THE NATIONAL NURSING LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Midwifery Leadership Competency Model

Version 2 revised April 2006

Modernisation Agency NHS
The Leadership Centre

MIDWIFERY LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY MODEL

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The roles and competencies in the revised version of this document were updated to reflect the recommendations of key stakeholders who reviewed the original framework as part of the sixth and final phase of the Heads of Midwifery Leadership project.

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Introduction

The Midwifery Leadership Project is part of the National Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting Leadership work being undertaken for the Leadership Centre.

To ensure the greatest impact on the midwifery profession it was agreed to target leadership development on certain post holders who have the opportunity for the greatest influence within and out of the Midwifery profession. The two roles identified that fulfiled the above were the LSA Officers and the Heads of Midwifery.

It was agreed to develop a competency model for the Head of Midwifery which would identify the leadership development needs of the Heads of Midwifery and address the issues facing the profession.

The issues that were identified for action were:

- *Define the role of Head of Midwifery, as these vary from region to region and trust to trust,*
- *Define the competencies required to ensure superior performance within the role of Head of Midwifery,*
- *Develop a model that would also support succession planning for the Head of Midwifery role,*
- *Develop leadership development programmes to enhance the skills and knowledge required to widen a Head of Midwifery's circle of control and influence.*

Model Used to Assess the Development Needs of the Heads of Midwifery

The Model adopted to address the issues was the Accelerated Competency System (ACS) developed by Linkage International. ACS is so called because it is a comparatively fast yet effective system of producing a competency framework, from which leadership development needs can be derived.

The system identifies the work (outputs) that need to be produced in order to meet/exceed customer requirements and achieve the organisation's strategic goals. It then defines the knowledge, skills and commitments (values) that individuals need to produce those outputs at superior levels. The ACS encompasses each of the elements reflected in the diagram overleaf.

Midwifery Competency Model

Work Context External conditions driving performance and the results you must impact	**Customers** Key receivers of work
Outputs Work produced for customers	**Competencies** Knowledge, Skills and Commitments required to produce outputs at superior levels

Linkage International

The competencies identified are the core competencies for the role of Head of Midwifery and have been developed by Heads of Midwifery themselves, using their language.

PLEASE NOTE:
When using the role descriptions and competencies it is important to recognise that they are *only* the core competencies, which every Head of Midwifery requires. Organisations will be required to build on them according to their local needs, management structures and wider role description.

Roles and Competencies

The Model identified three broad roles for the Head of Midwifery and 14 competencies.

The three roles identified are:

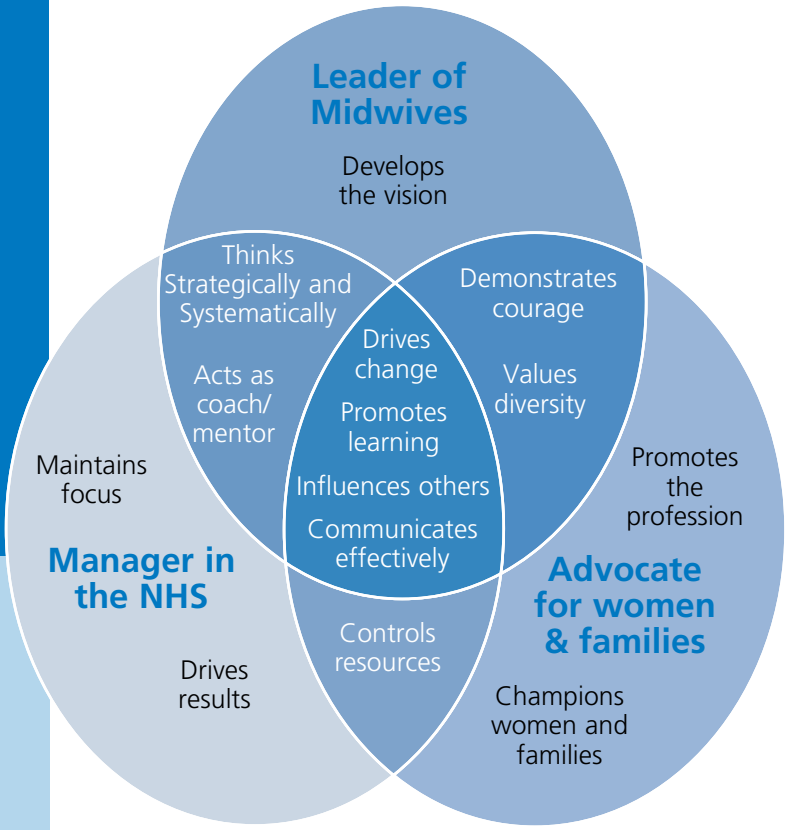
1 Leader of Midwives
2 Manager in the NHS, and
3 Advocate for Women and Families

The Competencies:

1 Promotes learning
2 Controls resources
3 Champions women and families
4 Promotes the profession
5 Values diversity
6 Demonstrates courage
7 Develops the vision
8 Thinks strategically and systematically
9 Maintains focus
10 Drives change
11 Influences others
12 Communicates effectively
13 Drives results
14 Acts as a coach/mentor

See diagram overleaf

Head of Midwifery Competency Model



Leader of Midwives

The Head of Midwifery focuses her/his attention on the needs and professional concerns of midwives, and in meeting the needs of women and families. The Head of Midwifery creates and promotes a positive vision of the future of maternity services for midwives, other health care professionals and the general public. This includes adapting national initiatives to local situations and circumstances. She/he embodies key elements of that vision in her/his own activities and behaviours. She/he creates a positive environment which facilitates development and actively promotes dignity and diversity. She/he articulates the value of midwifery to the NHS and represents the personal and professional concerns of midwives to all levels of management. The Head of Midwifery ensures that midwives are empowered to deliver current best practices in their work and, that they receive high quality, timely training including educational and development opportunities.

Manager in the NHS

The Head of Midwifery focuses attention on aligning midwifery and related clinical specialities. It also focuses on developing capability in general management, with NHS priorities at national, regional, local and Trust levels. The Head of Midwifery effectively manages and drives change for the benefit of women and their families and the staff who provide this care. The Head of Midwifery ensures that the issues, views, needs and concerns of the midwives are effectively represented throughout the organisation and beyond. She/he also liaises with the policy makers in the wider NHS statutory agencies and partnership organisations. She/he effectively plans, negotiates and manages resources to enable the needs of the local population to be met. She/he also demonstrates political astuteness and organisational understanding in working within the NHS.

Advocate for Women and Families

The Head of Midwifery promotes improvements in the overall health of women and their families, by facilitating the knowledge and skills of midwives to provide services. The Head of Midwifery enables midwives and other clinicians to act as professional advocate for the rights of women in making their own decisions throughout their pregnancies, labour and post-partum period. The Head of Midwifery creates an environment that enables women and their families, to be actively involved in the planning delivery and evaluation of maternity services. The Head of Midwifery promotes learning and communicates the options open to women, their families, and to interested parties; ensuring equality of access. She/he is supported by all levels of management.

Promotes learning

DEFINITION:

Develops a culture of lifelong learning for all contributors to maternity care. Creates and maintains systems to identify learning needs through supervision of midwifery practice, appraisal, research, evidence-based practice and collaboration with educational providers and other professionals to promote the body of learning regarding midwifery issues. Contributes to the knowledge and understanding of wider communities regarding the role of the midwife.

BEHAVIOURS INDICATORS:

- Creates opportunities for self and others to acquire additional skills and knowledge through a variety of methods
- Encourages high quality research and evidence-based/best practice
- Networks effectively with academic and other professional bodies, for joint learning opportunities
- Adopts a systematic approach to individual appraisal, identification of learning needs, and access to development opportunities
- Facilitates continual professional development
- Develops a culture that supports organisational learning

Controls resources

DEFINITION:

Identifies and effectively utilises resources to meet current demand. Ensures that there is sufficient flexibility and capacity in managing human, physical and financial resources.

BEHAVIOURS INDICATORS:

- Balances what needs to be done with what others want to deliver services within current resources. Anticipates the future and builds resource plans based on those assumptions
- Develops contingency plans for potential problems or breakdowns
- Considers the attributes of individuals with regard to allocation of human resources
- Puts forward a compelling case for increasing resources where appropriate

Champions women and families

DEFINITION:

Directs own efforts as well as those of others within the health and social care setting ensuring that the system is responsive to the needs of women and their families. Advocates and supports the rights of individual women to make informed choices. Promotes childbirth as a normal physiological process. Contributes to longer-term health gains whilst ensuring the interest and health and well being of all women are considered.

BEHAVIOURS INDICATORS:

- Acts to the fullest extent of own powers to ensure that the system is responsive to the needs of women and their families
- Advocates assertively for the right of women to make their own informed choices and decisions regarding their pregnancy
- Enhances the understanding of other health care professionals of maternity care as an holistic health care issue
- Focuses own efforts and those of others in the system on ensuring the physical health and emotional well being of women
- Evaluates the alternatives in terms of their potential impact on women first and the system second
- Enables midwives to be effective advocates for the rights and needs of individual women

Promotes the profession

DEFINITION:

Acts as an effective role model for the profession and creates a positive professional image to encourage recruitment to midwifery.

Creates a positive impression of midwifery. Promotes the unique role of midwives caring for women and their families. Is an advocate for the integrity of the profession of midwifery, establishing stronger alliances with partnerships organisations in the Trust, and PCT/SHA within the wider NHS and statutory agencies.

BEHAVIOURS INDICATORS:

- Values and demonstrates high professional standards
- Articulates midwifery issues to a broad range of agencies within and outside the NHS
- Informs the public of the role midwifery by citing successes and plays a key role in public protection and patient safety through supervision and evidence based practice
- Seeks opportunities to use own position to improve the welfare of women, families and children by valuing the unique contribution of the midwife within public health

Values diversity

DEFINITION:

Adapts own personal style and provides midwives with opportunities to develop, work effectively and flexibly within a diverse population. Seeks and advocates to recruit a team that reflects the variety of cultures of the local population. Ensures input from all midwives and stakeholders when making decisions, which allows greater understanding, appreciation and support of all diverse backgrounds and ethnic groups.

BEHAVIOURS INDICATORS:

- Is an advocate for the value of diversity within a health and Social Care setting
- Aims to create a diverse team by developing and recruiting people from different backgrounds, styles and cultures, reflecting the local population
- Involves local population in planning and developing services
- Works effectively with a wide range of people by adapting own style
- Provides midwives with opportunities to develop their awareness of the differing cultures with whom they work
- Seeks out opportunities to broaden own levels of cross-cultural experience
- Demonstrates personal valuing of diversity through a non-judgemental approach to cultural differences

Demonstrates courage

DEFINITION:

Is prepared to take management risks in demonstrating commitment to issues and values he/she truly believes in. Shows willingness to engage on behalf of the midwife when the rights and needs of women and families are endangered even though that stand may be unpopular with superiors in the NHS or the Trust. Embraces challenges, seeing them as opportunities to improve own performance and that of the team. Acts independently of senior management when the situation requires prompt action. Deals with interpersonal issues openly and directly – does not avoid conflict. Demonstrates high levels of personal and professional judgement in determining the acceptable level of risk.

BEHAVIOURS INDICATORS:

- Resolute and firm regarding critical issues even in the face of opposition and personal risk
- Supports midwives in the provision of care to women and families even if that support is politically unpopular
- Acts independently of management support when necessary to achieve critical results
- Confronts issues across agencies within the organisation
- Works through interpersonal issues with peers, management and the team openly and directly
- Demonstrates personal and professional judgement in analysing risk

Develops a vision

DEFINITION:

Embraces and articulates a compelling shared vision of the future of midwifery and the maternity services. The vision is placed within current and future context and ethos of midwifery, maternity services and the wider NHS. Acknowledges the past accomplishments and traditions of midwifery whilst expressing a positive vision of how those traditions, where they need to be, are adjusted to change in the future.

BEHAVIOURS INDICATORS:

- Effectively communicates shared, personal vision of the future of midwifery
- Links current trends and/or activities with the positive aspects of the vision
- Discusses the future vision of midwifery in terms of changes taking place in society and the health care environment
- Enhances commitment and creates enthusiasm by expressing a compelling vision of the profession
- Provides individual midwives with a sense of professional continuity and career development alternatives
- Creates commitment to the vision from the individual midwives by providing them with the opportunity to share in its creation

Thinks strategically and systematically

DEFINITION:

Leads the policy decision-making process, which includes collecting and analysing information in order to make effective decisions in complex situations. A strategic approach will be incorporated, which anticipates the future needs of service users and staff. Assesses risk, reviews options and plans contingencies whilst recognising national policies, key trends and political issues in the environment. Encourages and promotes multidisciplinary working.

BEHAVIOURS INDICATORS:

- Makes timely and effective decisions without undue hesitation even when faced with levels of ambiguity
- Accurately assesses impact of own decisions on the ability to meet the needs of women and their families
- Seeks confirming data from alternative sources when faced with conflicting information from usual sources
- Centres the strategy of midwifery on accurate information, broad range of inputs and anticipation of the future needs of women and their families
- Builds and develops effective networks across the NHS, Social Care, the Trust and wider community
- Effectively communicates the strategy to midwives and relevant stakeholders

Maintains focus

DEFINITION:

Identifies most critical elements of the work and keeps self and others focused. Successfully manages multiple projects/activities simultaneously by maintaining own focus on results and outcomes. Channels own efforts and those of the team towards meeting the needs of women and families in developing services.

BEHAVIOURS INDICATORS:

- Consistently focuses on the critical elements of the work
- Successfully manages multiple projects simultaneously
- Overcomes distractions to ensure results and outcomes are provided as scheduled
- Focuses own activities on minimising the impact of administrative activity on the effectiveness of the team
- Channels own efforts and those of the entire team on meeting the needs of women and families
- Focuses the team, setting goals and auditing outcomes against those goals
- Ability to prioritise and re-prioritise

Drives change

DEFINITION:

Creates a culture that acknowledges professional trends and responds to the needs of service users and professionals in driving change; creating a more flexible and outward looking organisation. Evaluates and reviews processes in the light of research, conditions or situations to ensure the service is dynamic and meets the needs of women and midwives.

BEHAVIOURS INDICATORS:

- Anticipates and plans changes and effectively communicates to the team
- Demonstrates a positive approach to the team through a quick and positive response in the face of the need for change
- Is an advocate for positive changes in the profession of midwifery
- Encourages the team to view change as an essential element of personal and professional growth
- Creates an environment of continuous learning to develop new capabilities
- Maintains a stability in the team whilst driving change
- Manages the team within a dynamic and changing service

Influences others

DEFINITION:

Develops own credibility and those of the wider team through the demonstration of high professional standards and personal integrity. Enhances own effectiveness and that of others by presenting personal positions and/or arguments in the context of the needs and values of others. Demonstrates high levels of political and organisational awareness and the ability to reach a common understanding without compromising the needs of women and families.

BEHAVIOURS INDICATORS:

- Develops credibility by acting consistently in line with shared stated values
- Demonstrates the highest standards of the profession of midwifery in own work and behaviour
- Works effectively with a broad range of stakeholders
- Presents own arguments or positions in the context of the needs and values of others
- Develops influence and credibility as a leader in nurturing and supporting the development of high standards of practice in others

Communicates effectively

DEFINITION:

Uses a range of media both formal and informal through a variety of settings effectively varying communication styles. Articulates clinical and professional issues in order to meet the needs of a diverse audience and to deliver health care services. Enhances own effectiveness and that of midwives by creating appropriate communication strategies. Facilitates and manages meetings effectively demonstrating appropriate skills such as listening and hearing.

BEHAVIOURS INDICATORS:

- Demonstrates the ability to engage and test the understanding of key stakeholders using a variety of processes
- Uses a broad range of styles to represent and articulate view points effectively
- Demonstrates the highest standards of midwifery effectively across ethnic, cultural and educational boundaries
- Presents own arguments or positions in the context of needs and values of others
- Effectively communicates clinical issues to both professional and non-professional audiences

Drives results

DEFINITION:

Demonstrates high levels of commitment to meeting, if not exceeding, all expectations. Perseveres and has tenacity to fulfil the needs of midwives, women and their families and other stakeholders. Demonstrates commitment to the concept of leader as an enabler. Consistently strives to maximise the returns on the resources. Seeks to exceed established standards of care. Within ethical, legal and moral boundaries seeks to overcome obstacles to meet the needs of women and their families. Promotes realistic optimism in the face of setbacks by not giving up on the achievement of the goals.

BEHAVIOURS INDICATORS:

- Demonstrates commitment to achieving results
- Willingly compromises own interests to ensure the needs of key stakeholders
- Seeks to maximise the value of all resources
- Does what it takes to overcome obstacles in meeting the needs of women and families
- Demonstrates realistic optimism in the face of setbacks
- Perseveres to reach goals even in the face of setbacks or barriers to success

Acts as a coach/mentor

DEFINITION:

Enhances the performance and capability of others through formal and informal interactions. Motivates them to higher levels of performance by increasing their commitment to the goal, clarification of the vision and development of the team. Provides constructive feedback, support and resources to enable the team to develop increased skills and abilities. Takes advantage of both formal and informal settings to provide people with coaching and encouragement. Prioritises own time to ensure availability to coach and mentor others.

BEHAVIOURS INDICATORS:

- Uses formal sessions such as performance management, statutory supervision and career counselling as opportunities to coach and motivate others
- Takes advantage of "every opportunity" to provide motivation and feedback
- Ensures that each person on the team has goals and priorities that are clearly aligned with those of the organisation, while setting goals in partnership with the employee
- Provides constructive feedback when performance improvement is required
- Provides meaningful feedback in response to successful performance
- Ensures that she/he has the time and is available to coach and mentor others
- Demonstrates an open and approachable manner

Recruitment of Heads of Midwifery

If you wish to use the core competencies to recruit a Head of Midwifery, please note the following.

The Heads of Midwifery through the model have identified the competencies that a potential Head of Midwifery will need to have had experience of and the competencies they need to have an understanding of:

EXPERIENCE:

- Champions women and families
- Promotes the profession
- Demonstrates courage
- Maintains focus
- Influences others
- Communicates effectively
- Acts as a coach/mentor
- Promotes learning

UNDERSTANDING:

- Values diversity
- Develops the vision
- Thinks strategically and systematically
- Drives results
- Drives change
- Controls resources

Steering Group Membership

- Chair – **Jenny Leggott**, DNS Nottingham City Hospital
- **Catherine McCormick** – Midwifery Advisor DOH
- **Trish Morris-Thompson** – DNS/M Birmingham Women's Hospital
- **Dr Sue Proctor** – Senior Nurse Bradford NHS Health Authority
- **Cheryl Shuttleworth** – HOM Salford Royal Hospitals
- **Sue Sauter** – Local Supervising Authority Officer
- **Gill Skinner** – HOM Royal Berkshire & Battle Hospital
- **Anne Jackson-Baker** – Director RCM
- **Pat Gould** – RCM
- **Carol McGowan** – Community Midwife Keithley Health Centre
- **Meryl Thomas** – Director of Midwifery Education & Practice ENB
- **Suzanne Cunningham** – Consultant Midwife Princess Anne Hospital
- **Gail Thomas** – Dean Wolson School of Health & Human Sciences

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