

BIRTHWAYS NEWSLETTER

Spring 2023

New parents can now 'ask Anya' for top parenting and feeding support



New parents and parents-to-be across Herefordshire and Worcestershire now have free access to a parenting and breastfeeding support app providing practical and emotional support as well as interactive technology to help their journey into parenthood.

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Local Maternity and Neonatal System have teamed up with Anya – a parenting and breastfeeding app which is available 24/7 to provide parents with evidence based information and expertise.

Zoe Durall, Lead Midwife at Herefordshire and Worcestershire LMNS, said: "We are delighted to be able to offer all parents to be and new parents up to 12 months after birth the opportunity to access Anya for free as part of an initial pilot.

"It is an app that uses pioneering 3D and Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology to support breastfeeding and the early parenthood journey and

has been developed and designed to give parents support, knowledge, comfort and the community needed to parent and feed successfully.

"Specialists are available to listen and signpost to extra help, there are virtual communities to join and share questions, and a 3D animation tool called LatchAid which uses cutting edge interactive technology to help with feeding skills.

"The app complements the support our new parents already receive from their midwives and wider maternity teams throughout their pregnancy journey and beyond and we have already received great feedback from those who have starting using it."

Since its launch earlier this year, more than 250 people across the two counties have downloaded the Anya app.

Comments from users include:

"I've asked all sorts of questions to the AI and experts. Each response has been really helpful and supported me and my baby."



Advertisement for the Anya app. It features the logos for Herefordshire and Worcestershire Local Maternity and Neonatal System, Anya, and NHS. The text reads: "Have you just had a baby? You can get Premium access NOW for FREE! Just search for 'ANYA BABY' IN YOUR APP STORE. Premium eligibility for postcodes in Herefordshire and Worcestershire." An image of a smartphone shows the app interface with a 3D animation of a baby's head and hands.

"I'm enjoying breastfeeding, my baby was slow to gain weight but is now gaining 30g a day for the past three days. I've enjoyed the videos and information available."

For more information and to download the app visit anya.health/hereford-worcester/



Equity and Equality at centre of new LMNS strategy



Herefordshire and Worcestershire Local Maternity and Neonatal System (LMNS) has published its Equity and Equality Strategy, setting out its commitment to taking equality and inclusion into account in everything it does.

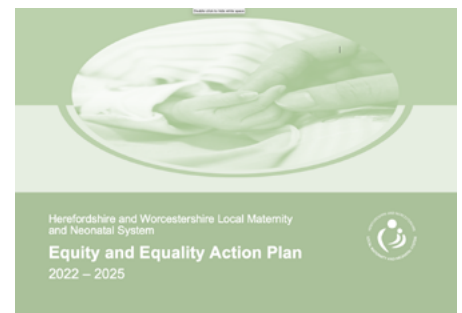
The strategy, developed alongside clinicians and Maternity Voices Partnership representatives, sets out the LMNS' aims to achieve equity and equality for mothers and babies from Black, Asian, and Mixed ethnic groups, those living in the most deprived areas and vulnerable groups; and to achieve race equality in experience for staff from minority ethnic groups – both in line with its vision of 'Delivering Choice Safely'.

It supports the five priorities identified in NHS England's Equity and Equality Guidance for Local Maternity Systems and the findings of the refreshed Herefordshire and Worcestershire Equity & Equality Strategy.

Hayley Durnall, Director of the LMNS, said: *The Equity and Equality Strategy sets out how we will ensure all our local service users have access to high quality, safe and sustainable, maternity, neonatal and perinatal mental health services.*

"We recognise the importance of embedding equality principles and practices within the LMNS and the wider Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care System, that will support us as a dynamic system which

enables the right services for our local population, placing fairness at the centre."



The Equity and Equality Strategy can be read on the LMNS website at birthways.nhs.uk/about-birthways/

Successful pelvic health advice service set to stay



Small actions can make a big difference to your pelvic floor before and after pregnancy.

Take a look at our website: squeezeifthold.co.uk

squeezeifthold.co.uk

SQUEEZE LIFT HOLD



Hints and tips to help you look after your pelvic floor.

Take a look at our website: squeezeifthold.co.uk

squeezeifthold.co.uk

SQUEEZE LIFT HOLD

For further information, hints and tips on looking after your pelvic health visit squeezeifthold.co.uk

Women across Herefordshire and Worcestershire will continue to benefit from additional, specialist information, advice, and support to maintain or improve their pelvic health following the success of a pilot Perinatal Pelvic Health Service.

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Local Maternity and Neonatal System (LMNS) became an early implementer system to improve access to postnatal physiotherapy services after securing £448,000 until March 2024 from NHS England and Improvement – and it has now been confirmed that funding will continue after this date.

The Perinatal Pelvic Health Service team works hard to improve the quality of care in the antenatal period before and during pregnancy by providing mums-to-be with more resources to enable them to take active steps to maintain or improve their pelvic floor function and ultimately reduce the number of women living with pelvic floor dysfunction (urinary and faecal incontinence) postnatally and later in life.

Amanda Argyle, Pelvic Health Midwife at Herefordshire and Worcestershire Local Maternity and Neonatal System, said: *“We are thrilled that we will now be able to continue our service after March 2024 – this is testament to the hard work and success of the team and is fantastic news for all women, staff and the wider community.*

“Following the launch of the Squeezzy App and our www.squeezeifthold.co.uk website last year, recent developments include investment in bladder scanners, pelvis and anatomy



New team members (left to right): Rhiannon Eling, Physiotherapy Assistant, and Melissa Oleksy, Administration Assistant.

models and educational material for Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust and Wye Valley NHS Trust. We’ve also secured a number of venues across both counties where our workshops and clinics can be delivered, enabling women to access pelvic health services wherever they live.

“We have lots in the pipeline too – we’re excited to be working on getting a self-assessment tool and referral pathways for pelvic health within women’s BadgerNet electronic maternity notes. This will also help us to provide a service that is available and easy to access for all.”

The team has also welcomed two new members - Rhiannon Eling, a new physiotherapy assistant, and Melissa Oleksy, administration assistant.

Amanda added: *“Rhiannon has been involved in the project since the start as our Maternity Voices Partnership representative so brings a unique perspective to the team. As part of her role she is spending time on the wards and preparing to run educational sessions for antenatal and postnatal women as part of our new pathways.”*

Spotlight on Worcestershire Maternity Voices Partnership



I'm Rebecca Stuart and I took up the role of chair of Worcestershire Maternity Voices Partnership just before Christmas 2022.

I am a Mum to two girls, aged almost two and six, who were both born at Worcestershire Royal Hospital. I am delighted that Becky Schofield, who was acting as interim chair, has agreed to stay on as vice-chair and we are both really excited to begin stepping up the work of the MVP with Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, now that we have us both in post. We thought we would take the opportunity to tell you a bit about what the MVP has been doing recently and what we have planned.

It's been a busy few months. We undertook our first "15 steps" event in February 2023, visiting maternity triage, antenatal and postnatal ward to give feedback on our initial impressions. Becky and I visited with a group of four service user representatives (three new Mums, a breastfeeding counsellor and the most popular addition – a baby, born at Worcester, who attended with their Mum and got lots of attention and smiles from all the staff members we met!). We were really impressed by the areas we visited, which all felt clean and safe. We'd like to extend a big thank you to all the staff members involved for their warm welcome, engagement, and patience as we conducted one of these visits for the first time. We hope to conduct these visits four times per year. We were also delighted to be involved in the co-production of a new video, providing information on the induction of labour, which was filmed in April.

We are currently recruiting volunteers to a new parent panel. We hope that from the end of May, we will be able to gather service user feedback from the panel on leaflets and posters that are created for parents and parents to be.

We are keen to increase awareness of the MVP and reach more users of maternity services, to gather their feedback. 'You said, we did' boards will soon be appearing across the



maternity department, funded by the MVP, which will have our contact details on and will provide a great opportunity for us to celebrate the work that is being undertaken by the Trust to continually improve maternity services.

We also hope to introduce more visits to the hospital to speak with families and conduct some listening events out in the community, to find out more about the experience of expectant and new parents. We would really appreciate the help of everyone working across the Trust, in raising awareness of the MVP and encouraging families to contact us with their feedback or follow our Facebook page facebook.com/voicesmaternity.

We look forward to meeting more of you on our future visits and would encourage you to get in touch with us if there is anything you think the MVP could help with, by providing a service user voice to inform your work. Please email hwicb.worcsmpv@nhs.net to get in touch.

Join our NEW parent panel!!!

There is lots of different information given to families about their maternity care. The MVP is often asked about new and updated leaflets on the Badger App.

We are looking for 10-12 new or expectant parents to join a small panel and give their opinion on some of these new leaflets and posters. We would contact you up to once a month via email. You would have three weeks to read the leaflets and send us your thoughts.

We'd like to include people with a range of different experiences and would be happy to engage with you in a different way if email doesn't work for you.

Please email us hwicb.worcsmpv@nhs.net with the subject panel rep and we will send you details.

A warm welcome to new LMNS Director Hayley

Hayley Durnall joined Herefordshire and Worcestershire LMNS as Director in January. Hayley's background is as a Public Health Consultant and prior to starting her position at the LMNS she worked for Worcestershire County Council leading the Public Health Portfolio for maternal and child health.



What attracted you to the role of Director of the LMNS? I have always had a passion for improving the health of children and families. After reading the second Ockenden review I felt compelled to be part of the change that ensured that our families experience the best possible maternity and neonatal care. I saw this role as an opportunity to put my passion into action and make a real difference at a local level.

Your background is as a Public Health Consultant. What benefits will this bring to your new role?

My background in Public Health gives me a valuable understanding of the importance of reducing health inequalities which is particularly applicable to maternity and neonatal care. In addition, the Public Health approach of understanding the need, the evidence and nurturing collaboration to address complex problems puts me in good position to lead the LMNS' refreshed focus of quality assurance and safety.

What are your first priorities for maternity and neonatal care across Herefordshire and Worcestershire?

My first priority is ensuring that the voice of our families experiencing maternity and neonatal care are truly heard, especially families from communities that healthcare services find harder to reach.

What are you enjoying most about the job? I love working with a multitude of different people and job roles, bringing people together to work effectively as a system.

What are the biggest challenges? I believe that challenges can always be turned into opportunities. Most people are aware of the spotlight on maternity and neonatal care as a result of various National Reviews, all of these reviews highlight challenges that need to be faced and present our Local Maternity and Neonatal System with opportunities to continuously learn and improve.

What are you looking forward to the most? Seeing a real impact on the outcomes for families across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.



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: hwicb.herefordshiremvp@nhs.net

Facebook: [@HerefordshireMaternityVoices](https://www.facebook.com/HerefordshireMaternityVoices)

Worcestershire

Email: hwicb.worcsmpv@nhs.net

Facebook & Twitter: [@voicesmaternity](https://www.facebook.com/voicesmaternity)

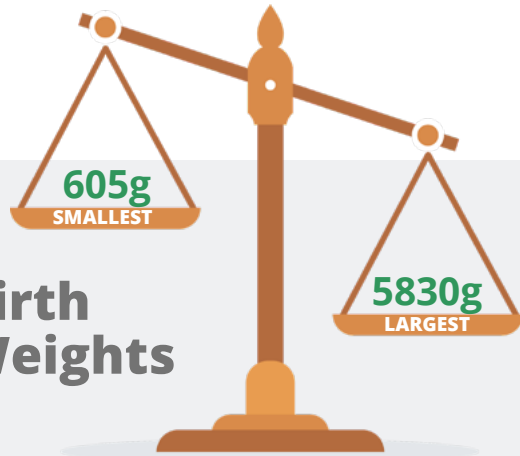
Instagram: [worcestershire_mvp](https://www.instagram.com/worcestershire_mvp)



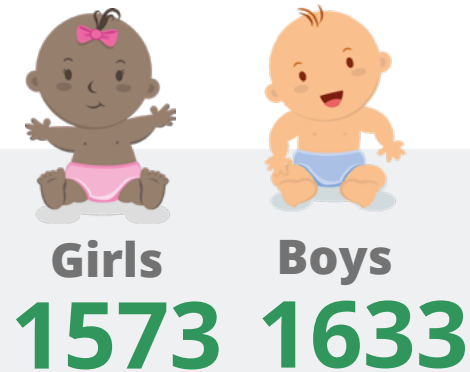
Maternity and Neonatal Insight



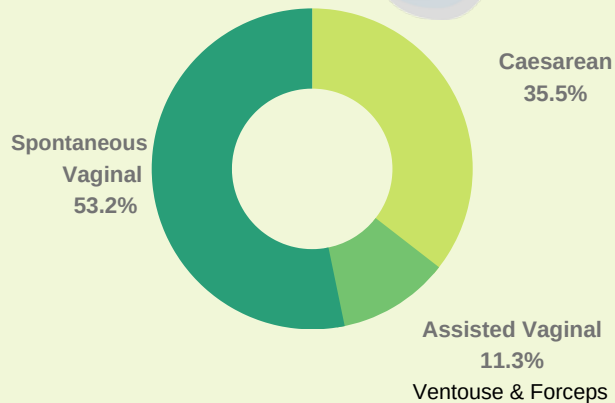
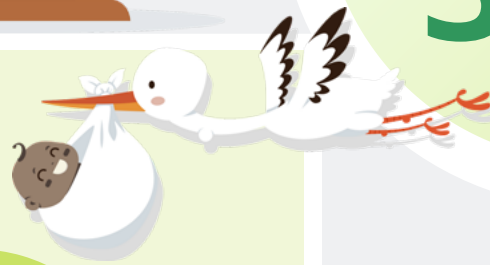
OCTOBER 2022 - MARCH 2023



Birth Weights



Type of Birth



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

