



# Annual Report 2021

03 FEBRUARY 2022



*"Working together to improve maternity services"*

Perhaps you are pregnant or you have just had a baby or maybe you work in maternity services - whoever you are, welcome to the 2021 annual report of the Lothian Maternity Voices Partnership. We have written this for you, to tell you who we are and to show what working in partnership can achieve. I hope that this will inspire you to join us and get involved in the work we do.

Change is slow in large organisations and this is often frustrating but you will see in the report that we are making a difference for women and their families in Lothian. It is important to say that this positive change could not happen without the respect and support the MVP receives from NHS Lothian or without the dedication of the midwives, obstetricians and everyone else looking after women and their babies.

We are keen to welcome new members to the MVP. If you have had a baby recently or have an interest in maternity services and would like to be involved just email me directly.

Mathilde Peace, Lothian MVP lay chair

[mathilde.peace@nhs.scot](mailto:mathilde.peace@nhs.scot)

## Our New Name

In 2021, the Maternity Services Liaison Committee became the Maternity Voices Partnership to better reflect what we do and join the community of MVPs across the UK. We still bring together the families who use maternity services and the people who work for NHS Lothian maternity services. We listen to identify where change is needed and work in partnership to make improvements.

*All our meetings continued to be held online in 2021. We miss having a cup of tea or coffee and a good chat together, the way we used to – but on the positive side this has meant that a lot more members were able to attend “remotely” and we had record numbers attending our meetings. More people know about the MVP and want to support our work, which makes up a little for the loss of more spontaneous conversations and social interaction.*

# 2021: What Did We Do?



## B.R.A.I.N.

We supported women to make decisions about their care. The MVP designed this simple card which is now given to all pregnant women and reminds them of the key questions they can ask when discussing options about their care.



We hope it will support women and their healthcare provider to have meaningful conversations based on mutual respect and trust. You can read more about this project [here](#).



## Spotlight on Perinatal Mental Health

Sadly the Covid-19 crisis had a huge impact on the well being of women, babies and their families. At the peak of the pandemic, not being able to get the support of a chosen partner at pregnancy appointments or, critically, during labour and birth caused enormous distress and anxiety. The Scottish Government is providing funding to expand and create support services for mums and babies. The MVP members are working together with NHS Lothian to develop local Maternal and Infant Mental Health services which will respond to this increased demand for support.

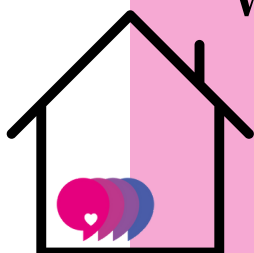
## We supported the creation of a Facebook page for NHS Lothian Maternity Services

The new Facebook page took its first baby steps in September and the number of followers has been growing steadily. Join us @NHSLothianMaternity to see what is happening across maternity and neonatal services, get the monthly statistics, meet the staff and participate in surveys. Twitter & Instagram accounts should follow shortly!



## We helped create a dedicated homebirth team!

The MVP helped community midwives make the case for the creation of a community midwifery team specialising in homebirth. The new Homebirth Team was successfully launched in October and provides continuity of care and support to the women and families who choose to have their babies at home.



# How You Can Get Involved



## Join Our Online Meetings!

We have 6 meetings a year. At present all our meetings are held remotely. Find out more on our website. We just need to know you are coming.

<https://services.nhslothian.scot/Maternity/MSLC/Pages/Meetings.aspx>

## Join A Parent Support Association

The MVP has established close relationships with a number of women's & parents' support associations. Among these are NCT (National Childbirth Trust), the Pregnancy & Parents Centre, the Breastfeeding Network, La Leche League, Held in our Hearts (Baby loss counselling and support) and JUNO (Perinatal mental health support). The members representing these support groups regularly feedback women's views and alert the MSLC to specific issues arising across the whole service.

## Join The Lothian Maternity Engagement Group

We have created an online group of recent users of maternity services who develop and test ideas to improve services. We are currently focusing on induction, postnatal care and breastfeeding support.



## Tell Us About Your Experience

Anyone can send comments and suggestions about Lothian maternity services. These are read by the MVP lay chair and remain anonymous unless the person sending comments wants a personal response.

Use the feedback page on the MVP website. This page is not for formal complaints.

<https://services.nhslothian.scot/Maternity/MSLC/Pages/Feedback.aspx>

## Mothers Voices Events

Invitation to a cafe or community centre near you to talk about your experience of maternity services with other parents and NHS Lothian midwives, health visitors and doctors. We are hoping to hold more Mothers' Voices in 2022 - one in West Lothian and one in Edinburgh. This will depend on the evolution of the covid-19 pandemic.

*"We are keen to welcome new members to the committee. If you have had a baby recently or have an interest in maternity services and would like to be involved, we would love to hear from you."*

Mathilde Peace, MVP Chair

<https://services.nhslothian.scot/Maternity/MSLC/Pages/default.aspx>





**What our members are saying...**

*"As a consultant anaesthetist working in maternity services it is crucial that we have the concerns of the women we care for at the centre of what we do. Having the opportunity to learn of those concerns and work together to bring about change is the great strength of the MVP. The lay chair of this group has provided skilled leadership to ensure all views are heard in a balanced way and this is a unique strength of the group in my experience."*

***"As the NHS Lothian Child Health Commissioner I value the importance of lay knowledge and find the input of the MSLC an invaluable co-production resource in helping professionals to understand the lived experience of our service users."***



***"I had a difficult pregnancy and being a member of the MVP has given me the opportunity to give something back to NHS Lothian. It has been great to meet new people and contribute to discussions, innovations and research around maternity services. My favourite part has been feeding back on what it is like to experience care and seeing changes and improvements made as a result of this. I feel like I have made a difference".***

*"My work with the National Childbirth Trust involves working with parents both antenatally and postnatally. New parents are sometimes reluctant to give feedback directly to NHS Lothian regarding their experience of maternity services. However, they frequently share their birth stories with me. They tell me what worked well for them and also, occasionally, where their experiences were not so positive. As a member of the MVP, I am able to feed these experiences back anonymously to the MVP. This feedback can help direct changes in services / facilities and, as a result, help improve the experience for maternity service users".*