



Supporting maternity & neonatal voices partnerships

National Maternity Voices CLC

Report for April 2024 - March 2025

'NHS England is providing an additional £3 million of funding for Maternity and Neonatal Voice Partnerships (MNVPs) in 2025/26 and 2026/27, with a part-year effect of £1.2 million in 2024/25. This funding is part of a £35 million package of additional investment in maternity and neonatal services over three years that was announced in the Spring budget. ICBs should already be providing appropriate levels of funding and resourcing to MNVPs, and therefore the additional funding recognises the central role MNVPs play in helping to improve care as outlined in [Maternity and neonatal voices partnership guidance](#), and the need to strengthen the neonatal parental voice component. This letter confirms allocations for 2024/25 ([Annex 1](#)), which have been calculated on a per unit basis. The funding will be available for ICBs to draw down by June. '

Extract from [NHS England letter May 2024](#)

Welcome to National Maternity Voices' (NMV's) Annual Report for 2024-25. This is a chance to review key events and activities in the year:

- Bi Monthly 'Cuppa & Chat' video meetings for MNVP leads to provide peer support, share good practice and discuss issues.
- Continuing to supply logo files and lanyards to MNVPs around the country
- Running MNVP Lead, Introduction to MNVPs, and Supporting MNVPs Training sessions
- Consultancy projects, notably contributing to the work of MBRRACE- UK Collaboration ([MBRRACE-UK: Mothers and Babies: Reducing Risk through Audits and Confidential Enquiries across the UK | MBRRACE-UK | NPEU](#)) and supporting MNVPs in South East London with bespoke training and mentoring.
- Contributions to the Health and Wellbeing Alliances' maternity consortium project 'Investigating experiences of interpreting'

The most significant event of the year was the provision of funding to MNVPs in order to embed neonatal voices in their work (see quote on front page). Happily this survived the change of government and is continuing in 25/6. While funds were partial or late in some places, it made a significant difference in many.

Louise Grew

Managing Director, National Maternity Voices, August 2025

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“The role of an MVP chair can be very lonely, and the support of other chairs, through National Maternity Voices has been so helpful.” ~ Chloe Ribeiro, Chair MVP West Essex

What is National Maternity Voices?

We are the association of Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership¹ (MNVP) leaders. 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 (and neonatal) services in England. We have a part time workforce drawn from the MNVP community.

All current independent lay leaders of MNVPs are invited to become members of the CIC to have a say in the running of National Maternity Voices (NMV). Members were invited to an informal members meeting in June and bi-monthly cuppa & chats. The AGM was held on 13th November 2024.

The main workforce of NMV this year was Louise leading the team, Siobhean as MNVP support lead, and Mo leading on Communications, Outreach and Inclusion, although Siobhean was on maternity leave from April '24- February '25. A full list of our workforce is given in Appendix 1.

1 'An MNVP listens to the experiences of women and families, and brings together service users, staff and other stakeholders to plan, review and improve maternity and neonatal care. MNVPs ensure that service users' voices are at the heart of decision-making in maternity and neonatal services by being embedded within the leadership of provider trustsThis influences improvements in the safety, quality, and experience of maternity and neonatal care.' ([MNVP Guidance](#))

National Support for MNVPs

Networking & Peer Support

From April we hosted regular informal Cuppa & Chat meetings on average every two months to enable MNVP leads to network and support one another. We don't have a set agenda for these, but do generally have a theme - based on key topics important in the MNVP world at the time.

"I consider National Maternity Voices to be a vital source of support in my role as a Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership (MNVP) Lead. The Cuppa & Chats provide a valuable platform to connect and gain insights at a national level—perspectives I might not otherwise access. I attend these meetings with questions or requests for advice, and I consistently leave with something useful: new contacts, fresh insights, practical guidance, or creative, out-of-the-box suggestions. This kind of support is especially important in our roles, where we often work independently and lack a team to collaborate or brainstorm with."

~Asiya Shah, Preston, Chorley & South Ribble MNVP Lead

We emailed leads and produced summary public [newsletters](#) in May, September and November and March.

NMV is active on Facebook (3.7K page followers) and Twitter (4.9k followers). There are 3 private Facebook groups:-

The original [chairs \(leads\) & reps group](#) for service user representatives around the UK: over 350 members, with a general purpose of sharing information, seeking help and sharing good practice.

The [National Maternity Voices multidisciplinary group](#) which includes any member of an MVP, NHS staff, VCSE (Voluntary sector Community or Social Enterprise) organisations, and researchers: it currently has over 860 members, and is mainly focused on research requests and involvement opportunities.

The [MNVP leads group](#) for MNVP leads/MVP chairs in England (over 100 members) provided a space for conversation and peer support between MNVP leads but is now little used. It has been 'paused' so it is searchable and we recommend the [chairs & reps group](#) for new conversations.

More information about our facebook groups can be found on our website here - [NMV groups page](#)

Logos & Lanyards

We continued to sell MNVP logos and purple Maternity Voices Partnership lanyards for service users to wear when undertaking 15 steps or collecting feedback in the community. We envision that there may be an increase in demand for logos next year due to the potential changes in ICB footprints.

Training

We have two experienced trainers, Omar Campbell and Mo Ade. Both are also current MNVP Leads. Omar has been our lead trainer and handles training enquiries for the year 2024-2025.

Open (pay per place) training for MNVP Leads ran in May, June, November and January. A total of 18 people attended.

"This training has been the single most useful event/meeting I have attended since beginning in post. The training was clear, well paced and relevant. The networking was great and plenty to take away..." Frankie, January 2025

We continued to offer the **Introduction to MNVPs** training- a 90 minute session suitable for anyone new to MNVPs: staff, VCSE reps, service user representatives etc. We ran an open session in April and 12 attended a session for service users in Leicester in February.

"I have gained more understanding on how an MNVP works" Participant Feb 2025

We also ran **Supporting MNVPs to be effective** in July, which is a 2 hour training for maternity commissioners and ICB/ host organisation staff who support MNVPs.

"...the day was very informative with very good discussions and every question was answered." Participant July 2024

We put in a bid to develop e-learning modules for MNVPs but were unsuccessful in a very competitive process. When the modules are released by NHSE, we will review and update all our training modules, in order for our training offer to complement the independently studied e- modules.

Consultancy

Our consultancy has three strands: supporting the development of MNVPs, supporting engagement with service users and providing service user representatives with MNVP links.

Smoke-Free Babies: we completed this project with a report on our activity and learning to Health Innovation West Midlands.

MBRRACE-UK Collaboration: Meg Hill served as a MVP/Service user representative on the collaborators group which analyses maternal and perinatal deaths. We engaged some south asian service users to give feedback on the public information provided by MBRRACE, and provided a short report with suggestions ahead of the publication. We disseminated information about the reports and encouraged MNVP leads to take up discounted places at the MBRRACE conferences.

South East London: Suzanne Jarret continued to support recruitment of MNVP leads and mentor them in post. We discussed training needs of the leads and Mo Ade delivered some bespoke face to face training in March (with an online follow up in July).

Professional Records Standards Body: we contributed to a service user voice consultation on the development of a standard for recording obstetric anaesthesia.

Health & Wellbeing Alliance: Maternity Consortium

This year's Maternity Consortium's Health and Wellbeing alliance project was about understanding the use and quality of interpreting services in maternity and neonatal services. The Consortium engaged with a variety of NHS staff, interpreters, service users, and Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations. NMV gathered insights from MNVP leads and other LMNS, ODN and Region service user leaders in England, and a few staff. We heard about:

- Their own experiences in relation to the use of interpreting services in NHS maternity & neonatal services
- What they are hearing about the quality and use of interpreting services from service users, providers, and commissioners
- The extent to which they are supported and resourced to reach out to, and hear from service users with language needs
- Their reflections on what could improve the use and quality of interpreting services

The London region has co-produced resources, e.g. communication cards in many languages for use before an interpreter arrives. See [Future NHS](#) for more information.

The Maternity Consortium shared their findings from the interpreting project at an online event in March and a report can be found [here](#)

National Maternity Voices (NMV) is a member of the Maternity Consortium which is led by Tommys and Sands. The Maternity Consortium is part of the Health and Wellbeing Alliance. More resources developed by the Maternity Consortium and others can be found in the [VCSE Health and Wellbeing Alliance Resource Library](#) from National Voices.

Funding & Accounts

Income	2024/25	2023/24
NHS England (MVP Support)	£ 0	£22,750
Health & Wellbeing Alliance	£ 7,500	£13,592
Training	£ 4,690	£ 9,425
Consultancy	£10,290	£14,807
Logos + Lanyards	£ 1,151	£ 1,907
Total	£23,631	£62,481

Expenditure		
Remuneration	£24,620	£72,144
Materials/service provision/travel	£ 316	£ 1,010
Organisation Expenses	£ 1,442	£ 2,666
Total	£26,377	£75,820

Gross surplus (Loss)	(£2,746)	(£13,339)
Tax (paid)	-	£ 2,534
Net Surplus (Loss)	(£2,746)	(£10,805)
Total directors pay	£16,602	£51,219

The main members of the workforce are listed in Appendix 1. All workforce time was paid. Income adjustments are incorporated within consultancy income.

Balance sheet at 31st March	2024/25	2023/24
Assets at bank	£ 8,036	£10,025
Debtors inc tax reclaimed	£ 564	£ 3,026
Creditors inc VAT	(£5,311)	(£ 988)
Net Current Assets	£ 3,289	£12,063
Deferred Income & accountancy	£ 3,297	£ 9,325
Net assets	(£ 8)	£ 2,738

Creditors includes a directors loan of £5000 repayable in October 2025. A total of £2,812 of income was deferred for work in 2025/26: £1,191 MBRRACE, £1,614 South East London, £674 Health & Wellbeing Alliance.

Appendix 1: Workforce & Council

Workforce

Louise Griew – Managing Director: Chair South Warwickshire MSLC 2009-2013, NMV administrator 2018-2025

Siobhean McCarthy-Perham - MNVP Support Director, MNVP Lead Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre (mainly on maternity leave this year)

Mo Ade – Communications, Outreach & Inclusion Director & Trainer, Lead Ashford & St. Peter's MNVP

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

Rae Lowe - Finance Officer: Lead Northumbria MVP

Omar Campbell - Trainer & Training co-ordinator, Lead Kings MVP

A few other people were remunerated for project work

Appendix 2: Jargon buster (Explanation of Terms)

Autonomous - having the freedom to make decisions and act independently

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

Chair - the presiding officer of a group or organisation, such as an MNVP or LMNS. From 2023 the role of MVP chair has evolved into that of MNVP Lead

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

CNST - Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts; handles all clinical negligence claims against member NHS bodies. NHS Resolution's [Maternity Incentive Scheme](#) is designed to support safer care by giving Trusts financial incentive to achieve 10 safety actions; action 7 requires Trusts to demonstrate they 'listen to women, parents and families using maternity and neonatal services and coproduce services with users'

Co-chair or co-lead - a person who shares the role of chair/lead jointly with another or others (Co-leads share responsibility equally unlike a lead and vice-lead)

Commissioner - An organisation which holds money for NHS care and contracts with providers to provide care for a given population; for maternity care, it's the **Integrated Care Board (ICB)**, neonatal care is currently commissioned by NHS England.

CQC - Care Quality Commission; an executive non-departmental public body of the Department of Health and Social Care, responsible for inspecting the quality and safety of health and care services

GDPR - General Data Protection Regulation, introduced in 2018 to govern how personal and/or sensitive information is processed and controlled

ICB - Integrated Care Board; the commissioner of healthcare including maternity care in an ICS area.

ICS - Integrated Care Systems; partnerships of organisations that work together to plan and deliver joined up health and care services. A total of 42 ICSs were established across England in July 2022. ICSs comprise ICBs and Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs)

Independent - free from outside control, not subject to external authority. An MNVP lead is ideally independent of the organisations that commission and provide maternity services.

LMNS - Local Maternity and Neonatal System (previously known as a LMS, Local Maternity System). LMNSs are partnerships of local maternity and neonatal provider and commissioner organisations, who work with service users to improve local maternity and neonatal services

Maternity and Neonatal Programme (MNP) the team in NHS England who support development and implementation of national policy. Previously the MTP - maternity transformation programme which aimed to achieve the vision set out in Better Births.

MNVP or MVP - A Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership is 'a partnership that works to review and contribute to the development of maternity services within a local area. It brings together the staff who pay for (commission) and provide maternity services with the women, birthing people and families who use those services.' ([2022 Toolkit definition](#))

Neonatal - Neonatal services care for premature and sick newborn babies: Neonatal Intensive Care (**NICU**) for highest needs, Special Care Baby Units (**SCBU**) for lower needs.

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. There is a Service User Voice rep in each region who supports the MNVPs in that region and represents service users on regional maternity and neonatal boards.

NHSE - NHS England, which provides national leadership for the NHS in England, and comprises national departments and seven integrated regional teams

NMV - National Maternity Voices, the association of independent lay leaders of MNVPs England, which supports and networks MVPs. NMV is not a national MVP.

ODN - Neonatal Operational Delivery Network ODNs exist to ensure all babies and families requiring neonatal care receive high quality care that is accessible and fair. Each ODN comprises a group of neonatal units within a locality working together

Provider - an organisation e.g. a hospital or group of hospitals who provide health care

PPV - Patient and Public Voice. NHS PPV partners include patients/service users, carers, families, people with lived experience and other members of the public who are involved in NHS work in different ways

Safety Action 7 of the Maternity Incentive Scheme specifies aspects of working with service users, including that MVP chairs should be remunerated. (see **CNST**)

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

ToR - Terms of Reference; a document used and developed by MVPs to outline their guiding values, principles, roles and activities. A template is provided by NMV for MVPs to adapt for their ToR if they wish to do so.

Vice-chair or Vice-Lead - a person who assists a chair and/or acts as their deputy.

Volunteer - a person who helps a group or organisation without being paid. (MVP service user members may be volunteers, but MVP chairs and vice-chairs should not generally be described as volunteers as these are intended to be paid roles.)