

Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin MVP Annual Report 2019-2020



Letter From Development Co-ordinator

2019/2020 has been a really positive year for the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin MVP. It has been a year of growth and development which means that we have entered 20/21 in a much stronger and structured place. The biggest development by far must be the recruitment of the Chair, Vice Chair and Volunteer members. I am extremely happy that we were able to get these recruited and set up in a sustainable way with the support of Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin. The recruitment didn't commence until the end of 19/20 but the majority of the planning and background work was completed throughout the year which meant that the new team was in place shortly after the start of the new financial year.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 had a large impact in the development and start of the volunteer programme which affected the end of the year but it did enable us to grow the service and establish the MVP as a reliable source of information for our families. COVID-19 has meant we have had to take a moment to assess how the MVP works in a safe way but I feel that the new way of working will actually benefit the MVP and encourage more people to get involved as they will have the option to join in virtually. The situation also improved and strengthened links and relationships with partner organisations and showed the value of how the MVP can support services.

2019/2020 was a great year which saw the MVP involved in many different focus groups and projects. It is great that more of our partners are involving us in their work and 19/20 was a year for building our connections with our partners. 2020/2021 is already looking very promising with the MVP being involved in many different projects, some of which are currently unique to us, and we look forward in being able to hopefully develop these projects and share the work that we do to support other MVP's nationally. A key area for 20/21 will be for us to build on our current work and build more robust feedback mechanisms to ensure we're reaching out to a wider range of people and enable our work to be as complete as possible. 19/20 has shown how well the MVP can be involved in specific project work initiated by professional partners but our aim is to also use the feedback gathered through our members and volunteers to inform professional partners of key areas that need further focus and improvement.

I am really proud of the progress that was made in 19/20 and I am really looking forward to working alongside the new Chair and her team in the coming year. Thank you to everyone who has supported us during the past year to get to where we are today.



Louise Macleod

Maternity Voices Development Co-ordinator, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Maternity Voices Partnership

Letter from Chair

I have been involved with the MVP for almost 2 years now and at the end of 19/20 had the pleasure of taking on the role of Service User Chair. I have a passion for improving maternity services and know how even seemingly minor changes can have a significant impact on people.

The 19/20 year has seen huge progress for the MVP including the recruitment of a fantastic volunteer team, unfortunately COVID-19 has meant we haven't all managed to get together in person. However, we are making great use of virtual meetings to get to know each other and build on the work already being done around antenatal, labour and postnatal services.

I feel very positive for the coming 20/21 year. There is a lot of work already in the pipeline, as well as the introduction of a more formalised way for new parents/service users to provide feedback. This will help us more easily spot recurring themes and enable a focus on improvements in these areas. We continue to aim for co-production and have made big steps forward in recent months.

During 20/21 I would like to see more diverse involvement in the MVP, not just in terms of service users but also service providers such as midwives, GPs and health visitors.

I would like to pay particular thanks to Louise for her continued hard work and for the dedication of all those who have participated in meetings, given feedback and helped spread the word about the MVP over the last year.



Emily Evans
Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Maternity Voice Partnership Chair

Letter from SRO/LMNS

I am immensely proud of what the Shropshire Telford and Wrekin Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP) has achieved over the last 12 months. I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this workstream with energy and commitment over this period.

The Shropshire Telford and Wrekin Local Maternity and Neonatal System has been working closely with the MVP to ensure that local voices are heard and feed into any new initiatives. This is something that will remain a focus as Maternity Transformation continues.

Maternity Voices Partnerships are a key element to institute co-production in maternity services with women and their families and are vital to ensuring that current and recent service user's experiences are used effectively to improve maternity services. MVP's create a collaborative exchange of ideas leading to changes that are service user influenced, and where possible service user led.

Our MVP has a key role in the local implementation of Better Births to ensure locally we are meeting the needs and expectations of local women by seeking feedback, providing representation and facilitating co-production at every opportunity.

We were thrilled that the local MVP Volunteer Programme was launched at the start of 2020 and now have an established team of 10 volunteers, a service user chair and two vice chairs in post. An established MVP with the right networking in place can achieve almost anything.

We are pleased that the MVP now has the opportunity to be able to take this programme forward and increase engagement to ensure that all communities across the county are represented and are given a voice. The programme will allow them to have a more diverse influence, and their work will be critical to our success as an LMNS.

I would like to thank Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin for supporting our local volunteer programme and for extending the reach of our engagement. I would also like to thank Healthwatch Shropshire for their continued commitment and support with engagement activities during 19/20.



Zena Young
Senior Responsible Officer for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin's Local Maternity and Neonatal System

What is the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Maternity Voices Partnership?

Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP), is an independent multi-disciplinary advisory and action forum with service users at the centre.

It uses a formal committee structure, with written agendas and formal minutes of discussions and decisions, and incorporates the principles and practice of participatory co-design and co-production through regular break-out sessions and small group work in order to ensure that the five principles of MVPs are at the core of the commissioning, monitoring and continuous improvement of maternity services.

Founding five principles:

1. To understand the importance of staff experiences and how that impacts on experiences for women, families and carers (and vice versa).
2. To work together creatively with respect, to develop solutions.
3. To use personal experience as evidence.
4. To hunt to continuous quality improvement with a particular focus on closing inequality gaps.
5. To work together as equals, promoting and valuing participation. To listen and seek out the voices of all women, families and carers using maternity services, making sure people from diverse communities have a voice, especially those voices that are difficult to hear.

It is funded and supported by the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Maternity and Neonatal System (LMNS) and is hosted by Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin.

The MVP serves the needs of local women and families and the Local Maternity System, including all acute and community services. It links with clinical network(s), to contribute towards and follow regional strategic direction, and links with other MVPs within the LMNS to share good practice. The MVP will listen to and act upon women, family and carer feedback at all stages of the commissioning cycle – from needs assessment to contract management. All members are committed to working in partnership and to implementing woman-centred care. Woman-centred care offers women information, choice, and care based on best available evidence, always respecting their choices and human rights. The MVP is committed to diversity and equal opportunities and upholds women's human rights in pregnancy and childbirth. The MVP is multidisciplinary, so its members will bring with them different beliefs, values and experience. All these perspectives should be valued and respected. Each member should have an equal opportunity to contribute to the MVP discussion and decision-making process. Care will be taken to enable full participation. For example, it is important to check that the terminology MVP member's use is understood by all and clarified if necessary.

Membership

The Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Maternity Voices Partnership includes

- Parents who have had a baby in the past five years, or service user representatives who have regular contact with pregnant women, their families, and new parents.
- Representatives of local groups who have an interest in maternity services.
- Midwives, Nurses and Doctors involved in Maternity and Neonatal Services.
- Commissioners of maternity and other related services.
- Others who have an interest in maternity services for example: GPs, children's centre leads, public health leads, health visitors, mental health service professionals.

Review of the past year

Feedback and outcomes:

During 2019/2020 we were not set up to be generating a large amount of feedback from service users. General feedback would be gathered when out on promotions but this was very difficult to capture and almost impossible to feedback to the women who provided it. However, when feedback was gathered, this was shared with the services and teams involved to enable them to look at how they could make improvements in line with the feedback received. Our main mechanism for specific feedback was through our Facebook page. We received a total of 6 messages from women who felt they needed to feedback on specific concerns or compliments. We did receive a number of other messages asking for information on specific topics or advice on where to get support from which highlighted a need for better access to information. We also received 3 emails which provided specific feedback. All of the specific feedback was captured in a form and was then sent directly to the team at Shrewsbury and Telford Hospitals Trust (SaTH) who would then feedback on any improvements that were made in response to the comments received. Any compliments received were directed to the team and was also captured in the LMNS staff updates to ensure that staff heard of the positives.

Some of the feedback received is documented below and includes how changes were made.

- During an awareness week for baby loss the (Early Pregnancy Advice Service) EPAS service had a memory tree within their unit. A lady fed back that when she was using the unit she noticed the tree and felt it was not the best place for the tree. She was consulted on where the tree should be placed and this information was shared with the team and the organiser to ensure that other options were considered for the next awareness event.
- It was fed back that there was a lack of information about miscarriages when women book with the maternity service. The lady felt that having some more information would alert women to the issue and also make them aware of how common it can be and what to do if they suspect they are having a miscarriage. Discussions took place with the team and it was decided that it was a very sensitive subject and it may not be appropriate to have this information at the point of booking. However it was agreed that there needed to be more information on the booking letter on how women get help if they have any early pregnancy concerns. The MVP was asked to be involved in redesigning the booking letter.
- A lady who requested a face to face meeting fed back that she found staff lacking compassion particular on postnatal ward. They had not been empathetic and seemed too busy to ask her if she was ok. She felt there needed to be more support for women on postnatal ward who have a baby on the neonatal ward as she was unable to get any support to go up and see baby which she said ended up in her going alone and nearly passing out. Staff were also not aware that the

lady in the room didn't have a baby with her so walked in expecting to see a baby and didn't always know how to react when there was no baby there, this included Bounty reps. As this was face to face feedback we were able to reassure the woman and let her know about changes that had already taken place that would support some of the issues she raised. We then kept the lady informed about changes that had been put in place which included training for staff, implementation of suggested poster on doors of women without babies to alert staff. This was followed up with update emails to include updates on collapsible beds on the neonatal ward, additional support to help neonatal mums to get to the ward to see their babies and additional staff training. The lady's details were passed onto the team so that they were able to communicate to her improvements that had been made in response to her feedback.

Message Promotions:

Through 2019-2020 the MVP has assisted in sharing and promoting some very important messages through our social media platforms. We have helped to promote the use of the Baby Buddy app which has been funded by the local LMNS to share local information and is supported by the midwife and health visiting teams.

We have helped to continually promote the Reduced Fetal Movements message in a different variety of ways by sharing the Tommy's messages and supporting the launch and promotion of the local movement bracelet that is handed out free to women in the local area. The bracelets were launched at the beginning of 2019/2020 year and the MVP shared the media surrounding the launch to help make more women aware of the bracelets and the message they help promote which is to be aware of your baby's movements and to seek help as soon as you notice a change in your movements.

Perinatal mental health had a large focus throughout the year with many different messages being shared and also sharing information on the new support services and peer support group that was set up.

We continued to support the local red hat campaign by sharing the posters and passing on information on how people could support the local unit by supplying red knitted hats for the team to be able to quickly identify babies who may extra monitoring or support whilst they are in the postnatal unit.

We have also used the MVP to help share national messages as they are released and use our social media to target specific message during awareness campaigns such as STOPTOBER and breast feeding awareness weeks.

Events and groups:

The MVP development co-ordinator has continued to get out and about as much as possible to local groups and events to help promote the work of the MVP. Due to concentrating on some of the bigger projects such as the volunteer programme and support engagement work for Transforming Midwifery Care Louise was unable to do as many group visits to the more rural areas of the county as she has in previous years but the aim for 2020/2021 will be to have the support from the new volunteers to enable work to be undertaken in all areas of the county.

Some of the groups/events that were visited last year included

- Telford Sling Library meeting
- Lawley Breast feeding group
- Mothercare expectant parent events
- Shropshire baby and toddler event in Shrewsbury
- Mum2Mum market
- Baby Buddy Celebration events
- Health Watch Telford and Wrekin AGM
- GP Forum
- Telford & Wrekin CCG AGM
- SaTH Public Health Study Day
- Baby Buddy Celebration events

We also supported SaTH to set up some MVP Coffee Mornings; one which was at Shropshire Education and Conference Centre on the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital site and one that was at the Women's and Children's centre at Princess Royal Hospital in Telford. These were not well attended and we were in discussions with the engagement team at SaTH to see how these could be better run in the future. We advised moving away from the hospitals and changing the name of them. We were looking into setting these up again but COVID-19 then hit. These may be something to set up again in the future with the support of the volunteers. During the year we also used local supermarkets to help promote events happening and to promote the work of the MVP and the Baby Buddy app. These are a great way to get out in local communities to enable more families to become involved in what the MVP does.

Social Media:

The MVP social media accounts have grown considerably through 19/20. At the end of 2018 we unfortunately lost access to the original MVP Facebook group which had a quite considerable following. At the beginning of 2019 we managed to set up the new Facebook page and by the start of the 19/20 year we had around 160 people liking our page and following what we were doing. By the end of March 2020, we had around 800 likes which is a considerable increase in people following what we do. Our Instagram was set up April 2019 and is not as successful as the Facebook page but still has a small following and is another way to reach out to people who are interested in what we do. Our Twitter account was set up in 2018 and continued to grow slowly throughout 19/20. It is another great way to share the work we do but it is more directed at the professional side of the work and is a way to spread our messages through local companies. It is also where some of the staff go to follow what we do.

Throughout 19/20 we worked hard to introduce the MVP into local Facebook groups. Pages gained the ability to join certain groups on Facebook which significantly supported us as we were then able to post specific details on these groups promoting the work we do or events that people can take

part in. We run a monthly social media report which is included in the MVP Hub meeting papers to report on the activity on all of our social media platforms and shows the growth of each account. The social media pages are a great way to be able to engage with families to encourage them to get involved in projects but it is also a great way to share local information. Any local or national information that is released is promoted through the social media to enable it to reach as many people as possible. The MVP page has now been able to join some local Facebook groups which helps us share messages but also enables us to gather feedback as women and families post questions on these groups.

Volunteer programme:

The main aim of the MVP during 19/20 was to implement and recruit to the MVP volunteer programme. The idea was to recruit a team of volunteers based around the county who will then support the MVP to gather feedback and help deliver messages and communications when they are released. They will be working in their local areas to gather general feedback which will be sent through the MVP Hub and onto the LMNS board which will then help shape the future of services and pinpoint specific areas that may need to be looked at further. Having volunteers out in the communities will mean they are able to do targeted engagement with local groups with a specific focus on the seldom heard groups such as young mums, BAME populations, mums with disabilities and dads. It is important to have these volunteers working across the county to ensure that the views of people from across the whole county are heard as topics that come up may differ from area to area.

The volunteers will also be involved in more targeted work. They will be invited along to meetings to discuss specific areas that need service user input such as perinatal mental health and birth choices. They will also be involved in co-producing documents for the providers and will be used to help specific focused feedback on projects as and when this is required.

During 18/19 steps were made to develop the MVP through the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) but it became apparent that this was not the most appropriate place for the MVP to sit as they should sit separately to any of the commissioners/providers to help them remain independent which can encourage members to engage fully. In November 2019 Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin were approached to see if they would be able to support the setting up and supporting of the volunteers. It was agreed that Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin would host the volunteers with the full support from the LMNS team.

In February 2020 we went out to advertise for 3 positions, MVP Chair, MVP vice-chair and also for MVP volunteers. We had a great response to the adverts which resulted in approximately 25 requests for application packs. From those who completed application forms we then interviewed 16 applicants. We had one application for the Chair position and two applications for the Vice chair. It was agreed that each of these applicants would be a great asset to the team and therefore we offered both of the vice-chair applicants to join us and share the role to support the successful chair. From those who were interviewed we successfully appointed a chair, x2 vice chairs and a team of 12 volunteers to support them. As COVID-19 hit these volunteers began their Healthwatch induction via emails and began to become involved in the work that was done virtually. As the majority of these first wave of volunteers are based in Shrewsbury it is vital that we continue to grow this group further during 20/21 and use them to encourage more people to come and support the work we are doing. There has been further interest from people wanting to volunteer for us since the initial set of interviews but it was decided that we would concentrate with training and setting up the first group. The plan will then to open it out again and increase our numbers across the county.

Hub Meetings:

During 19/20 the MVP only managed to host two Hub meeting which were in June and September. December was cancelled due to having no room available, and the final one in March was cancelled due to COVID-19. In June we met at NHS Telford and Wrekin CCG and had 12 attendees; 2 service users, 1 local birth worker and the remainder professionals from the CCG's or SaTH. In September we met at the University building in Shrewsbury and had 10 attendees; 1 service user representative from the polish community and the remainder staff from the CCG's and SaTH.

Focus Groups

During 19/20 we were asked to participate in a number of specific focus groups/discussions.

- Transforming Midwifery Care (TMC) – A number of MVP members were involved in the engagement workshops to help discuss and develop the plans for the midwifery care in the county. A number of events were held which the members attended and participated in. These members then worked with the TMC team to develop a TMC focus group who were used to help proof read documents as they were developed.
- Perinatal Mental Health Focus Groups – On the 15th November 2019 Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin hosted a focus group which brought together professionals and service users to discuss the current perinatal mental health service and how it could be developed. The MVP promoted the event and ensured service users were present at this event. 3 Service users attended. On the 22nd November Healthwatch Shropshire organised to visit the Oswestry breast feeding group to speak to them on the same subject to collect views from other areas of the County. 5 Service users were present at this discussion. The Healthwatch teams then used these discussions to report back to LMNS board on the topic of the local perinatal services
- Home birth focus group – On the 26th November 2019, 4 service users came together with the newly formed homebirth team to discuss the new service and how it should be rolled out and promoted. They discussed the leaflets that were going to be used and how the team should look to launch the team. This was a very successful meeting which the women thoroughly enjoyed but unfortunately shortly after the meeting the Homebirth team was put on hold until the Continuity of Carer teams were developed further. The hope is the ideas raised in this meeting will be used in the future when a team takes shape again.
- Planning for a healthy pregnancy workshop – On the 15th January 2020, 2 service users joined professionals to discuss how we could develop and promote Planning for a Healthy Pregnancy. This was very successful and managed to contribute a few ideas
- Wrekin MLU focus group – On the 20th August 2019, 4 service users came together with 4 members of staff to have a tour of the Wrekin Midwife Led Unit. After the tour the group came together and discussed how the unit could be improved. Mood boards were created and ideas gathered on how LMNS funding would be best used. The group also discussed the MVP doing fundraising for the unit to help provide smaller items to make the area more homely. Shortly after the event we found out that there would be a new MLU unit built on the site so the discussions that we had were then used to influence the new unit instead of an upgrade on the old unit.



Wrekin MLU Focus
Group Write up.docx

- Wrekin MLU design group – On the 24th January, 2 users joined staff to discuss the new unit and to have a say in how the unit would look. They helped to pick paint choices, splash backs, flooring choices and equipment. The paint choices were then put out to the wider MVP via social media to help with the final decisions. The group that met also discussed the LED screens that were to go into the birthing rooms and they helped to pick out the final design.

- Postnatal Stakeholder event – On the 29th January the LMNS held a postnatal Stakeholder event to help develop the postnatal plan. We had 2 Service users attend plus a local instructor who supports women to exercise during pregnancy and beyond. These were also invited to a follow-on session to discuss things in more detail following the larger event.
- Saving Babies Lives Event – On the 27th February the LMNS hosted an event to discuss how to further reduce stillbirth neonatal deaths and brain injury over the next 5 years. This had 9 MVP members in attendance. The LMNS provided onsite childcare which encouraged service users to attend as this was an all-day event.

15 Steps to maternity

On the 23rd August we held our first 15 Steps to maternity event at the Wrekin Midwife Led Unit. This was attended by 4 service users plus 2 members of staff and 2 LMNS staff. Below is a full report from this event. Shortly after the event we found out that the unit was to be closed and a new unit was to be built. Comments and recommendations from the 15 Steps event were discussed and included in the planning of the new unit. The plan was to revisit the new unit once open and complete a follow up 15 Steps but this was postponed due to COVID-19-19.



Enclosure 8 - 15
Steps of Wrekin Midw

Newsletters

In 19/20 we were able to share our updates with 3 newsletters. There was a Summer, Winter and Spring edition of our newsletters. In 20/21 we will continue to create these newsletters to share the work that is being done. We also tried to keep people who were registered on our mailing list updated as much as possible. This sometimes proved difficult to work out how this was best done as some items that would interest people had time aspects to ensure feedback and views were gathered within a certain time frame and then some items were able to be collated and sent out as a regular update. In 20/21 we wish to develop this further to find out how this would work best to ensure that all of our members are getting the correct messages.

Projects:

Over 19/20 the MVP was involved in many projects and had an input in developing some important work. Some of these are listed below.

- Proof Reading – Throughout the year we were asked to proof read and comment on many documents. This mainly came from the team at SaTH and included an Enhanced Recovery Leaflet, Iron Infusion Leaflet, an LMNS Summary and an MVP Summary.
- Development of the Home Birth Team
- Exercise in pregnancy plan and walk leader training
- Linking in with the local foodbank/baby bank
- Development of a Top tips document to go onto a map of the new MLU
- Pre-consultation engagement – The MVP assisted the Transforming Midwifery Care Team to complete some additional engagement that was required with seldom heard groups.
- Promotion of Baby Buddy App
- Promotion of reduced movements messages
- Transforming Midwifery Care (TMC) – The MVP was involved in the workshops which were delivered around the Midwife Led Unit Review. In April 2019 2 Service users attended a workshop in Telford which was a follow up event to a larger engagement workshop in the

previous year. Following on from this event a small reading group was developed to work with the TMC team to look at documents relating to the review as and when this was required.

- LMNS funding workshop – 2 service users attended a workshop in May to help plan the LMNS budget for 19/20.
- Supporting continuity of carer development

COVID-19 Support:

At the end of 19/20 COVID-19 hit and dramatically altered the way everyone was able to work. The MVP steered away from the feedback gathering aspect and primarily became a source of information. We supported the local services to promote when changes to services happened and tried to keep the members up to date as possible. We also acted as a mechanism to help support local services to pinpoint any issues that families were having with new measures. This enabled us to quickly identify where there were possible issues and feed these back to the teams. We then worked to help disseminate any changes that were made and tried to reassure families and reduce confusion as much as possible. The MVP became much more than a feedback service it became a crucial step in ensuring families were informed and felt that even in difficult times they were able to still be heard and supported.

COVID-19 meant that all the meetings that members are involved in became virtual instead of face to face which as an MVP we feel meant that these meetings actually became more accessible and easier for service users to attend as it meant they didn't have to travel or arrange childcare.

Moving Forward

As we move into the 20/21 year, we are hoping that having the team of Volunteers and the Chair team will ensure that the MVP continues to grow and move forward. Our key aims for the year will include

- Continue recruitment of service user volunteers specifically within the more rural communities and seldom heard groups.
- Recruiting Staff MVP volunteers to help promote the MVP within the staff side and encourage staff to be more involved in what we do.
- To develop a robust feedback mechanism and ensure that we share how feedback is used to create change.
- Support the new volunteer team to begin to promote the MVP and start to collect feedback from local families. A key focus of these volunteers will be to seek out and create connections with groups in their communities and to encourage the seldom heard voices to either come forward or be heard or to act as a support to enable the feedback from these groups to be shared.
- Build the MVP Hub and encourage more professional partners to attend including on the ground staff. Hubs will remain virtual until COVID-19 measures are lifted but we will always continue to have a virtual option as this has shown to ensure more people are able to attend the meeting.
- We have been invited to have a presence on the SaTH Labour ward and Guidelines forums.
- Work with SaTH to incorporate the MVP into their Standard Operating Procedures to ensure the MVP is always involved in all aspects.
- Support SaTH with their maternity transformation programme and work with the Transformation midwives on their key projects.

- Develop the mailing list further and set a more formal structure to enable us to share information. This will involve us having to ensure that people on our mailing list wish to stay involved and wish to share their details with the new team that has been created.
- Continue to strengthen bonds and links with professional services to embed the MVP into the work they do.
- Encouraging and supporting all of our professional partners to use MVP as a main source to share key messages.
- To encourage professional partners to include the MVP in all of their work and promote Co-production as far as possible.