



## Engagement with antenatal education in Nottingham: Working with hardly reached communities to improve place-based inclusivity and wellbeing

### Project Aims

Antenatal Education is not a universally commissioned NHS service in England, and financial pressures have led to many NHS maternity services discontinuing their antenatal services. This has resulted in the space being filled by a plurality of providers - including hospitals, charities, and community-led organisations.

A key report by MBACE in 2022 found evidence of considerable racial disparities in maternity care in the UK, with Black, Asian, and mixed ethnicity women more likely to die than their White counterparts, while women living in the most deprived areas were almost three times more likely to die than those in the most affluent areas. Many of the women who died struggled to engage with services to meet their complex intersecting health and social care needs.

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust's (NUH) maternity services are currently subject to a government-commissioned review prompted by bereaved parents seeking answers about poor maternity care.

This research project will examine how antenatal education activities are conducted and engaged with - and by whom - in Nottinghamshire, with a subsequent consideration of resultant implications for inclusivity and wellbeing amongst under-represented groups. The research will explore existing antenatal maternity services, in terms of types of service providers, the focus of provision and how services are delivered. Investigating whether the approaches of antenatal educators in Nottingham are demonstrating an appreciation, understanding and empathy for a broad spectrum of cultures could contribute to safer and more personalised care for all mothers in Nottingham.

The research project will also investigate factors that affect individuals' decisions whether to participate in antenatal education using participatory research activities to co-produce findings with maternity service users. From this, the research will examine how potential exclusion from, antenatal maternity services may impact prospective parents' wellbeing. This research, undertaken with Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, aims to spotlight areas in which service provision can better meet the needs of currently under-represented groups. As a result, it hopes to increase the agency of hardly reached groups in engaging with antenatal care to improve the wellbeing of parents/prospective parents and babies, and to provide a more inclusive offer in the antenatal space.



## Project Aims

1. Identify current antenatal provisions in Nottingham City by examining the existing suite of available antenatal maternity services.
2. Examine the implications for both user wellbeing and the inclusivity of the antenatal offer from the point of view of a wide range of potential users, including vulnerable groups.
3. Provide robust evidence on the usefulness of co-production in developing effective solutions to local problem(s) relating to antenatal education.

## Supervisory Team

1. Lead Academic Supervisor: [Professor Mihaela Kelemen, UoN](#)
2. Academic Co-Supervisor: [Dr Claire Ingram, UoN](#)
3. Academic Co-Supervisor: [Dr Jacqueline Kirk, NTU](#)
4. Community Supervisor: [Dr Lisa Common, Nottingham University Hospitals Trust](#)

## Key Details

Host University:	The University of Nottingham
School / department:	Nottingham University Business School
Start date:	03 April 2024
Financial offer:	Tuition fees covered in full (worth approx. £15k across full PhD programme). Monthly stipend based on £18,622 per annum, pro rata, tax free.
Working hours	Full-time (minimum 37.5 hrs per week), or part-time (minimum 20hrs per week).
Working Style:	Primarily in-person at host university. Flexible working supported. Working pattern to be agreed between successful candidate and lead supervisor.



# Competencies

## Co(I)laboratory Core Competencies

Category	Competency	Assessed: Application (A), Interview (I)
<b>Comprehension and evaluation</b>	Strong understanding of the project and its subject matter.	A / I
	Analytical, researcher mindset with keen attention to detail.	A / I
	Communicate complex concepts with clarity and precision.	A / I
	Able to identify connections, patterns, gaps, and irregularities in information/data.	I
	Able to interpret data/information confidently with logic and empathy to derive meaning.	I
<b>Social and emotional</b>	Demonstrable experience of responding effectively changing contexts, information and demands.	A
	Ability to persevere in the face of challenges/failures and to remain constructive in developing solutions.	A
	Demonstrable passion for learning with clear drive and curiosity to undertake this specific research project.	A / I
	Willingness to immerse oneself in the research subject matter and make a contribute to new knowledge through a PhD.	A / I
	Strong desire to make a positive community impact through the research.	A / I
	Willingness to think deeply about complex concepts and engage with academic ideas and theory.	A / I
<b>Preparedness and potential for success</b>	Experience of working, collaborating and communicating effectively with different stakeholders.	A
	High level of self-motivation and ability to work with minimal guidance.	A / I
	Strong organisational and time-management skills with the ability to balance and prioritise multiple tasks.	A / I
	Ability to identify potential challenges and complexities and thoughtfully consider possible solutions.	A / I
	Able to identify the technical, personal, or professional skills required for a task and take action to develop these.	A / I
<b>Community Context</b>	Genuine desire to undertake community-engaged research over more traditional approaches to research.	A
	Understand the impact of and need for the inclusion of diverse experiences and points of view in research.	A / I
	Appreciation/understanding of the importance of community insight and experience in the generation of new knowledge.	A / I
	Awareness/understanding of the broader societal context related to the subject matter of the project.	A / I



Project Specific Competencies			
Essential	Assessed: Application (A), Interview (I)	Desirable	Assessed: Application (A), Interview (I)
Professional, academic or equivalent background in a relevant area (e.g., maternity services, healthcare, psychology, social sciences, etc.).	A / I	Experience in current maternity services policy, strategy and delivery, or antenatal education.	A / I
Understanding and appreciation of the local context and challenges relating to maternity services.	A / I	Demonstrable connections to or experience with diverse communities and networks related to maternity service users.	A / I
Ability to engage with sensitive topics with empathy and compassion.	A / I	Experience with relevant research methods (e.g., participatory research, social science or health science methods, etc.)	A / I

## References for Further Reading

- Nottingham University Hospitals (2023). Parent and Antenatal Classes. Accessible at: <https://www.nuh.nhs.uk/parent-and-antenatal-classes> [last accessed Sep 2023].
- NCT (2023). About Us. Accessible at: <https://www.nct.org.uk/about-us> [last accessed Sep 2023].
- Sherwood Forest Hospitals (2023). Infant Feeding. Accessible at <https://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/our-services/maternity/infant-feeding/> [last accessed Sep 2023].
- Ockenden Maternity Review (2022). Accessible at: <https://www.ockendenmaternityreview.org.uk/> [last accessed Sep 2023].
- MBRRACE-UK (2002). Accessible at <https://www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/mbrrace-uk/service-users> [last accessed Sep 2023].
- FiveXMore (2022). Accessible at: <https://fivexmore.org/> [last accessed Sep 2023].
- Birthrights (2022). Inquiry into Racial Injustice in Maternity Care. Accessible at: <https://www.birthrights.org.uk/campaigns-research/racial-injustice/> [last accessed Sep 2023].
- MWNUK (2022). Invisible - Maternity Experiences of Muslim Women. Accessible at: <https://mwnuke.co.uk/resourcesDetail.php?id=256> [last accessed Sep 2023].
- NHS England (2023). Three Year Delivery Plan for Maternity and Neonatal Services. Accessible at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/three-year-delivery-plan-for-maternity-and-neonatal-services/> [last accessed Sep 2023].
- Taheri, B., Pourfakhimi, S., Prayag, G., et al. (2021). Towards Co-Created Food Well-being: Culinary Consumption, Braggart Word-of-mouth and the Role of Participative Co-design, Service Provider Support and C2C Interactions. *European Journal of Marketing*, 55(9): 2464–2490.
- Ahuvia, A.C. (2005). Beyond the Extended Self: Loved Objects and Consumers' Identity Narratives. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32(1): 171–184.
- Bruce, H.L. and Banister, E. (2020). Army Wives' Consumer Vulnerability and Communities of Coping. *European Journal of Marketing*, 54(11): 2849–2871.
- Boltanski, L. and Thévenot, L. (2006). *On Justification: Economies of Worth*. (C. Porter, Trans.). Princeton University Press.
- Da Silva, N. (2023). The Industrialization of Healthcare and its Critiques. In: Diaz-Bone, R., Larquier, G.d. (Eds). *Handbook of Economics and Sociology of Conventions*. Springer, Cham.
- Nikolova, G (2016). The Impact of Clinical Research on Developing an Alternative Way to Provide Antenatal and Postnatal Education to Black and Minority Ethnic Mothers, Using the Internet as a Means of Mass Communication. *MIDIRS Midwifery Digest*, 26(1): 41-47.



## References for Further Reading

- Damsted Rasmussen, T., Johnsen, H., Smith Jervelund, S., Christensen, U., Nybo Andersen, A.-M., and Villadsen, S.F. (2021). Implementation, Mechanisms and Context of the MAMA ACT Intervention to Reduce Ethnic and Social Disparity in Stillbirth and Infant Health. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18 (8583): 1-16.
- Kristiansen, M. and Bloch-Poulsen, J. (2013). Participatory Knowledge Production and Power: Co-Determination through Dissensus in Dialogic Organisational Action Research, in L. Phillips, M. Kristiansen, M. Vehviläinen & E. Gunnarsson (Eds). *Knowledge and Power in Collaborative Research: A Reflexive Approach*, 193-212. New York: Routledge.
- Kelemen, M., Surman, E., and Dikomitis, L. (2018). Cultural Animation in Health Research: An Innovative Methodology for Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement. *Health Expectations*, 21(4): 805-813.

