

## CASE STUDIES

**Showing the success of MSLCs/MVPs working well to improve maternity services.**



### **Capturing the voices of seldom heard and minority groups: Tower Hamlets MSLC**

An innovative community development approach has been taken in the design and delivery of local MSLCs in Tower Hamlets, Newham, Waltham Forest and Hackney. The communities that make up the four MSLC areas include Bangladeshi, Somali, White British, Slovakian, Algerian, Chinese, African/Caribbean, Nigerian, Indian, Polish and Angolan.

The Mothers Support Group (MSG) in Tower Hamlets meets between MSLC meetings. Workers from Social Action for Health, a community development organisation, hear the feedback of local women from different ethnic backgrounds, including Bangladeshi, Indian Caribbean, African, Chinese, Eastern European and White British. 923 local women's voices were heard in Tower Hamlets between April 2014 and March 2015.

As a group, the MSG identifies some key issues to take to the MSLC meeting as well as coming up with some suggested solutions. The approach empowers local women from the most disadvantaged communities to share their maternity experiences and builds local women's capacity to influence and shape maternity services.

With the support of the user chair and the committee's administrator, individual women gradually develop confidence to feed back directly to the health professionals and commissioner at the MSLC meetings. About 10-12 women regularly attend the MSG meetings and about eight of them attend the MSLC meetings.

## **Contributing to a new local perinatal mental health pathway: Bromley Maternity Voices (MSLC) (for website)**

Bromley MSLC was instrumental in helping Bromley CCG design a new Perinatal Mental Health Pathway. The MSLC played a role in securing funding for the pathway, by providing two user testimonials for the business case. The new service works with existing mental health and maternity services to provide high quality specialist mental health support to women and their families during pregnancy and for a year after birth. It offers multi-disciplinary clinics involving psychiatrists, midwives, psychologists, pharmacists and obstetricians working closely together with the women in need and their respective families to ensure that interventions are co-ordinated, responsive and seamless. GPs work closely with the service to support women during pregnancy and health visiting services are involved after the baby is born. It is designed and funded by NHS Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group and delivered by Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust and King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

<http://www.bromleyccg.nhs.uk/news/improving-mental-health-care-for-pregnant-women-in-bromley/26651>

# Designing a poster to help women personalise their birth space: Bromley Maternity Voices (MSLC)

Service user members of Bromley MSLC designed the poster (below) giving information about how to personalise the birthing rooms at the local hospital. This poster is now up in every room on Labour Ward at the Princess Royal University Hospital, Farnborough.



King's College Hospital **NHS**  
NHS Foundation Trust

## Birthing room at the PRUH

Welcome to your birthing room at the Princess Royal University Hospital.

We would like you to feel as comfortable as possible during your labour and birth and the following features may help you to feel more relaxed.



### Bed

Speak to your midwife about moving the bed against the wall to maximise space in the room. You may like to kneel on the bed or lean against it, rather than lie on it, so that gravity can be on your side. You can also adjust the height of the bed.



### Lights

The lights can be dimmed as you wish. Some women find that lower lights give them more privacy, which can help boost the hormones needed to labour effectively. You may wish to bring in battery operated candles from home.

### Birth balls

These are available on request and some women find these very useful in helping to adopt a good position for labour and can help the baby move into the best position for birth. Birth mats and birth stools are also available.



### Home comforts

Women feel much more comfortable when they are surrounded by their own familiar things. You are welcome to bring in your own blankets, pillows and anything else from home that makes you feel safe, secure and warm.

### En-suite

A shower is available and the showerhead detaches. This can help some women with targeted pain relief.

### Fans

These may be available on request if your room does not have one.

### Music

There is a CD player in each of the rooms, or you are welcome to use your iPod and speakers too. Some women find listening to their favourite music a great way to help them relax.

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on 020 3299 1844.

Ask questions to make informed decisions about your labour and birth. Your midwife is there to support you and will talk you through your options. She will give you all the information you need to make the right decisions for you.

**Your body, your birth, your choice**

# Debunking Myths: Normalities of low mood after childbirth in Personal Child Health Records (“The Red Book”): Sheffield MSLC

Sheffield MSLC conducted a user consultation regarding low level mental health problems, in which 119 women said that they would like easy access to information that showed low level mood and anxiety after birth was normal and that they were not bad mothers. It was suggested that a page with quotes about the normalities of possible low mood after birth could be suitable for the new updated Red Book. 262 women responded to this questionnaire about the Red Book in just a short time.

Sheffield MSLC created this poster (below), which is now included in every personal child health record in Sheffield.

## Debunking myths

'By parents for parents' with Sheffield MSLC and families

**The rush of love**

The rush of love that you get when you first see your baby that everyone tells you about - this is not true for so many Mums. For most Mums your love will grow over time, until you feel that amazing love everyone talks about. It will come so don't worry - and if you are worried call your HV.

**Your baby is fine, that is all that matters**

No!  
That is not all that matters. YOU are important. Your happiness matters. Do not be afraid to think of yourself and to look after yourself.

**Dads are useless**

NO!  
Dads are one half of the parenting team. You are a team together. Dads are capable. Dads are not baby-sitters. Communicate with each other. Support each other, learn together. All families are different and whoever you co-parent with support each other and work together. You do not have to feel alone.

**You will forget all about birth**

This is untrue and dismissive to your feelings. Every birth is different, every Mum's experience is different and every experience matters. A birth is a huge emotional event as well as physical. If you need to talk about your birth or you are struggling with what happened then speak to your partner, a friend, your HV or ask to discuss your birth with a senior midwife.

**Its the happiest time of your life**

Having a baby is wonderful but it is also very hard work and exhausting. Many women, and some men too, struggle emotionally and mentally, feeling quite low, anxious and sometimes isolated. If you feel like any of this describes you talk to someone you trust, your partner, family member, your Health visitor etc

Proud work of Sheffield families and Sheffield MSLC

