Dorset Maternity
Voices Partnership

Dorset County Hospital & University Hospitals Dorset 2022

Maternity Voices Partnership Annual Report 2022

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Introduction

2022 was a very busy and exciting year for Dorset Maternity Voices. We have expanded our work significantly, been involved in a broader range of work within the local maternity and neonatal system, recruited two fantastic chairs (one for each trust), and held our first formal MVP meeting in November.

I'm so grateful to our new chairs, Kelly and Marianne, who've worked so hard this year to learn about the service and are so passionate about improving things for our service users. This report gives a brief recap of our work in 2022. One of our aims for 2023 is to share more information about the work we are doing, and we will update as this happens on our facebook page. If you'd like to find out more, join our meetings or volunteer, please get in touch.

- Rachel

2022 Summary

Chairs recruited in January 2022 due to increase in MVP funding and workload

Involvement in the work following the Ockenden reports, including co-production of information for maternity service users, and visits to both trusts

Return to gathering feedback in person, at various events, groups and within the maternity units and sharing this feedback with the units

Beginning to recruit volunteers to help us reach a wider and more diverse range of service users

Involvement in the development of a five-year Equality & Equity plan for maternity services within Dorset

We have resumed visits to the units to speak to service users in the waiting rooms and wards, and to carry out "15 Steps" assessments

Representing service users within the trusts and local maternity and neonatal service at a high level

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2022 Survey

We had a fantastic response to our 2022 survey, with responses from over 270 service users and partners. Analysing all of the information has been a huge undertaking. We released a survey report in late 2022 to show the main themes within the information collected - you can find the report on our Facebook page and on the Maternity Voices page of the Maternity Matters Dorset website.

We are now in the next phase of working with the information you've given us. We have met with senior staff at both trusts to discuss feedback, statistics and themes from the survey, and address as much of the feedback as possible.

We will be running another survey in 2023, and over time hope to show how addressing the feedback received influences your experiences of maternity services.

We identified three main areas from the feedback that we should focus on in 2023. Those areas are:

- Personalised care
- Informed choice and consent
- Infant feeding

We also identified the need for work on the postnatal care pathway, and on awareness of reduced fetal movements, and reviewing the current postnatal care pathway. Work is beginning on these themes - if any service users have a particular interest in those areas and would like to get more involved, please get in touch

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Maternity Voices Partnership Meetings

In 2022 we were delighted to host our first formal Maternity Voices Partnership meeting, where service users, clinicians and other stakeholders got together to discuss issues around maternity care and the results of our 2022 survey. This has been an aim for a long time, and we were thrilled to have more than 60 attendees, including representatives from midwifery, obstetrics, commissioners, charities and lots more.

Our goal is to hold MVP meetings quarterly. While we are establishing the meetings and working on issues across Dorset, we are holding the meetings jointly to avoid duplication of work, but this may change in future.

In order to make sure we represent your views, we would be really grateful if you could attend future meetings - please check our Facebook page for updates on future dates

Social Media

In order to reach as many service users as possible, we have worked on our Facebook presence and now have almost 3,500 followers on our main page, and nearly 800 members in our community facebook group. This is a great way of reaching more people, and we would love for you to join and share your views with us

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Forming new relationships

In 2022, we made contact with a wide range of charities and other stakeholders in an attempt to build relationships and engage with a wider range of service users. So far we have met with several organisations and discussed the specific needs of our shared service users, and we look forward to doing more with this over time. If you work for an organisation who also works with maternity service users, please get in touch to discuss how we can work together.

We are also building a community of volunteers who can get more involved in improving maternity services, and need volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and areas within Dorset to help us - please contact us if you'd like to find out more

Coproduction

Several years ago we coproduced all the content for the Maternity Matters Dorset website. In 2022, we reviewed the content and highlighted areas that needed additional information to enable all service users to make informed choices about their care. We are working closely with maternity staff to develop the website content further and close these gaps. We are also helping to produce patient information on a range of topics to ensure that it's clear and accessible to all.

We are increasingly involved in LMNS and trust-level strategic, governance and safety work, attending meetings to represent service user voices based on the feedback we receive. We sit on the partnership board of the LMNS as an equal partner, and the service user voice is central to decisions made which will impact maternity care.

15 Steps & Walk The Patch Visits

Dorset MVP team have enjoyed regularly visits to the two local maternity hospitals over the last year. We have been carrying out 15 steps visits across both sites - this is an approach to service/quality improvement which checks first impressions from a service user perspective. The outcomes are then used to make improvements.

Across the two trusts we have aimed to carry out monthly 15 steps visits and over the last 12 months teams have visited all the maternity and neonatal areas in both Trusts. At each 15 step visit the team has included MVP service users as well as multiple maternity staff from the local trust including the trust heads and directors of midwifery. These visits have identified many suggestions for improvement that have then been formally fed back to the trust resulting in ongoing improvements for service users such as staff photo boards and increased patient information displayed throughout the maternity departments.

Walk the Patch is our opportunity to collect direct feedback from current maternity users on the antenatal and postnatal wards of a maternity unit, and we do this each month. It is intended as a snapshot of service users experiences of care on a certain day on the maternity wards, we also visit SCBU/NICU.

After receiving feedback, we write this up and share this with the head of midwifery and direct management team at each trust. The feedback we receive may suggest improvements and we work with the team to support the appropriate improvements. We also often receive positive feedback, and this is cascaded down to the midwifery team particularly if a member of staff has been recognised for the care they have given.

Equality & Equity Plan

In 2022, we worked with NHS Dorset's maternity team on the development of a five-year Equality & Equity Plan. This plan has the following vision statement:

"Our vision for maternity care in Dorset is of a service that is truly accessible to all, from pre-conception through to the postnatal period, and where everyone receives the best care and clinical outcomes regardless of need or barrier. The care we provide now and in the future will be safe, equitable and personalised, with our service users and their families' needs at the heart of everything we do."

We will be working together as a local maternity and neonatal service to reduce inequalities and ensure that all service users can access a high standard of maternity care.

We have already begun working with third sector organisations and community groups to reach a wider range of service users, and we are looking forward to working on this more in 2023. If you would like to assist us, or work for an organisation and would like to link with us on this work, please get in touch with us.

Ockenden Report

Since December 2020, a large focus in our work has been the Ockenden review and the two subsequent reports. The reports followed an independent review of maternity services at the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust. These reports led to a number of national actions that needed to be taken to improve maternity services and make them safer. Many of these recommendations involved involving Maternity Voices Partnerships, and embedding service user representation within maternity services

As an MVP, we have since been involved in coproducing more information, attending meetings to provide service user voice, undertaking analysis of the information available to you all, and being part of Insight visits to both trusts to assess progress against the actions needed. This is ongoing work which will continue throughout the coming year and beyond.

Next Steps

We are currently finalising our annual work plan for 2023. This will include working on the identified themes from our 2022 survey, developing our MVP meetings, working on the Equality & Equity plan, actioning feedback, and so on. We are looking forward to ensuring your voices are well represented within the system.

How To Contact Us

Dorset Maternity
Voices Partnership

If you would like to give feedback, get involved in future events, or volunteer as a service user representative, we would love to hear from you!

Email: maternityvoicesdorset@gmail.com
Facebook: @DorsetMaternityVoices
Website: www.maternitymattersdorset.nhs.uk/support/maternity-voices