

National Maternity Voices CIC Report for April 2020 - March 2021



Welcome to National Maternity Voices' (NMV's) Annual Report for 2020-21. This is a chance to review the progress we've made together, as the association of independent lay Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP) chairs. Key steps have included:

- Supporting the national response to the pandemic, especially the communication of key information about service changes to expectant parents and alerting NHS England and others to issues worrying service users.
- Collaborating with NHSE on video conferences for MVP chairs to provide national updates, spread good practice and discuss issues.
- Developing training for whole (multidisciplinary) MVPs, for Chairs and for service users.
- Training and supporting a cohort of mentors from ethnic minority backgrounds to extend our mentoring program.
- Supporting the running of the [Nova Network](#) peer support group of chairs and reps from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- Holding our first annual meeting and establishing a separate workforce for the CIC with an advisory council and a Chair elected by current MVP Chairs.
- Establishing a multidisciplinary review of the MVP Toolkit of materials

Louise Griew

Managing Director, National Maternity Voices, August 2021

Message from Chair of Council

I would like to especially acknowledge the great efforts of MVP chairs. Despite the unprecedented pandemic, we have come a long way. Working with you is an honour and an inspiring experience.

Between November and March the NMV Council had stimulating discussions about:

- Responding to the Ockenden report;
- Practical support for MVPs and particularly Chairs;
- The redefinition of MVPs and the establishment of the MVP Toolkit Review;
- The future of National Maternity Voices;

It is an honour to represent our Council (and, by doing so, the MVP community and service users) at strategic national meetings such as the MTP Stakeholder Council (Better Births) and the NHS Citizens Advisory Group. I was pleased to present some of our opportunities and challenges at the 5th anniversary event for 'Better Births'.

Zenab Barry

Chair of Council , National Maternity Voices

Contents

Summary and Introduction

What is National Maternity Voices?

People

The Pandemic

Representing MVPs

Networking & Supporting MVPs

Inclusion

Service User Summit – 11th March

Mentoring

Training

Funding + Accounts

Appendices:

1. List of Committee, Workforce + Council
2. Terms of Reference for National Maternity Voices Council
3. Glossary (Explanation of Terms)

What is National Maternity Voices?

We are the association of Maternity Voices Partnership¹ (MVP) chairs in England. In legal terms we are a community interest company (CIC) with the purpose of championing the voices of women and families in the development of maternity services in England.

In September 2020 we invited current independent lay chairs of MVPs to become members of the CIC to have a say in the running of National Maternity Voices. Fifty five did so and nine members agreed to serve as our new advisory council. In November the current chair members of the CIC elected Zenab Barry as the first chair of council. Information on the structure of National Maternity Voices CIC can be found on our [website](#).

In autumn 2020 we moved from operating as a committee of volunteers, to operating as a workforce led by the directors and advised by the council. We had directors meetings monthly and council meetings bimonthly (November, January and March). Council terms of reference were discussed and amended.

1. A Maternity Voices Partnership is an NHS working group of women, birthing people and their families, commissioners and maternity service staff collaborating to review and develop local maternity care. It is led by an independent lay chair who ensures service users are represented.

People

The main workforce of NMV this year was Hannah as acting Chair becoming MVP Support Director, Louise as Administrator becoming Managing Director and Mo as Communications Lead becoming Communications Outreach and Inclusion Director. Cathy handed communications over to Mo and joined NMV Council. Laura stepped down as a director in September and developed our Training. Sandra, a founding member of NMV and Emma are our other directors.

A full list of our former committee, workforce and new council is given in Appendix 1. We are hugely grateful to them for their insight and passion.

We also value the members of the MSLC and MVP Chairs and Service User Reps Facebook group who can be relied on to ask interesting questions, comment, support each other and share good practice every day.

Our key contact at NHSE/I is Lisa Ramsey, the Service User Voice Policy Manager for the Maternity Transformation Programme (MTP).

The Pandemic

In the initial phase of the coronavirus pandemic Maternity Voices Partnerships shifted their focus to support maternity services in decision making around temporary service reconfiguration, and communicating those changes to women, birthing people and their families. Via social media MVP chairs were able to pick up good ideas such as live Q+As with Midwives and support each other with challenges.

A key concern of many service users was the barring of support partners from scanning appointments even when there was a reason for anxiety. NMV joined with Birthrights and

other charities to write to the Society of Radiography and ask for a discussion of the guidance.

We supported NHSE to publicise and put on national MVP chair video conferences where information was relayed and local challenges discussed. These began in March initially weekly and progressed to monthly from May onwards. Recordings of the calls were shared on the Facebook group.

In May NMV sent evidence about the impact of the pandemic on maternity service users and how MVPs helped to the Health & Social Care select committee. You can read more about MVPs in the Pandemic on our [Covid web page](#).

Representing MVPs

MVPs were represented on NHS England's Maternity Transformation Stakeholder Council by Hannah and then by Zenab (Elected Chair of NMV Council) from November. NMV contributed to a working group on learning from COVID. The escalation process for MVP chairs to raise safety concerns was discussed in the Maternity Safety Stakeholder Group.

NMV attended a No 10 Roundtable on inequalities in maternity care with some MVP chairs and contributed to co-produced recommendations.

We worked with the CQC on a project to support inspectors working with MVPs. (Our first consultancy project.)

In January NMV published a statement about [MVPs in the Ockenden report](#) and the importance of adequate resources and sent it to key stakeholders.

NMV contributed to safety culture development working group and facilitated payments for MVP chairs involvement in workshops. (Consultancy project).

Networking & Supporting MVPs

We reviewed the service user rep Facebook group in April, removed inactive members & created group rules restricting to service users active in MVPs. We encouraged other MVP members to join the NMV multidisciplinary facebook group. Following discussion with Council we explored options for a Chairs only space.

We collaborated with MTP on 1 hour video calls for MVP chairs frequently in spring, then monthly. We began hosting informal 'cuppa & chat' sessions for MVP chairs in January.

We finished compiling the MVP Database and updated it alongside the MVP map. We used it to email our first newsletter to chairs in August and sent others in November and February.

We revised and updated our website through the year adding a COVID 19 page, social media guidelines, annual report and workplan templates, Health Professional MVP role description. We also added information about NMV updating 'about us' adding a Purpose & Values page and our Annual Report for 19/20.

We provided logos to 16 MVPs.

We input to template evidence for safety action 7 in relation to the work of MVPs and remuneration of the chair. We contributed to meetings of regional reps and provided one-to-one support to regional reps. We liaised with National SUV reps up to September.

Inclusion

The Nova Network was established by Toyin Adeyinka as a place of support and information for MVP chairs and service user reps who are Black, Asian and from other minority ethnic groups. It is primarily a WhatsApp peer support group with about 4 Zoom meetings a year. The main purpose of the group is to be a supportive and nurturing space, particularly for those new to the role and from less diverse areas. NMV support included promoting the group, listening to expressed needs, acquiring funding for the facilitation of the network and moderation of the group, and providing mentoring.

Following queries in the community we conducted a [Diversity survey](#) of MVP chairs to act as a baseline. 80 responses showed ethnic diversity roughly in line with the female population, about a quarter had neonatal experience, and two thirds felt the need to be paid for most of the hours they work in the role.

We published a statement about including [Neonatal Voices within MVPs](#) in January and are now offering the MVP logo with strapline including neonatal. There are ongoing discussions about how neonatal parents are involved at all levels.

The new NMV structure includes ethnic minority representation on our Council and a Director (Mo) with responsibility for outreach & inclusion. A [Hearing All Voices](#) page was added to the website to include links to examples of MVP outreach.

Service User Summit - 11th March

The virtual Service User Voice Summit on 11th March featured inspirational short talks from many MVPs on diverse topics with planning and facilitation assistance from NMV. The [agenda and 4 of the video clips](#) are on the website.

Mentoring

The maternity service user representative community have always offered informal voluntary peer mentoring to each other and this continues. This is now supplemented by NHSE trained [mentors](#) who are experienced chairs and services user representatives. Mentoring was offered to national SUV reps from November 19 and to MVP Chairs from March 20. Many requests came in during the spring and summer of 2020. Feedback was very positive with mentees gaining confidence and valuing an outside perspective.

Uncertainty about funding meant the programme was paused August - November. In September a cohort of mentors from ethnic minority backgrounds were trained.

At March 21, 14 people had finished their sessions with a mentor, 12 were ongoing with mentors and 8 had been offered a mentor but not taken it up to date.

Training

Laura James developed the training modules which are designed to foster collaborative working and equip MVP members with the tools they need to make their MVP effective. Seven virtual courses were delivered from August 2020 to end March 2021:

2 x full day multidisciplinary training, 2 x full day service user training, 3 x half day MVP chair training. All participants on the courses said their training needs were met.

The [training page](#) on the NMV website has been updated with content, price and testimonials/feedback from participants. It also links to relevant NHS material.

Enquiries and bookings are strong.

Toolkit Review

NMV gained project funding from NHSE for a multidisciplinary review of the MVP Toolkit of resources. It began with a discussion on the February MVP chairs call. Collation of needs and issues continued with a survey circulated in the Newsletter and on MTP bulletin. There was an initial review and reorganisation of the website resources. A multidisciplinary steering group co-chaired by Zenab Barry and a member of staff will oversee the work.

Funding & Accounts

NMV had 3 tranches of funding from NHSE/I Maternity Transformation team: An initial £22,000 to fund our core work of supporting MVPs, £4,000 for work on Inclusiveness and £10,000 for the toolkit project. £8,500 of the latter was carried forward for work in 21/22 together with £6000 to cover mentoring. Other income was obtained by selling training and consultancy services.

Income	2020/21	2019/20
NHS England		
MVP support	£26,000	£12,000
Mentoring (from 19/20)	£ 4,985	£ 225
Toolkit project (first part)	£ 1,500	-
Training / SU Event	£ 6,165	£ 3,250
Consultancy/ lanyards	£ 4,100	£ 433
Total	£42,750	£15,908
Expenditure		
Remuneration	£41,574	£14,100
Materials/service provision/travel	£ 250	£ 926
Organisation Expenses	£ 1,221	£ 803
Total	£43,045	£15,829
Gross profit (Loss)	(£ 295)	£ 79
Less Corporation Tax		£ 15
Net Surplus (Loss)	(£ 295)	£ 64
Total directors pay	£33,279	£10,250

In addition to the directors, 12 others were paid for their time at our standard rate of £150/day or as mentors. Around 100 days of time was unpaid, mainly from the directors.

Balance sheet at 31st March	2020/21	2019/20
Assets at bank +prepayments	£16,716	£ 8,396
Debtors	£ 4,850	-
Creditors (due within 1 year)	£ 6,145	£5,842
Net Current Assets	£15,431	£2,569
Deferred Income & accountancy	£15,652	£2,490
Net assets	(£ 231)	£ 64

Notes: The creditors shown are claims from the workforce. Invoices issued before 31/3 for sums paid and work to be undertaken after 31/3 are not shown in these accounts.

Appendix 1: Workforce, Council and former Committee

Workforce (from October 2020)

Louise Griew* – Managing Director: Chair South Warwickshire MSLC 2009-2013, NMV administrator 2018-2020

Hannah Lynes* – MVP Support Director: Chair of Bromley MVP 2017-2019, Acting Chair of National Maternity Voices 2019-2020

Mo Ade* – Communications, Outreach & Inclusion Director: Chair Ashford & St. Peter's MVP

Emma Taylor* - Director: Chair Reading MVP, Prevention workstream SUV

Sandra Guise* - Director: Founder member of NMV, Chair West Cumbria MVP & Carlisle & Eden MVP, Co-chair Northeast & North Cumbria Maternity Eng.Group

Laura James* – Training Lead: Chair Bromley MVP 2014-2017, Acting Chair of National Maternity Voices 2018-19, Co-Chair of London MVP strategic group 2018-2020

Charlie Priddy – Finance Officer: Chair Hywel Dda MVP

Katie Good – Secretary: Co-Chair Peterborough & Hinchingsbrooke MVP

Toyin Adeyinka* – [Nova Network](#) Coordinator: Chair Lewisham MVP, Service User Voice on Maternal Mental Health Workstream

Nadine Otting – Mentor Coordinator: Chair Nottingham and Nottinghamshire MVP

Council (from November 2020)

Zenab Barry – Chair of Council: Co-Chair Chelsea & Westminster MVP

Cathy Brewster*: Chair of Stockport MVP, Greater Manchester & Eastern Cheshire MVP Network co-chair and LMS board user rep, Digital workstream SUV rep.

Nicki Burnett: Chair Kernow MVP (Cornwall & Isles of Scilly)

Michele Misgalla: Co-chair Kings MVP (South London)

Nadine Otting: Chair Nottingham and Nottinghamshire MVP

Amanda Pike: Chair Lincolnshire MVP

Suzanne Jarrett*: Chair Brighton and Hove MVP 2013-2020, Lay Member South West Maternity Transformation Project Board

Ruth Prentice*: Chair Northern Lincolnshire MVP, Humber, Coast and Vale LMS board service user rep

Natalie Whyte: Co-chair Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland MVP

Former Committee

In addition to those from previous lists marked * the following were members of NMV committee from April - September 2020.

Amneet Graham: Chair Newcastle MVP 2019 - 2020

Emma Johnston: Chair of West Sussex MVP

Mindy Noble: Chair of Hampshire MSLC

Rachel Plachcinski: Service User Rep North Kirklees MVP, co-lead for parent, patient and public involvement at NPEU (research unit for maternity & neonatal care).

Catherine Williams: founding NMV Chair, South East Service User Voice Rep

Appendix 2: Terms of Reference for National Maternity Voices Council

Background

This document is based on [Participation and Oversight in National Maternity Voices](#), which was amended and ratified at the General meeting of 8/10/20.

That in turn references the community interest company's [articles of association](#). The articles specify that 'the Directors are responsible for the management of the Company's business, for which purpose they may exercise all the powers of the Company.' At November 2020 there are 5 Directors - 3 current MVP chairs and 2 former chairs.

Membership of the CIC is open to the independent lay (service user) chairs of Maternity Voices Partnerships together with those former chairs who maintain an active involvement with National Maternity Voices. In this context, Chair includes Co-Chair but not Vice Chair. Members of the CIC can attend and vote at General Meetings and view papers from any formal meeting of the CIC (Council, General or Directors). They can also stand for council membership, nominate another member, and if a current chair, vote in any election for contested places on the council.

All members are required to agree to uphold [National Maternity Voices Purpose and Values](#)

Purpose of the Council

The Council is a steering group to inform and review the work of National Maternity Voices CIC, specifically it aims:

- a) To discuss issues raised by relevant stakeholders. (NMV Directors, workforce, member chairs, and the wider MVP community of service user reps and NHS staff.)
- b) To have an overview of the work of NMV with opportunity to query and challenge.
- c) To inform the priority setting and input to the workplan of National Maternity Voices.
- d) To share the diverse experiences of MVP Chairs to bring deeper understanding to the work of NMV.

Practicalities

At least 2 Directors will attend each council meeting. A remunerated secretary will manage the administration of council meetings. There will be 5 meetings of the council per year as well as the annual general meeting of the CIC in October. Council members are volunteers and the time required should not exceed half a day every 2 months. The council may decide to hold adhoc informal meetings of its members on a voluntary basis. Any significant work outside of meetings will be agreed at outset and paid at a standard rate, as will expenses. A council member (other than the Chair) that starts to work regularly for NMV will join the workforce and be replaced on the council.

Appointment of Council members

Any member of the CIC (a current MVP chair or chair who has retired in the last year) wishing to stand for council should ask a current chair member to nominate them. If there are more nominees than spaces in any category then there will be an election based on one member one vote for each category:

- a) The most popular candidate for chair will be appointed.

b) 2 ethnic minority chairs will be appointed.

c) One member from each NHS Region (ideally in addition to above but certainly if none of the above from that Region).

Only those members of the CIC who are current chairs or co-chairs of MVPs will be able to vote. Only ethnic minority members will vote for category b. Category c will be voted on by the members in their own Region. If there are fewer than 10 volunteers, or there are too few to meet one of these requirements, ongoing efforts will be made to recruit and co-opt member chairs with an appropriate background in line with the above criteria. The council may decide to co-opt associate members at any time, subject to the meetings remaining a workable size.

Changes to the personnel on the council will happen annually at the general meeting with each person asked to serve between 2 and 6 years with re-appointment required after 3 years. (Those of the current committee appointed to council will have their term reckoned from when they joined the committee.)

Council members can step down at any time, and may be asked to step down if they miss 3 consecutive meetings. Replacement acting council members can be co-opted by the council during the year, followed by a recruitment and election process at the annual meeting.

Once appointed to council, members are not expected to represent any particular subgroup of MVP chairs e.g. from their own Region. They are expected to be active within the community of MVP chairs but not required to undertake any particular activity beyond that they do as an MVP chair. Note that council members have a completely different role from the Service User Voice Reps appointed by the Maternity team in each NHS Region.

Chair of NMV Council

This is a council member who will be remunerated to chair council meetings via Zoom. They will collaborate with the directors of NMV to compile the agenda for council meetings and discuss who from the workforce will attend.

They are expected to maintain an active presence amongst other MVP chairs on social media and maintain contact with the directors of NMV via email in between council meetings.

They will represent the MVP community and service users at national meetings such as the Better Births Stakeholder Council or identify a suitable deputy. It is expected that the role will be around 1 day a month. Note that although the role is remunerated, a degree of independence from the Directors and workforce of National Maternity Voices is expected.

The chair will act as a point of contact for anyone who wishes to complain about the acts or omissions of a member or members of the NMV workforce/directors. The chair will ensure the NMV complaints policy is followed.

The chair will be appointed for 2 years with an option to be reappointed for a further 2 years.

These terms were last amended by council on 10/2/21.

Appendix 3: Glossary (Explanation of Terms)

Better Births - the report of the National Maternity Review published in 2016 which proposed a number of interlinked changes in maternity care to make it safer and more personalised.

Clinical Network - a network of specialist doctors e.g. obstetricians who collaborate to improve care in their area.

Commissioner - An organisation which holds money for NHS care and contracts with providers to provide care for a given population. For maternity care the commissioner is a clinical commissioning group (CCG) which pays for the care of mothers and babies in their area. Neonatal care is commissioned by NHS England regionally.

LMS - Local Maternity System - a group of CCGs and providers working together to provide consistent care across a wider area e.g. a county.

Maternity Transformation Programme (MTP) - a change programme led by NHS England, working through Local Maternity Systems, which aims to achieve the vision set out in Better Births. Also used to denote the team at NHSE/I who support this.

MVP - A Maternity Voices Partnership is an NHS working group of women, birthing people and their families, commissioners and maternity service staff collaborating to review and develop local maternity care. It is led by an independent lay (service user) chair who ensures service users are represented.

NHS Region - The NHS in England has 7 Regions which are North East and Yorkshire, North West, Midlands, East, London, South East and South West. Each has a regional maternity team who liaise with providers and clinical networks in their Region and with the national maternity team.

NHSE/I - NHS England and NHS Improvement – these two national organisations merged to become one.

NMV - National Maternity Voices - the association of MVP chairs and former chairs.

Provider - an organisation, usually a hospital or group of hospitals who provide maternity care

SUV - Service user voice - a representative of service users on a board, working group or committee