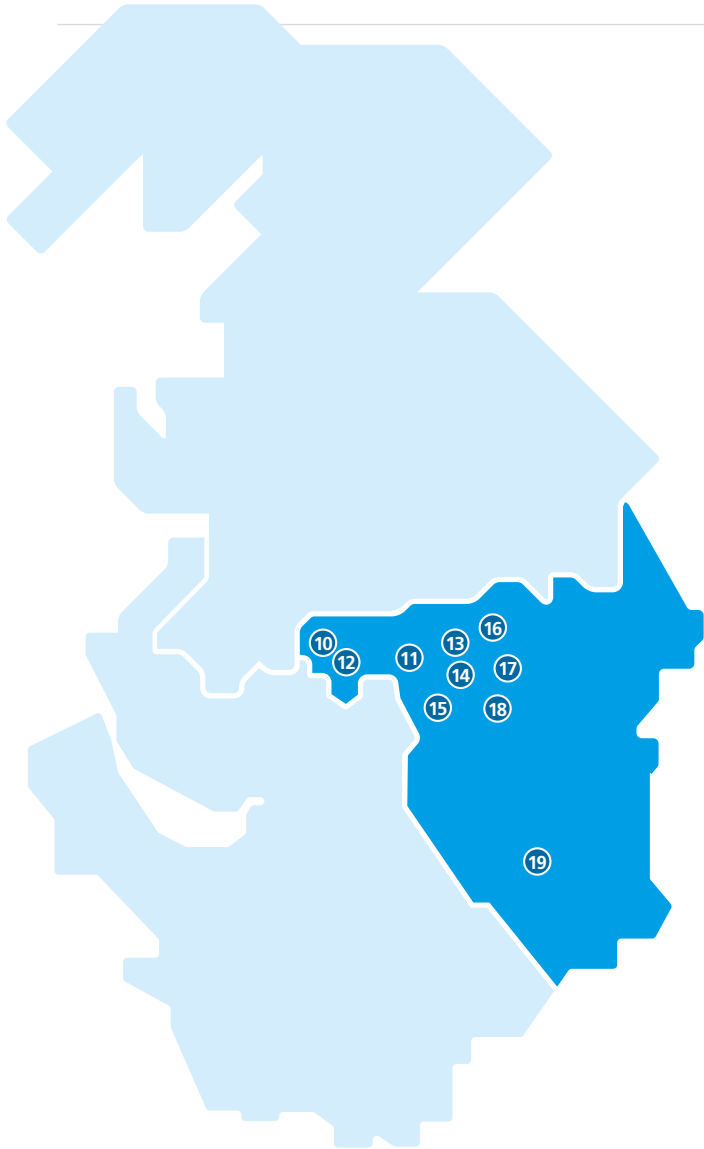
² A place to give birth that is run by midwives and isn't on the same site as a hospital maternity unit. Also called a standalone or free-standing birth centre.



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Greater Manchester and Eastern Cheshire Local Maternity & Neonatal System

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<div><div>NHS</div><div>Bolton</div><div>NHS Foundation Trust</div></div>		<div><div>NHS</div><div>Northern Care Alliance</div><div>NHS Foundation Trust</div></div>			
10	Royal Bolton Hospital	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	16	Royal Oldham Hospital	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>
11	Ingleside Birth and Community Centre, Oakwood Park	<div><div></div></div>	<div><div>NHS</div><div>Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care</div><div>NHS Foundation Trust</div></div>		
<div><div>NHS</div><div>Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh</div><div>NHS Foundation Trust</div></div>		17	Tameside General Hospital	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	
12	Royal Albert Edward Infirmary, Wigan	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div>NHS</div><div>Stockport</div><div>NHS Foundation Trust</div></div>		
<div><div>NHS</div><div>Manchester University</div><div>NHS Foundation Trust</div></div>		18	Stepping Hill Hospital, Stockport	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	
13	North Manchester General Hospital, Crumpsall	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div>NHS</div><div>East Cheshire</div><div>NHS Trust</div></div>		
14	St Mary's Hospital, Manchester	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	19	Macclesfield District General Hospital	<div><div></div></div>
15	St Mary's, Wythenshawe	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			

KEY |

CONSULTANT LED LABOUR WARD

HOME BIRTH

ALONGSIDE MIDWIFE-LED UNIT (AMU)¹

FREE-STANDING MIDWIFE-LED UNIT (FMU)²

MATERNAL MEDICINE CENTRE

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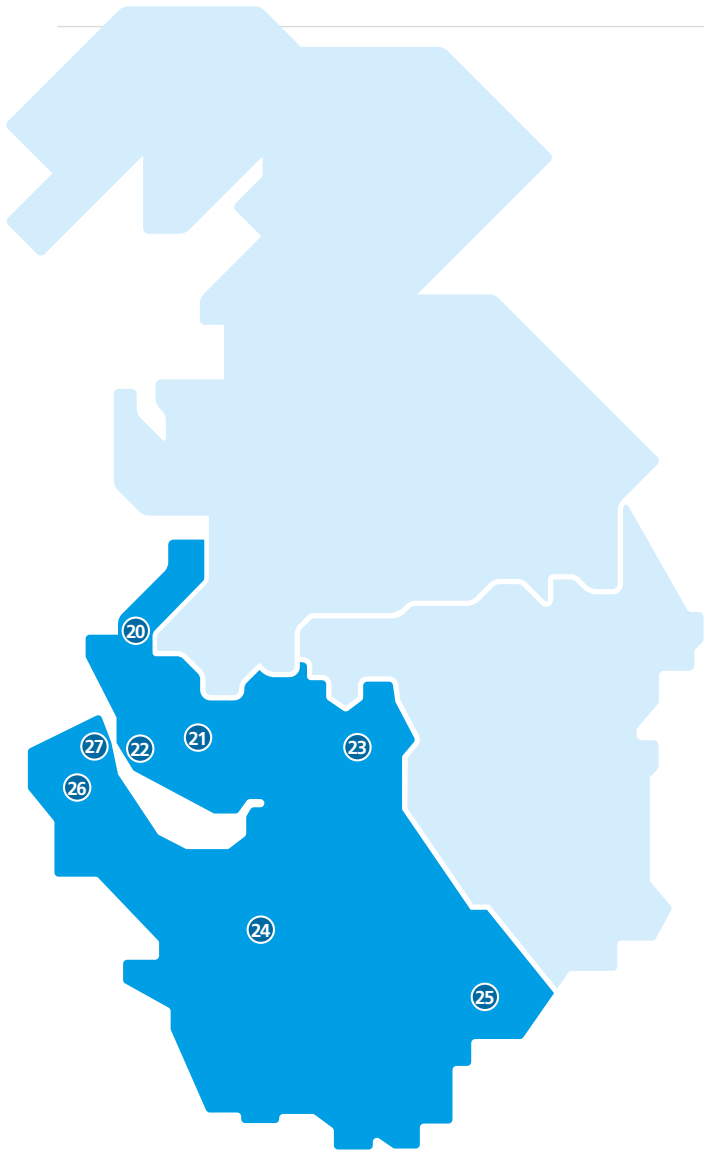
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Cheshire and Merseyside Local Maternity & Neonatal System



NHS
Southport and
Ormskirk Hospital
NHS Trust

②① Ormskirk District Hospital

NHS
St Helens and Knowsley
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

②① Whiston Hospital

NHS
Liverpool Women's
NHS Foundation Trust

②② Liverpool Women's
NHS Foundation Trust

NHS
Warrington and
Halton Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

②③ Warrington Hospital

NHS
Countess of
Chester Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

②④ Countess of Chester Health Park

NHS
Mid Cheshire Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

②⑤ Leighton Hospital

NHS
Wirral University
Teaching Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

②⑥ Arrowe Park Hospital

②⑦ Seacombe Birth Centre

KEY | ● CONSULTANT LED LABOUR WARD ● HOME BIRTH ● ALONGSIDE MIDWIFE-LED UNIT (AMU)¹ ● FREE-STANDING MIDWIFE-LED UNIT (FMU)² ● MATERNAL MEDICINE CENTRE

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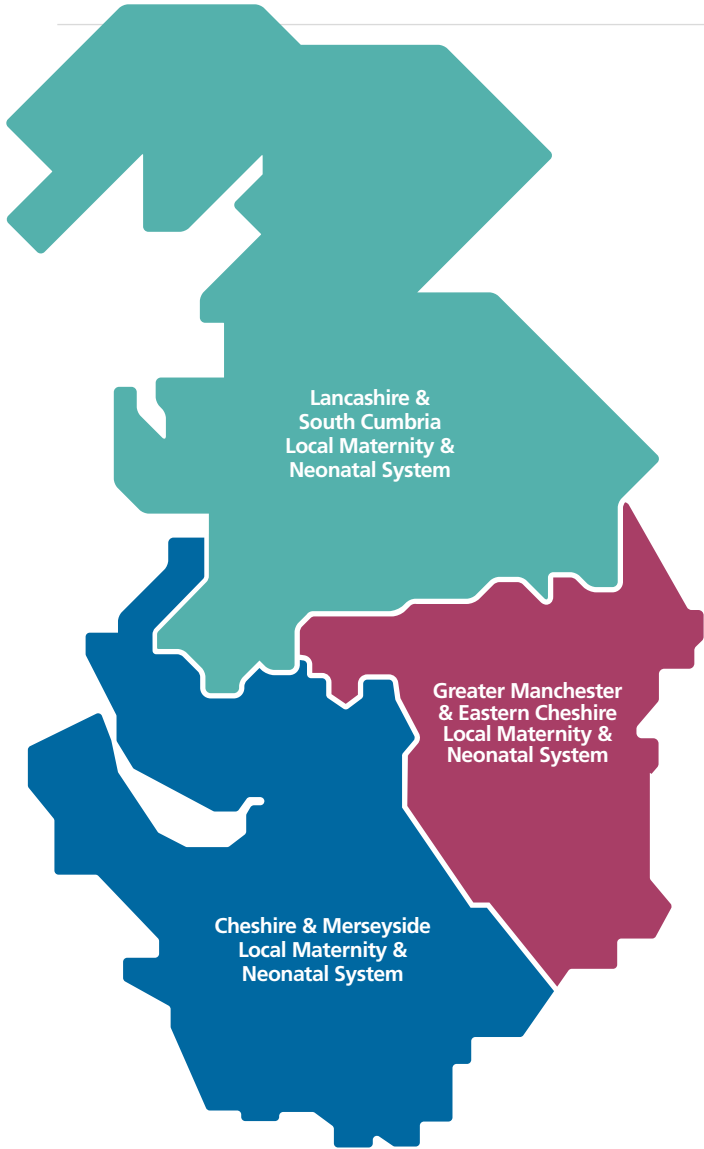
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Maternity Voice Partnerships

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MATERNITY VOICE PARTNERSHIPS	LINKS
Lancashire and South Cumbria	Globe
Blackpool Teaching Hospitals	Facebook Email
East Lancashire Hospitals	Facebook Instagram Twitter Email
University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay	Globe Facebook Instagram Twitter Email

MATERNITY VOICE PARTNERSHIPS	LINKS
Greater Manchester and East Cheshire	Globe

MATERNITY VOICE PARTNERSHIPS	LINKS
Cheshire & Merseyside	Facebook Instagram Twitter Email
Liverpool	Facebook Instagram Twitter Email
Wirral	Facebook Instagram Twitter Email
Chester	Facebook Instagram Twitter Email
Central Chester	Facebook Instagram Twitter Email
Southport, Ormskirk & Sefton	Facebook Instagram Twitter Email
St Helens	Facebook Instagram Twitter Email
Warrington & Halton	Facebook Instagram Twitter Email



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Strategy

The North West Maternity Team work with the National programmes to translate national strategy and policies to fit local and regional circumstance and in turn, support the Integrated Care Boards (ICB) to deliver on priorities.

We are the conduit between the National NHSE maternity team, the LMNS's and Provider Trusts.





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Improvement

Partnership Working

- **Service users** -The Regional team are committed to ensuring the voices of women and birthing people, as the key stakeholders in maternity services, are represented in the North West. Our NW Patient and Public Voice Partner is an integral part of the NW regional maternity team, providing us with insight and challenge from our NW Maternity Voice Partnership (MVP) Chairs and members.
- **The NW regional maternity team** work closely with the Clinical Networks in the North West for Maternity to create improvement through clinical leadership, strategic focus, large-scale change and transformation to improve maternity services for women, birthing people and their families.

Equity and Equality

- The Equity and Equality: guidance for local maternity systems highlights that equity means all mothers and babies will achieve health outcomes that are as good as the groups with the best health outcomes. For this, maternity and neonatal services need to respond to each person's unique health and social situation – with increasing support as health inequalities increase – so that care is safe and personal for all.

Integrated Care Systems will take a lead role in tackling health inequalities, building on the Core20PLUS5 approach introduced in 2021/22 to support the reduction of health inequalities experienced by adults, children and young people, at both the national and system level. The Regional Maternity Team facilitate the North West Maternity Improving Equity Collaborative (MIEC) which provide support to the three ICS / LMNS's within region to delivery their maternity equity and equality action plans by working together to share learning, remove unwarranted variation and ensure consistency of approach.

The MIEC are informed by local, regional, and national policy drivers and provide expertise and system leadership to support the co-production, development and collaboration required to reduce inequalities for Black, Asian and Mixed ethnic groups and the most vulnerable pregnant women.

[Equity Plan](#)
[Core20PLUS5](#)



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Improvement

Midwifery Ambassadors – transforming Perceptions of Midwifery

The NHS Long Term Plan recognises creating a healthy, high-performing system, is dependent on our people. The scale and pervasiveness of change required to deliver the Long-Term Plan are unprecedented. Midwives have a significant contribution to make. Much depends on our ability to empower midwives to play an active role in shaping the future and to create a workforce that is fit for purpose for the future. The aim of the Perceptions of Midwifery programme is to build the passion and creativity within the profession, building confidence and creating conditions that enable our current and future workforce to deliver the NHS' mission of high-quality care.

The national Transforming Perceptions of Midwifery was re launched, after the pandemic, with the objective of examining the perceptions of midwifery, held by those in the profession, family and friends, health and social care policy makers, the media, service users, the public and of those who may plan to enter the profession. The aim is to inspire the enthusiasm of front-line midwives, empowering them to become change agents in their own work settings by becoming Midwifery Ambassadors.

The North West Maternity team will consolidate and expand regionally the achievements of the national Perceptions of Midwifery work, moving towards a separate piece of work bespoke to the North West. This is focused on developing a North West Midwifery Ambassadors Network, building their own power to make a difference whilst improving their confidence and knowledge. It is about igniting collective brilliance and power of midwives by enabling everyone with an interest to contribute in a meaningful way. Through the increasingly powerful informal leadership

skills of midwives; influencing, connecting, networking, running campaigns, using virtual methods and social media we will empower them to transform the perception of the midwifery profession from the ground up.



@TeamCMidO



#PerceptionsofMidwifery
#LoveYourMidwife
#MidwiferyAmbassadors

North West Maternity Research Network

On 8th February 2023 the National Chief Midwifery Officers Team hosted a National Maternity Research Conference. Central to the event was the launch of the National Maternity Research Strategy a key part of the strategy is the ambition to set up a national system of regional maternity research networks across the 7 regions for which NHS England have oversight.

The North West Maternity Research Network was launched in February 2023 enabling a region wide celebration of the contribution research has had to maternal health and care, as well as giving an opportunity to collaborate on regional updates and facilitate local collaboration between Higher Education Institutions and Clinical teams.



Regulation

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- We recognise the importance of supporting and monitoring the progress of transformation. The NW Maternity Team oversee progress and delivery of the Maternity Delivery & Programme and any other maternity related issues across the North West Region through the NW Perinatal Board.

The aim of the Board is to ensure that the vision set out in “Better Births” (2016) is delivered in line with the most recent NHSE Guidance, and any other quality or safety related issues, levers, or policy drivers that are relevant to maternity services.

- We are committed to the timely identification and escalation of quality and safety concerns in the NW maternity providers to ensure appropriate supportive action is taken.

The North West Perinatal Safety Surveillance and Concerns Group has been implemented to identify and respond to emerging safety concerns in maternity and neonatal services across the North West.

It brings together regional representatives from regulators and other national bodies to draw together their insights and form appropriate actions.



Safety and Quality

We want the standard of maternity services in the North West to be of the highest quality and the safest in England. As a regional maternity team, we monitor this providing greater insight of the safety and quality of care into the North West Maternity providers. We do this through:

- The development and implementation of the regional maternity heat map which includes key safety and quality metrics that help provide important insight into the maternity providers and flag any additional support required.
- Visiting all maternity providers annually ensuring ongoing work to embed the Ockenden and other national recommendations.
- Support for the implementation of various safety initiatives, such as SBLCBV2saving-babies-lives-care-bundle-version-two-v5.pdf (england.nhs.uk) / Ockenden Final report of the Ockenden review - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) / CNST Maternity incentive scheme - NHS Resolution / MatNeoSIP NHS England / Maternity and Neonatal Safety Improvement Programme
- Support LMNS assurance processes including the Perinatal Quality Surveillance Model implementing-a-revised-perinatal-quality-surveillance-model.pdf (england.nhs.uk) and the implementation of PSIRFNHS England / Patient Safety Incident Response Framework, with the escalation of concerns through the NW Perinatal Safety Surveillance and Concerns Group and the NW Perinatal Board
- Sharing of learning regionally in relation to the initiatives, incidents, collate, analyse and distribute data from a variety of sources including the North West Regional dashboard / Maternity Safety Data Set / CQC reports / CQC maternity survey etc.

[SBLCB version 2](#)
[Ockenden \(2020/2022\)](#)
[CNST](#)
[Maternity & Neonatal Safety](#)
[Perinatal Quality Surveillance](#)
[Patient Safety](#)
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Transformation

The Maternity Transformation Programme (MTP) initially sought to achieve the vision for maternity services set out in Better Births but more recently has widened its scope to include new initiatives and service improvements. The NW maternity team is committed to achieving this transformation for the women and birthing people within the NW region. We provide oversight, guidance, and support to the LMNSs and Maternity providers to develop, implement, embed, and sustain transformation through the following initiatives and programme of work.

- The North West Maternal Medicine Network
- Midwifery Continuity of Carer Continuity of carer
- Personalised Care and Support - Personalised Care and Support Planning in Maternity Service
- Report template - NHSI website ([england.nhs.uk](https://www.england.nhs.uk)) - national guidance Choice and Personalisation
- Pandemic recovery work
- Equity & Equality Plans – Equity and equality: Guidance for local maternity systems
- Maternal Mental Health Service
- Continuous Glucose Monitoring
- Maternity Digital Strategy
- The development and implementation of the North West Maternity Research Network



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- **International Recruitment** – We are committed to ensuring all our internationally recruited midwives have a personalised, supported transition into NW Maternity Providers. The NW maternity team work to provide system wide leadership with the IR recruitment team, the LMNS, the pastoral care team and the providers to support the entire recruitment process – testimonial from one of the IR
- **Maternity Support Workers** – We recognise that MSWs are an integral part of the maternity workforce and we want to ensure we provide opportunities for individuals to develop and grow throughout their careers. One of the opportunities available are MSW and Midwifery Apprenticeships which are supported throughout the North West Apprenticeships - [Apprenticeships \(rcm.org.uk\)](https://rcm.org.uk) Maternity Support Worker - [Step Into The NHS : Maternity support worker](#)
- **Retention** – Everyone has been through unprecedented times during the pandemic, and it is clear the impact that this has had on the maternity workforce. We have brought together a community of practice for the maternity retention leads in the North West, who are providing pastoral care and support to the maternity workforce in all providers. This regional group are developing and sharing initiatives or interventions to support the long-term health and well-being of midwives, MSWs and the wider team.
- **Our future workforce is extremely important to us** - We work closely with NHSE Workforce, Training and Education Directorate, our LMNSs and Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) to ensure our future workforce are well prepared and supported into practice at the point of qualification.
- **Leadership** – We understand a significant part of delivering safe, high quality maternity services is strong and effective leadership. We want to ensure our current and future leaders have the best opportunities and support their potential. Leadership training, developed by our midwifery leaders in Cheshire and Mersey LMNS, has been rolled out across the region with the aim being to enhance courage, compassion, care and connection within our leadership teams.
- **Return to Midwifery Practice** – We value and want to support all midwives, including those who wish to return to the profession. There are two routes for those wishing to return to midwifery practice –
 1. **Return to Practice** - this route is appropriate for midwife's who's NMC registration has lapsed and would involve an accredited return to practice course.
 2. **Return to Midwifery** - for those who haven't been in practice but remain on the NMC register, providing the ability to update clinical skills.
 Either way, we support midwives by securing a placement in one of our NW maternity providers, who give the time, and support needed to return to midwifery.

Leadership

Courage Compassion Care & Connection

Sharing our Passion & Purpose



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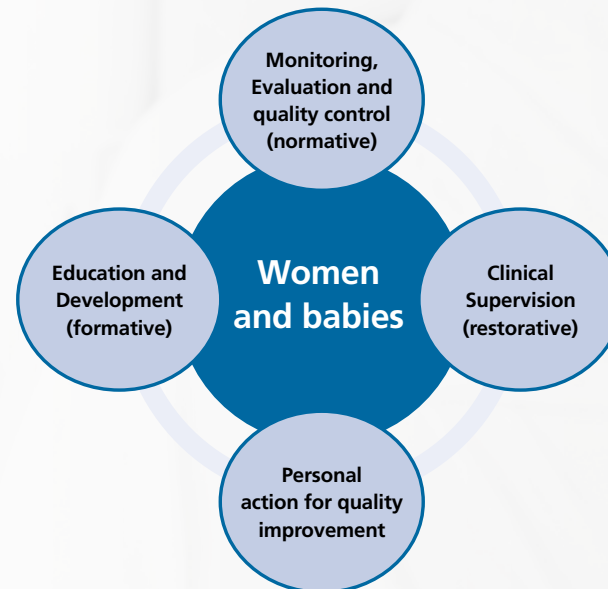
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AEQUIP

- **A-EQUIP is an acronym for Advocating and Educating for QQuality ImProvement** - The model aims to support a midwife through a continuous improvement process utilising restorative clinical supervision, personal action for quality improvement and preparedness for professional revalidation through a process of reflection and the Professional Midwifery Advocate (PMA) is the practitioner who deploys the A-EQUIP model and the associated leadership role.



Professional Midwifery Advocate (PMA) Network

- In the North West we have more than 185 Professional Midwifery Advocate practicing across 18 maternity providers and working in 3 universities who are dedicated to supporting our maternity workforce and sharing best practice.
- The PMA network, led by the Regional NW PMA, brings together PMA's within the NW region. Providing a safe space to come together as a community for peer support, sharing challenges and best practice and creating new knowledge to advance both the PMA role and A_EQUIP model.





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Thank you to all our partners and stakeholders for their dedication and contribution to achieving the North West maternity vision and strategy.