

## Board of Directors

### All reports **MUST** have a cover sheet

<b>Subject:</b>	Homebirth Service		<b>Date:</b> 2 December 2021	
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Lisa Gowan, General Manager, Women & Children's Paula Shore, Head of Midwifery/Nursing			
<b>Approved By:</b>	Julie Hogg, Chief Nurse			
<b>Presented By:</b>	Julie Hogg, Chief Nurse			
<b>Purpose</b>				
The purpose of this paper is to update Trust Board on the recruitment campaign for Community Midwifery and provide an update on the position of the suspended overnight home birth service.			<b>Approval</b>	<b>X</b>
			<b>Assurance</b>	
			<b>Update</b>	
			<b>Consider</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>				
<b>To provide outstanding care</b>	<b>To promote and support health and wellbeing</b>	<b>To maximise the potential of our workforce</b>	<b>To continuously learn and improve</b>	<b>To achieve better value</b>
<b>x</b>	<b>X</b>		<b>x</b>	
<b>Overall Level of Assurance</b>				
	<b>Significant</b>	<b>Sufficient</b>	<b>Limited</b>	<b>None</b>
		<b>x</b>		
<b>Risks/Issues</b>				
<b>Financial</b>	<b>x</b>			
<b>Patient Impact</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Staff Impact</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Services</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Reputational</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Committees/groups where this item has been presented before</b>				
Executive team 15 September 2021 Trust Board 1 October 2021				
<b>Executive Summary</b>				
<b>PURPOSE</b>				
<p>The purpose of this paper is to update Trust Board members on the community midwifery recruitment campaign and provide an update on the position on the three month suspended overnight home birth service which is due for review on 31 December 2021.</p> <p>In light of the latest guidance around the continuity of carer agenda and the recognised national shortage of registered midwives, the women and children's triumvirate, with the support of the Chief Nurse, have proposed that this is an opportunity to undertake a review of our community service.</p> <p>Due to the current vacancies and on-going recruitment alongside the impending review of the service as a whole, the senior midwifery team recommend the following:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue with the suspension of the overnight homebirth service for the period of a further three months, from 31 of December 2021 to 31 March 2022</li> <li>2. Contact individually all women planning a home birth during that period and follow up with a letter which demonstrates the rationale for making this difficult decision. This personal contact will</li> </ol>				

ensure we can develop bespoke plans for those women where clinically appropriate as we have described above.

3. Continue with the active recruitment using a rolling advert for Community Midwives. As applications are received, the team will continue to interview on an ad hoc basis.
4. Community Service review, including the role of MSW Band 3 role. Terms of Reference are drafted with the review due to commence in December 2021
5. Continue to build on the work with the Maternity Voices Partnership to ensure they help support our women through this period.

Based on the above recommendations, the maternity service asks Trust Board to support a further suspension of the Home Birth service overnight from 31 December 2021 until the 31 March 2022

The maternity service, via the Maternity Assurance Committee, will continue to monitor the recruitment progress across the community midwifery service and will oversee the recommendations following the community midwifery review.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to update Trust Board members on the community midwifery recruitment campaign and provide an update on the position on the three month suspended overnight home birth service which is due for review on 31 December 2021.

## BACKGROUND

At the October Trust Board meeting, colleagues were updated on the vacancy levels across the community midwifery service which is described below and represented a 35% vacancy loss across the service against the Birthrate plus recommended WTE.

October	Birthrate + WTE	Current budgeted WTE	Actual WTE
Community (core and caseload)	RM	RM	RM
	43.17	39.61	27.16

Since reporting to Trust board in October, the community team have appointed a further 6wte registered midwives and they continue to have a rolling advert out and interview as soon as an application is received. This means that there has been a marginal improvement against our vacancies which is described below:-

December	Birthrate + WTE	Current budgeted WTE	Actual WTE
Community (core and caseload)	RM	RM	RM
	43.17	39.61	28.26*

*\*figure is for the current WTE, which has taken into account recent internal transfers back to acute midwifery. With the recent recruitment campaign the trajectory for the end of March 22 is 31.28wte. There will also be further additions from the preceptorship programme to factor into this total but as yet, this is not confirmed.*

## HOME BIRTH SERVICE

As described in October, our average our home birth service delivers six babies per month. Whilst this number is low, we are acutely aware of the impact not having this facility has on our women. Women will have multiple reasons for choosing a home birth due to the benefits from birthing at home.

Trust Board should note that because of the low numbers of home births there are only two midwives on call overnight for this service. This means that a second lady who starts to labour who wants a home birth is not able to. This has always been the case and the community midwifery team have always been clear when discussing birth plans with their women.

During the three month overnight suspension, there have been two women who have started to labour into the evening where a homebirth has not been supported, with five women supported to birth at home. The Head of Midwifery along with Matron colleagues have supported these women who have understandably been disappointed, but have ensured an individualised plan of care. On both occasions the maternity service has been able to facilitate their birth plan. Whilst the location was different, the plan has met their needs and they reported back feeling supported and listened to.

## **COMMUNITY MIDWIFERY REVIEW**

In light of the latest guidance around the continuity of carer agenda and the recognised national shortage of trained midwives, the women and children's triumvirate, with the support of the Chief Nurse, have proposed that this is an opportunity to undertake a review of our community service.

The terms of reference are attached for information. The aim of this review is to ensure the clinical pathways are in line with national guidance and the staffing establishment is appropriate for the geographical areas covered.

This review will be undertaken by a member of the regional chief midwife's team with a timescale of three weeks to complete. There is a commitment for a report and action plan to be made available within four weeks of the review being completed.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In light of the current vacancies and on-going recruitment alongside the impending review of the service as a whole, the senior midwifery team recommend the following:-

1. Continue with the suspension of the overnight homebirth service for the period of a further three months, from 31 of December 2021 to 31 March 2022
2. Contact individually all women planning a home birth during that period and follow up with a letter which demonstrates the rationale for making this difficult decision. This personal contact will ensure we can develop bespoke plans for those women where clinically appropriate as we have described above.
3. Continue with the active recruitment using a rolling advert for Community Midwives. As applications are received, we will continue to interview on an ad hoc basis.
4. Community Service review, including the role of MSW Band 3 role. Terms of Reference are drafted with the review due to commence in December 2021
5. Continue to build on the work with the Maternity Voices Partnership to ensure they help support our women through this period.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the above recommendations, the maternity service asks Trust Board to support a further suspension of the Home Birth service overnight from 31 December 2021 until the 31 March 2022

The maternity service, via the Maternity Assurance Committee, chaired by the Chief Nurse will continue to monitor the recruitment progress across the community midwifery service and will oversee the recommendations following the community midwifery review.

Trust Board are asked to note the following:-

1. The five recommendations made by the senior midwifery team
2. That the home birth service will be restricted overnight for a period of three months from 31 December 2021 until 31 March 2022.