

Newsletter 25 - February 2023

Winter newsletter

The festive season seems to have arrived and departed very quickly, as we said goodbye to 2022 and welcomed the New Year! 2022 was a busy and productive year for both the UKMidSS team in Oxford and for our reporters. It looks like 2023 will be an exciting year too! In this newsletter we have updates about our Diabetes in Pregnancy study, as well as introducing our new Advanced Maternal Age study and a new upcoming survey. There is also a final reminder to complete the Listen2Baby survey!

UKMidSS Stars

This New Year couldn't start without recognising the special contribution of some UKMidSS reporters who have gone above and beyond to catch up with outstanding reports and data entry. Our winter stars are: **Faye Wells** from **Bradford Birth Centre**, **Katie Headlam**, from **Fatima Allam Birth Centre**, and **Yvonne Taylor** from **The Midwife Led Birth Centre**, at **The Royal Oldham Hospital**.

Listen2Baby survey- Have you responded yet?

Listen2Baby is a three-year NIHR-funded programme of research which is aiming to provide evidence to improve the quality and safety of intermittent auscultation (IA). Head of UKMidSS,

Rachel Rowe, is the Chief Investigator for Listen2Baby. 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 was sent to all reporters at the beginning of November. So far, we have received a response from 63% of units, which is great, but we can do better! **We're particularly keen to hear from freestanding midwifery units, who are under-represented in survey responses so far.** If you have received our survey invitation and not responded yet, please do so... You could also forward the survey to your Fetal Monitoring Lead Midwife, if you feel you are unable to respond to some of the questions.

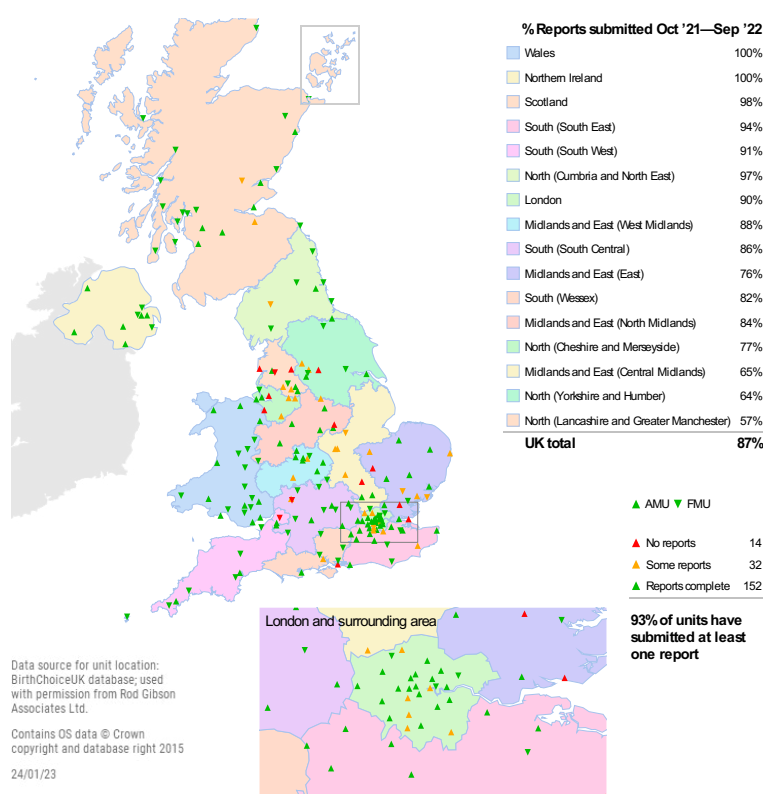
Listen2Baby

Diabetes study

As you will be aware, we finished active reporting and data collection for the Diabetes Study in October 2022. Our new study, will be starting in February. This means that there is not much time left to catch up with reporting and data entry!



We need **one last push** to complete reporting and data entry... So far, 184 units (93%) have submitted at least one report and 85% of units who have reported cases have completed the data entry. 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 some units who have not yet submitted any monthly reports, or who have missed some months. There is still time for you to catch up and we would really appreciate that. We need these reports, even if you have never admitted 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 ASAP.

The Acorn Suite Bedford, Hospital	Meadow Birth Centre, Worcestershire Royal Hospital
Burnley Birth Centre, Burnley General Hospital	Airedale Birthing Centre, Airedale General Hospital
The Birthing Unit, Broomfield Hospital	The Oasis Birthing Centre, Princess Royal University Hospital
Cossham Birth Centre, Cossham Hospital	Singleton Midwife-led Unit, William Harvey Hospital
Fylde Coast Birth Centre Victoria Hospital, Blackpool	Grange Maternity Centre, Petersfield Community Hospital
Lotus Midwifery Unit, Leeds General Infirmary	The Midwife Birth Centre, Royal Stoke University Hospital
Midwifery-led Unit, Countess of Chester Hospital	Abbey Birth Centre- St Peter's Hospital, Chertsey
The Mary Rose Birth, Centre Queen Alexandra Hospital	Bradford Birth Centre, Bradford Royal Infirmary
Primrose Midwifery-led Birthing Suite, Hinchingsbrooke Hospital	Community Maternity Unit,
Sanctuary Birth Centre, Nottingham University Hospital	Perth Royal Infirmary
Sapphire Birth Centre, Whiston Hospital	The Carmen Suite, St George's Hospital, Tooting
Stroud Maternity Unit, Stroud Maternity Hospital	The Juno Suite, Colchester General Hospital
Lotus Birth Centre, Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel	Penrith Birthing Centre, Penrith Community Hospital
The Midwife Led Unit, Royal Hallamshire Hospital	St Mary's, Wythenshawe
The Birth Unit, Gloucestershire Royal Hospital	The Willow Suite, Birmingham Heartlands Hospital
Bluebell Birth Centre, North Manchester General Hospital	Bluebell Birth Centre, North Manchester General Hospital

Coming soon: Advanced maternal age (AMA) study!

As mentioned in our previous newsletter, we are ready to start our new study “Advanced Maternal Age”.

What is the aim?

We are aiming to investigate outcomes in women who are aged 41 or older when giving birth, and who are admitted to a midwifery unit for labour care, and describe and compare their labour care, management and outcomes with other women admitted to midwifery units.

Why are we doing this study?

Maternal age at birth has been increasing for at least the past 30 years, and in 2020 in England and Wales about 24% of births were to women aged 35 or over. We know that advanced 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 a 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.



When will the new study start?

The study will run from 1st February 2023 for a year. You will receive your first report request on the 1st of March for February cases. This means that you should start making a note of the women admitted to the MLU for labour care who are aged 41 or older in February.

As a reporter, what do I need?

- A working email to receive our reports- no login details are required to submit the monthly reports.
- A “Study Case Log” to make a note of the cases and controls available [here](#).
- Login details for our database OpenClinica, where you will send us detailed information about cases and controls. If you don't have a login or cannot remember the login details, please email us at ukmidss@npeu.ox.ac.uk.

Where can I find more information?

All relevant documents about the study are available on our [website](#). There is also a webinar available explaining how to perform the data entry in OpenClinica. This is based on the Diabetes study, but the data entry process is the same for both studies. If you are struggling and need any help, please email Alessandra (Research Midwife) at ukmidss@npeu.ox.ac.uk. She will be more than happy to help.

What if I am too busy and struggling to find time for reporting and data entry?

We are very happy to have more than one reporter for each birth centre. We would suggest you look for one or more colleagues that would be happy to help you, and we can add them to our system to receive reports and provide them with login details for OpenClinica.

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



What else is happening? New Survey!

The AMBeR Study (Accessibility of Midwife-led Birth settings in the UK to Racialised Women)

We will soon be circulating a survey which forms part of the **AMBeR** study. We are running this survey in collaboration with researchers at the *Centre for Maternal and Child Health at City*, University of London.

What's the AMBeR study about?

We know that in the UK, racialised women (sometimes referred to as 'ethnic minority' or 'BAME') experience worse obstetric outcomes compared with White women. Recent reports by *FiveXMore* and *Birthrights* have highlighted that racialised women also have poorer experiences of maternity care. We know that for women with straightforward pregnancies, midwifery units and homebirth services can offer woman-centred, culturally safe care when compared with obstetric-led settings. However, there is some evidence suggesting that racialised women might be less likely to access midwife-led intrapartum care.



The AMBeR study aims to explore the barriers and facilitators which influence access to midwifery units and homebirths by racialised women. The project will involve a systematic review and an analysis of routine maternity service data. Overall, the team at City hope that this research will help us understand what approaches can work to improve the inclusivity of maternity services for racialised women. In the future, the study findings might feed into a quality improvement research project.

AMBeR Survey

As part of the AMBeR study we are carrying out a survey using UKMidSS, to collect information about how midwifery units have tried to reach, engage with and improve care for racialised women. There are around 10 questions, allowing you to report any initiatives that have taken place in your unit. The team at City would also like to explore this topic in more depth with a small number of UKMidSS reporters, so if you would like to take part in a short interview with a researcher from City, please add your contact details to the survey and they will be in touch.



Can you help pilot the survey?

The survey will go out to reporters towards the second half end of February. As usual, before we do that, 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. Once the pilot is complete, we will then invite all remaining units to take part in the main survey.

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.

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