

Newsletter 24 - September 2022

Autumn approaching

The warm weather is still here with us and we hope you managed to get a nice break over the summer. The plants and trees in Oxford are still looking rather dry, so we are hoping for a bit of rain for once!



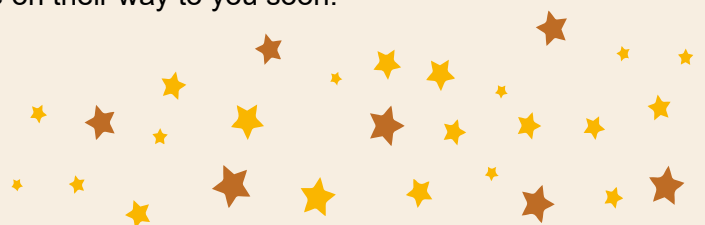
2022 was a very busy summer for the UKMidSS team. We have been thinking and preparing for new research projects and surveys. Some reporters will already have received an invitation to take part in a short follow-up survey from our Diabetes Study (more on page 2). We have a new survey of practice about intermittent auscultation which will be on its way to you soon (see page 2). We are also approaching the final month of our Diabetes in Pregnancy Study. This means we have a new study in the pipeline, and you can find out more about this on page 4.

Summer stars

But before we tell you all about our news... We need to talk about more important stuff - **biscuits!**

It was really difficult this time to choose only three stars, as many reporters have retrospectively completed outstanding reports and data entry. For this summer, our UKMidSS stars are reporters who went an extra mile catching up with outstanding reports and data entry.

A big well done to: **Marisa Hickman** from **Sanctuary Birth Centre**, Nottingham University Hospital QMC Campus; **Lindsay Craney** from **Newcastle Birthing Centre**; and **Antigone Claustres** from **The Birth Centre**, St Helier Hospital, Carshalton. Biscuits will be on their way to you soon!



New UKMidSS Surveys



We have been very busy preparing for two surveys of practice to be carried out using UKMidSS. Some of you will have received an invitation to take part in the Diabetes Survey already, and later this month everyone will be receiving an invitation to take part in the Listen2Baby Survey.

Diabetes Study Survey

In July, our Steering Group reviewed the findings from an early analysis of the Diabetes Study data. These results showed that a relatively small number of units have reported most of the cases (women with diabetes admitted to a MLU for labour care) for this study. This is likely to reflect local guidance/admission criteria. The Steering Group therefore recommended that we carry out a short survey of units with higher numbers of cases, so that we can investigate and describe the admission criteria and care guidance for women with diabetes in those units. This will help us to put the results of the study in context and guide any changes in policy/practice.

For this survey, we have only invited those units that reported at least ten cases over the course of the study, or for whom the number of cases was at least 2% of admissions. If you have received our survey invitation and not responded yet, please do so... We really need your data! If you have not received the survey, sit back and relax!

Listen2Baby Survey – take part in our pilot!

Rachel has recently received funding from the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) to lead *Listen2Baby*, a three-year programme of research which is aiming to provide evidence to improve the quality and safety of intermittent auscultation (IA). The first part of this larger project is a survey of practice to describe the range of IA devices, counting methods, training, and audit used in units across the UK. The invitation to take part in the survey will be sent to all reporters towards the end of September/ beginning of October.

Before we send the survey invitation out to everyone, we would like to pilot it. This will help us check that the survey questions are easy to understand and can be answered by our reporters. If you would like to help with this, please email Alessandra ukmidss@npeu.ox.ac.uk. We will then send you the survey, ask you to complete it and send us any comments on the questions back. Once the pilot is complete, we will then invite all remaining units to take part in the main survey.

Listen2Baby

Water immersion and raised BMI

You might remember from our previous newsletter that Claire, PhD student Claire Litchfield at Oxford Brookes University, is investigating whether water immersion might improve rates of physiological birth for women with raised BMI.

She is now recruiting midwives through social media to take part in interviews about their experiences and views on the topic. She would particularly welcome views from midwives practising outside of England.

For further information about this study please contact Claire Litchfield by email: 17113138@brookes.ac.uk

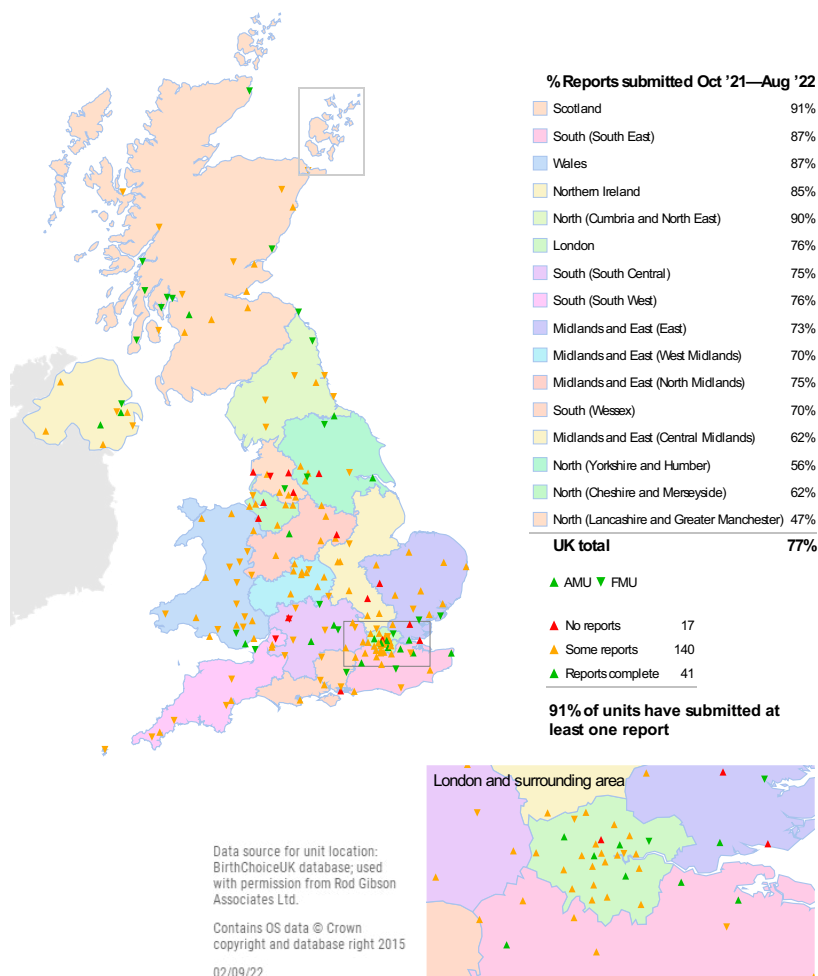
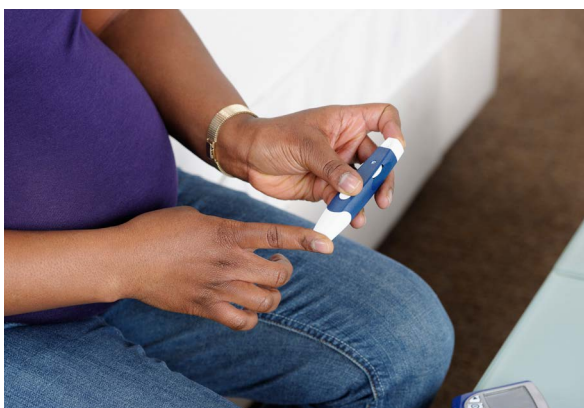


Diabetes in Pregnancy Study Update

You will receive the last report request for our Diabetes in Pregnancy Study on the **1st of October**. Our next study will start in early 2023. This means that you have extra time to catch up with any outstanding reports and data entry!

So far, 181 units (91%) have submitted at least one report and 69% of units who have reported cases have completed the data entry - well done!

If you have data to enter and are waiting for your OpenClinica login details, please contact Alessandra at ukmidss@npeu.ox.ac.uk. She will chase those for you.



Urgent - we still need your reports!

There are 17 units who have not yet submitted any monthly reports. There is still time for you to catch up and we would really appreciate that. We need these reports, even if you never admit women with Diabetes in your unit or if your unit has been closed to admissions.

In our previous studies we have had close to 100% participation. This helps us make a stronger argument for any changes in policy or practice and raises the profile of research about midwifery units.

If you are a reporter or Head of Midwifery from one of the units below we really need to hear from you urgently. Please contact Alessandra on ukmidss@npeu.ox.ac.uk.

The Acorn Suite, Bedford Hospital	Midwifery-led Unit, Countess of Chester Hospital
Burnley Birth Centre, Burnley General Hospital	The Mary Rose Birth Centre, Queen Alexandra Hospital
The Birth Centre, Whittington Hospital, Highgate	The Midwife Led Birth Centre, The Royal Oldham Hospital
The Birth Unit, Gloucestershire Royal Hospital	New Beginnings, Southend Hospital
The Birthing Unit, Broomfield Hospital	Primrose Midwifery-led Birthing Suite, Hinchingsbrooke Hospital
Cossham Birth Centre, Cossham Hospital	Sanctuary Birth Centre, Nottingham University Hospital City Campus
Fylde Coast Birth Centre, Victoria Hospital, Blackpool	Sapphire Birth Centre, Whiston Hospital
Lotus Midwifery Unit Leeds, General Infirmary	Stroud Maternity Unit, Stroud Maternity Hospital
Chorley Birth Centre, Chorley and South Ribble Hospital	

Advanced Maternal Age Study

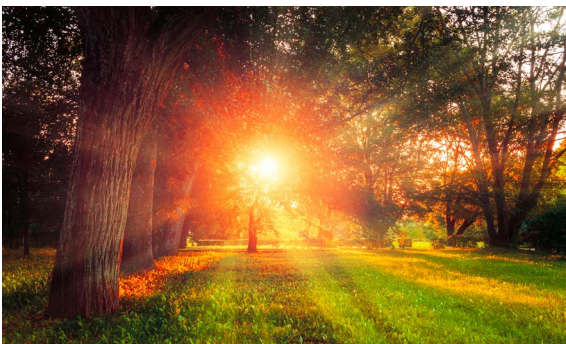
With the Diabetes in Pregnancy Study coming to an end, the UKMidSS team has been working behind the scenes on a new study. We are aiming to investigate outcomes in women with a maternal age greater than 40 years when giving birth and who are admitted to midwifery units for labour care. The study will run from early 2023 for a year.



This study has come about as maternal age at birth has been increasing for at least the past 30 years. In England and Wales in 2020, 24% of births were to women aged 35 or over. We know that increasing maternal age is associated with a range of pregnancy complications, interventions and adverse outcomes including diabetes, hypertension, Caesarean section, stillbirth and neonatal death. In our recent [survey](#) of midwifery unit admission criteria, 64% of local midwifery unit admission guidelines indicated that women aged 35-40 years were explicitly eligible for midwifery unit birth. There is lack of evidence about the risks and benefits of midwifery unit care for women aged over 40,

and it is not known how many women aged over 40 are admitted to midwifery units for labour care. With this new study we are aiming to **estimate the proportion of women admitted to midwifery units for labour care in the UK who were aged over 40 at birth, and describe and compare labour care, management and outcomes with other women admitted to midwifery units.**

We'll be sending more information out over the coming months so please look out for this. In the meantime please make sure you're up to date with the Diabetes Study and respond to any survey invitations.



Update contact details

Is one of your reporters leaving? Is the lead midwife for the MLU going on maternity leave? Is your Head of Midwifery taking a sabbatical? If yes, please do let us know. We rely on updated contact details to communicate news as well as collecting data for our studies.

CPD certificates

If you need a CPD certificate for your revalidation, please get in touch! Being a UKMidSS reporter means that you are contributing to national audit and research. You can drop us an email ukmidss@npeu.ox.ac.uk



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