



BIRTHWAYS NEWSLETTER

Edition 4 - April 2021



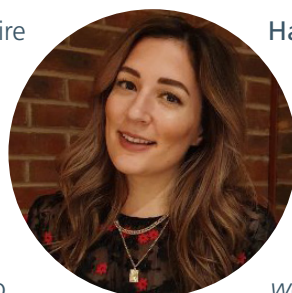
£300K to support pelvic health for local mums-to-be

Mums-to-be across Herefordshire and Worcestershire are set to benefit from additional, specialist information, advice, and support to maintain or improve their pelvic health following a successful bid for more than £300,000.

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Local Maternity and Neonatal System (LMNS) have been successful in securing £337,000 from NHS England and Improvement to become an early implementer system, driving forward the NHS Long Term Plan commitment to ensure that women have access to multidisciplinary pelvic health clinics and pathways by 2023/24.

This money will be spent on improving the quality of care in the antenatal period before and during pregnancy by providing additional specialist staff, extra training, and providing mums-to-

be with more resources – including a new app to support pelvic floor muscle training a self-assessment tool to use throughout the pregnancy journey - to enable them to take active steps to maintain or improve their pelvic floor function.



Hazel Brookes, Quality Improvement Midwife at Herefordshire and Worcestershire LMNS, said: *"This is fantastic news for our local service users and we are delighted that we are one of just ten systems across the country to receive this specialist funding. The money, spread over three years, will enable us to expand the range of support that is available for mums-to-be to manage their pelvic health - including a specialist midwife and more physiotherapy assistants."*

"We hope to develop our perinatal pelvic pathways in partnership with our service users, with an ambition to create a single point of access to a multi-disciplinary perinatal pelvic health clinic."

Fay Baillie, LMNS Project Director, said: *"It's widely reported that pelvic floor dysfunction is significantly under-reported due to embarrassment, shame or the belief that it is normal following birth. We want to give our service users the confidence to seek treatment if they feel something is not quite right."*

"The funding will ensure we can lead local delivery of our ambition to improve the prevention, identification, and treatment of 'mild to moderate' pelvic floor dysfunction following birth, and ultimately reduce the number of women living with pelvic floor dysfunction postnatally and in later life."

Thank you and a fond farewell to Christobel Hargraves

Members of Herefordshire and Worcestershire Local Maternity and Neonatal System (LMNS) said a huge thank you and a sad farewell to outgoing Chair Christobel Hargraves at their Board meeting in March.

Christobel, who chaired the LMNS Board since its inception in 2017, oversaw the development of the LMNS Plan and a number of service improvements. These included the continuing growth of the Continuity of Carer model of care, the development of the [birthisways.nhs.uk](https://www.birthisways.nhs.uk) website signposting new mums to information and advice, the implementation of joint safety huddles across the two counties, and the launch of neonatal outreach services – and all the while ensuring the views of service users are listened to thanks to the growing involvement of Herefordshire and Worcestershire Maternity Voices Partnerships’.

Matthew Hopkins, Senior Responsible Officer for the LMNS, said: *“The success of the LMNS to date owes much to Chris who has shown true commitment to the development of integrated maternity and neonatal care across our two counties, and ensuring the voice of service users is well and truly heard.”*



A warm welcome to our new Chair



We are delighted to welcome Dr Louise Bramble as the new Chair of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Local Maternity and Neonatal System Board.

Dr Bramble, a GP Partner at Chaddesley Corbett Surgery in Kidderminster, and the Clinical Lead for NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group, took up post on April 1.

She said: *“I’m delighted to be taking on the role of Chair and am really looking forward to working with the LMNS team*

across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

There has already been so much outstanding work over the last few years under the chairmanship of Christobel Hargraves, and I’m excited about being able to support further improvements in the quality and safety of maternity and neonatal care and personalisation of our services for families.

“I have always been extremely passionate about improving care for children and providing them with the best start in life, and there is no better start than with a healthy pregnancy.”



New special care area enables mums and babies to remain together

A new transitional care area at Hereford County Hospital's special care baby unit enables mums and babies to remain together with additional support.

Previously mums and babies who needed special care may have been separated if their baby had required admission to the Trust's Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU).

The new transitional care area within the Special Care Baby Unit provides two bedded bays with a care cot and

a bed alongside each other, and 24/7 access to support and monitoring from a team of experienced midwives, neonatal nurses, neonatal support workers and paediatricians.

Elaine Evans, special care baby unit ward manager at Wye Valley NHS Trust and Herefordshire and Worcestershire LMNS Neonatal Nurse, said: "We're very pleased to open this transitional care area, which will make such a difference to the mum's experience, providing specialised care and support to mums of late-preterm

infants without being separated from their baby.

"Mums are able to stay with their baby which helps with bonding, breastfeeding, getting to know any additional needs of their special care baby, and the preparation for when they are ready to both go home".

Mums and babies who are considered for the new transitional area will need to meet criteria to ensure that the care is appropriate and safe for the baby.



Virtual maternity tours from the comfort of your own home

Mums-to-be and their partners across Herefordshire and Worcestershire will soon be able to have guided tours of their local maternity services from the comfort of their own home, thanks to a series of new videos.

Informative virtual tours of the neonatal intensive care units (NICU) and postnatal wards at both Hereford County Hospital and Worcestershire Royal Hospital will be available on all digital devices by the end of the month.

It is hoped the videos will help to familiarise parents-to-be with both areas, provide information and

advice around how to access the departments and what to expect if admitted, and reduce any anxieties that they may be feeling before their baby is born.

Hazel Brookes, quality improvement midwife at Herefordshire and Worcestershire Local Maternity and Neonatal System, said: "We hope that these new videos will provide information as well as reassurance to parents to be who might have questions and anxieties around what it might be like in hospital following the birth of their baby.

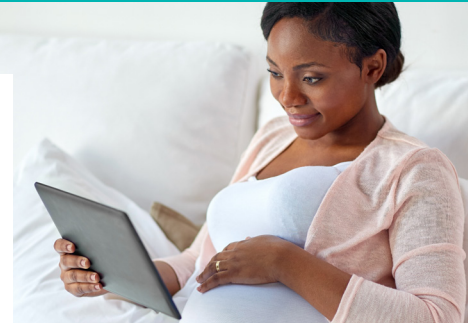
"By being able to 'visit' the neonatal and postnatal areas of their local

hospitals in advance, we aim to reassure them that friendly staff are on hand to provide safe, quality care to them and their baby, and give an insight into what the ward or area they or their baby will be staying in is like, including practical information like how to locate it, what the daily routines are like and when partners can visit."

The videos will be available via the the maternity pages on both Trust's websites at:

www.worcsacute.nhs.uk or www.wyevalley.nhs.uk or on the LMNS website at: birthways.nhs.uk/birthwaystv/

Mums-to-be now have even more maternity information at the touch of a button



The continuing rollout of an innovative maternity app for mums-to-be across Worcestershire means even more personalised maternity information is now available at their fingertips, helping to support them through their pregnancy and after birth.

The BadgerNet app, which was launched in the county last year, enables women to access a real-time summary of their maternity notes, supporting them from their first contact in antenatal care through to the delivery of their baby and postnatal care.

Using BadgerNet, pregnant

women and the maternity and healthcare staff caring for them, can see all of the details of their pregnancy in real-time, from any location. These can be easily updated at each maternity visit or appointment, in either a community or hospital setting.

Continuing developments on the App mean BadgerNet is now also accessible by neonatal staff, enabling seamless care and the sharing of knowledge for vulnerable babies born prematurely.

Further, a range of approved information leaflets and resources have been added, to

ensure women have easy access to a range of up to date evidence based information.

Carol Rayers, BadgerNet Project Midwife said:

"Uptake of the app amongst our mums-to-be is currently 93% and we are receiving positive feedback. The access to real-time information is a real benefit for both pregnant women and clinicians as it means care can be tailored appropriately, more quickly."

Future developments include the development of a single pregnancy record, linking the system with BadgerNet at Hereford

County Hospital and Birmingham hospitals so that seamless care can be provided where women may have to be transferred to other sites for specialist care.

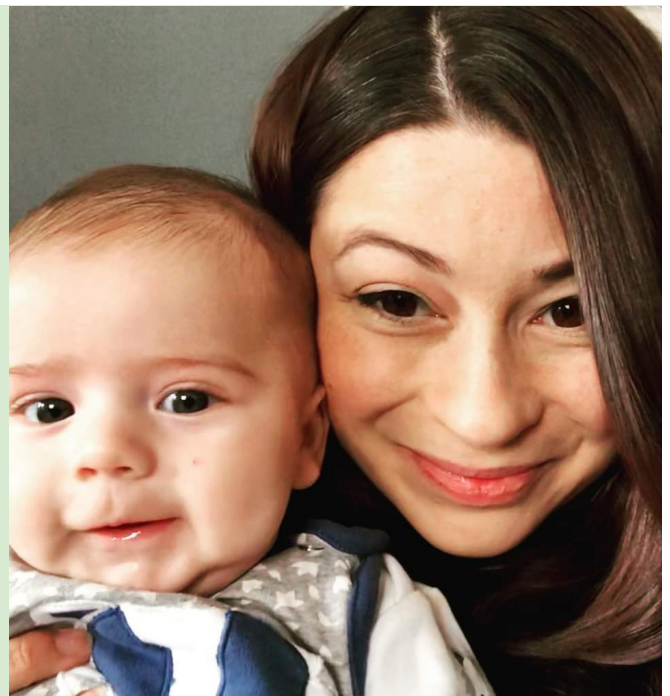
All information is held securely and cannot be accessed without the appropriate login details (similar to internet banking).

For anyone unable to use the app, a Summary Record and appointment card is available.

What local mums say

Herefordshire mum Emily Thomas said:

"I found the Badgernet portal invaluable throughout my pregnancy. As my partner was unable to attend my antenatal appointments, having access to my maternity notes on my phone enabled me to keep him involved and allowed us to keep track of my pregnancy. As I had access to all of my notes, it gave me greater understanding of my health and empowered me to be more involved in my care planning. I try to be as eco conscious as possible so I enjoyed having leaflets on my phone. It was also helpful to have them all to hand and I often found myself reading them when I couldn't sleep at night. I would then write down any questions I had for my midwife in the diary function ready for my next appointment. I loved checking the week by week updates on babies' development and found the appointment reminders extremely useful with baby brain!"



Information to keep you and your baby healthy in 11 different languages

Did you know that a series of NHS coronavirus leaflets for pregnant women and new mums, have been translated into 11 different languages?

Topics include planning your birth, looking after yourself and your baby in pregnancy, parent information for newborns and illness in newborns.

A helpful animation has also been produced explaining how NHS maternity services have changed during this time and why it is important to keep in touch with your maternity team. In addition, the NHS has collaborated on a series of videos with the 'Baby Buddy' app, supported by charity Best Beginnings, to help remind pregnant women about some of the issues that they need to look out for when pregnant. These are especially relevant to women from

ethnic minorities and both the app and charity have further resources to support diverse audiences.

Your local maternity team is still here to help you, so contact them as you would normally. They will be working together with you and providing you with extra support during this unprecedented time.

Some studies suggest that pregnant woman from ethnic minorities are more likely to be admitted to hospital with coronavirus than white women, so maternity services have been asked to take extra precautions to keep you safe, which includes prioritising your care and access to services.

It is also important that you take extra steps to protect yourself and follow the advice about how to avoid getting coronavirus. If you think you have

coronavirus then alert your maternity team and they will advise you about what to do next.

Remember to attend all your antenatal appointments and seek help early from your midwife or maternity team if you have any concerns about your health or your baby's health. Get help early so you have the best chance of recovery.

For further information, including links to all of the information referenced above, please visit:

www.birthisways.nhs.uk/midwives-are-giving-extra-support-to-black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-women-during-coronavirus/



**JUST SPEAK TO
YOUR MIDWIFE**

**Your
health
matters** **help us
help you**

Top postnatal tips from new animation

A new animation will ensure new mums in Herefordshire and Worcestershire receive consistent, expert advice and information following the birth of their baby.

The new Maternity Postnatal Information for New Parents animation, based on an award-winning resource developed by Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and service users, is compiled by experts to deliver the core aspects of discharge information for new parents.

It includes important information including what to expect after birth, how to register a baby's birth, and advice on both baby and maternal health and wellbeing.

Hazel Brookes, quality improvement midwife at Herefordshire and Worcestershire Local Maternity and

Neonatal System, said: "Those initial first days after the birth of your baby can be an anxious as well as exciting time, as there are so many new things that you may be experiencing for the first time. This informative animation has proved to be a really popular resource elsewhere, and we are really looking forward to our local mums being able to benefit from the expert advice in such a user friendly and accessible way, and being able to refer back to it at any time."

New mums will be signposted to the animation by their midwife during their pregnancy to help them prepare, as well as following birth. It will be accessible on both Trust's websites at worsacute.nhs.uk or wyevalley.nhs.uk as well as through the BadgerNet app.

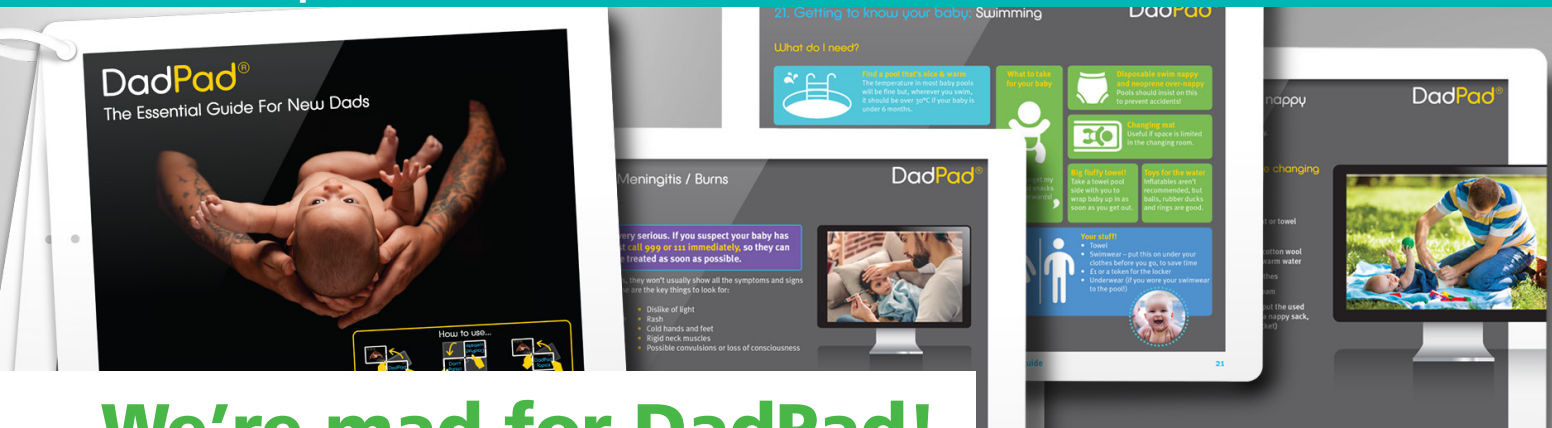


all's well that starts well

Go to www.nhs.uk/start4life



A good start for a healthier life



We're mad for DadPad!

Dads across Herefordshire and Worcestershire are being reminded that they can prepare for parenthood, and gain additional support through a free online resource called DadPad.

DadPad is an online information pack developed by dads for dads; helping

fathers prepare for family life and tackles the mental health issues which can affect new parents.

The app is available to download from App store or Google Play store and covers a range of topics, such as; breastfeeding support, awareness of mental health difficulties, the

anxiety and frustrations that come with parenthood, as well as hands-on advice on nappy changing and surviving with no sleep!

Visit thedadpad.co.uk/app to download the app for free.

Funding boost aims to give mums and babies the best start

A £20,000 investment in specialist equipment will help to improve the health and wellbeing of mums and their babies in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, it is hoped.

The funding from Herefordshire and Worcestershire Local Maternity and Neonatal System will be shared between maternity services at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust and Wye Valley NHS Trust to help more women give up smoking before their baby is born, and reduce the number of babies born before 37 weeks.

The money will fund personal carbon monoxide monitors for women in the highest risk groups so that they can reduce or eliminate their exposure and understand the measurements of their carbon monoxide levels. Exposure to carbon monoxide, which presents a risk to pregnant women

and their baby, can be caused by smoking during pregnancy or other environmental factors.

It will also provide two fetal fibronectin machines (one for each Trust) to help identify women at risk of delivering prematurely – enabling measures to be put in place to prevent this, or plans to be made to manage this safely.

Both of these measures form part of the national 'Saving Babies Lives' action plan, put in place to make maternity care safer.

Barbra McLeod, Governance Lead at Herefordshire and Worcestershire LMNS said: "Lots of work has already taken place across the two counties to help reduce the numbers of women who are smoking at delivery, and reduce the number of babies born before 37 weeks – both of which are important factors in delivering the

aims set out in Saving Babies Lives.

"It is hoped that this investment in specialist equipment will further improve the safety and quality of maternity and neonatal care for our local families."

Saving Babies Lives aims to reduce the numbers of women smoking at the time of delivery to 6 per cent, and reduce preterm births to 6 per cent – both by March 2022. The number of women across Herefordshire and Worcestershire who are still smoking at the time their baby is born currently stands at 9.9 per cent (year to date) and the number of babies currently born before 37 weeks currently stands at 8.9 per cent (year to date).

Continuity study day for midwives attracts top national speakers

National midwifery experts were among the speakers at a special Continuity of Carer virtual study in February for practising and student midwives from across Worcestershire.

The roll out of the Continuity of Carer model – which aims to ensure that more mums-to-be see their named midwife, or a midwife from a small team, right through their pregnancy journey including birth – is continuing to gather pace at the Trust, with six teams now in place. The aim is for over half of the county's families receiving maternity care in this way by March 2022. This new model of care fully integrates with traditional maternity services ensuring seamless, collaborative care for all families across Worcestershire.

Those attending the event were able to hear from Dr Sheena Byrom OBE; one of the UK's first Consultant Midwives; Dr Claire Feeley, Researcher and Editor of The Practising Midwife;

Trixie McAree, the National Lead for Continuity of Carer; and Lia Brigante, the Royal College of Midwives Quality and Standards Advisor.

Valuable insights on how the Continuity of Carer model is working in Worcestershire were also shared by Trust Continuity of Carer midwives Julia Lyons and Sharon Groves, and local mums also shared their views on the benefits of being cared for in this way.

The event was organised by Caitlin Wilson, Consultant Midwife at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust/University of Worcester and Lead for Continuity of Carer. She said: "Our growing numbers of Continuity of Carer teams are ensuring that women have continuity of the person looking after them during their maternity journey, before, during and after the birth. This continuity of carer and relationship between caregiver and receiver has been proven to lead to better outcomes and safety

for women and babies, as well as offering a more positive and personal experience.

"The event was a great opportunity for current practising midwives and student midwives who are considering joining a Continuity team to hear first-hand from national leads in this area, as well as local teams on the ground, the vision for safe and personalised care that put the needs of the women, her baby and family at the heart of care in line with the national Better Births report."

Work is underway to deliver Continuity of Carer for Herefordshire mums-to-be.

To see how Continuity of Carer is benefiting mums and midwives, you can watch the short film on the LMNS' Birthways website at: birthways.nhs.uk/birthwaystv/



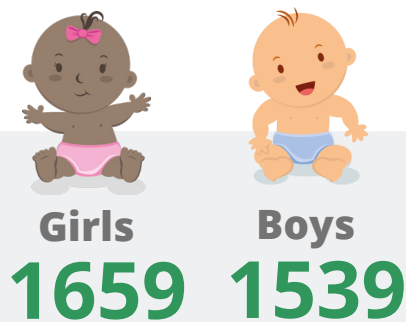
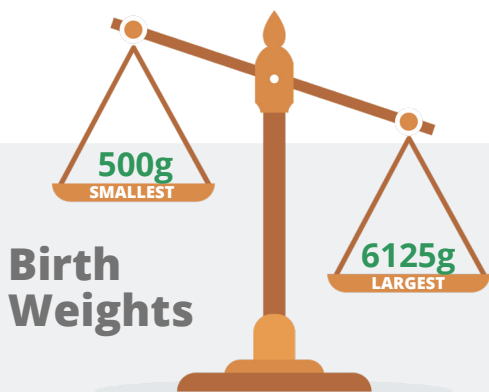
Welcome to Worcestershire's newest Continuity of Carer team, Team Amethyst.

Team Amethyst is the sixth team of Continuity of Carer midwives in the county, and will be delivering care to families in the Droitwich area.



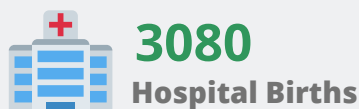
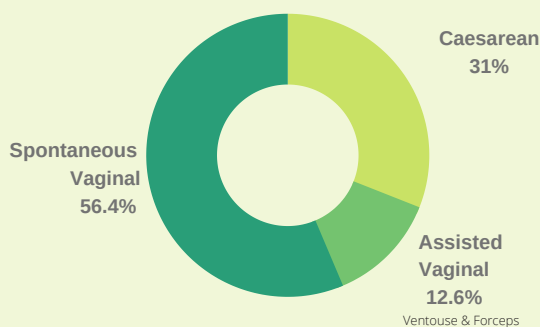
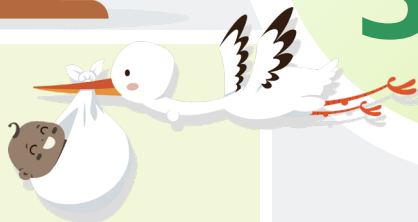
Maternity and Neonatal Insight

SEPTEMBER - FEBRUARY 2021



An additional 18 babies were born where gender was not recorded, forming the babies total

Type of Birth



Please note that Home and Hospital birth figures will not match total babies figure due to multiple births and babies born before arrival



2374 Breastfeeding



34 Twins



3817 Bookings



269 Smoking

Number of Women Smoking at the time of their delivery

This dashboard shows monthly maternity data across the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Local Maternity and Neonatal System

HEREFORDSHIRE
Maternity Voices
Working in partnership to improve maternity services

WORCESTERSHIRE
Maternity Voices
Working in partnership to improve maternity services



We would love to hear your experiences of maternity care before, during and after birth.

What went well?
What didn't?
What changes would you like to see?

HAVE YOUR SAY

Herefordshire

Email: Herefordshiremv@outlook.com

Facebook: @HerefordshireMaternityVoices

Worcestershire

Email: worcestershire.mv@outlook.com

Twitter: @voicesmaternity

instagram: worcestershire_mv



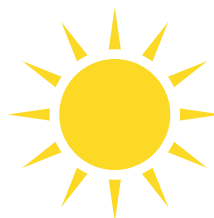
Staying healthy in pregnancy



Report any concerns you have to your midwife or triage



Attend all of your appointments



Aim for 20 minutes of exercise a day and lots of sunlight



Eat a healthy and balanced diet



Take Vitamin D daily



Take folic acid before pregnancy and until you're 12 weeks pregnant



Quit smoking – the sooner the better. There's help available.



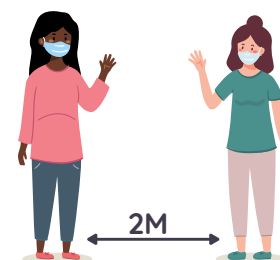
Not drinking alcohol is the safest approach



Wash your hands regularly



Wear a face mask



Follow Government guidance

Cut down this line