



CONSULTATION ON ELECTORAL REFORM

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form **must** be completed and returned with your response.

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

- Individual
 Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

The Royal College of Midwives, Scotland

Phone number

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Address

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Postcode

EH2 1EP

Email

info@rcm.org.uk

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

- Publish response with name
 Publish response only (without name)
 Do not publish response

Information for organisations:

The option 'Publish response only (without name)' is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.

If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation in, for example, the analysis report.

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

- Yes
 No

[...]

QUESTION 20: Do you think that we should make it easier for individuals who may be at risk from any form of abuse to register anonymously, whilst maintaining the integrity of the electoral register?

The Royal College of Midwives welcomes the measures taken by the UK government and the devolved nations to make it easier for those experiencing domestic abuse to remain safer whilst still exercising their right to enrol to vote. We support expanding the list of qualified officers to include registered health professionals. We also support the expansion of court orders that would be available for applicants to use for evidence in their application for anonymous registration, to cover all forms of domestic abuse (for example, forced marriage and FGM). The RCM is producing guidance for our midwife members across the UK to enable them to make attestations in support of applications for anonymous voter registration. We see this change to allow midwives to support survivors in this way as sensible measure considering the relationship between pregnancy and domestic abuse. Midwives routinely ask women accessing maternity services about abuse, and can signpost and refer to specialist support. Anonymous registration is another tool midwives can use to help keep women safe. We have been collaborating with the Electoral Commission and Women's Aid on this guidance, and have in particular have consulted with Scottish midwives who specialise in caring for survivors of domestic abuse and so-called honour based violence. We would be happy to share our guidance with the Scottish Government once it is published before the local elections 2018.