In 2016, the first comprehensive survey of consultant midwives throughout the four countries of the United Kingdom and the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man was carried out by the Royal College of Midwives Consultant Midwife Network and supported by RCM (Wilson et al. 2018). The survey aimed to identify overall numbers of consultant midwives, and examine demographic and its role speciality. This first comprehensive evaluation of the role across the UK gave a robust data set which has set a benchmark for changes to be mapped against.

The survey was repeated and modified in 2018; changes included evaluating the role and impact on midwifery leadership in addition to demographic information; giving a vibrant and dynamic overview of the position over time.*

**10 Key Findings**

1. **Consultant midwives** working for the NHS throughout United Kingdom; Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

2. Number of trusts out of 165 that employ consultant midwives.

3. The largest number of consultant midwives (in England), and the % working fulltime.

4. Net increase of consultant midwives across the entire United Kingdom and Channel Islands over the two year period between surveys.

This showed a variation in the findings from the previous survey as an additional five consultant midwives were found to be in post at the time of the 2016 study making a total count at that time to be 89. This increase in the count was due to respondents not participating in the 2016 survey despite being in post but answering the survey in 2018 as well as local intelligence identifying consultant midwives in the post during both surveys who did not respond to either survey.

**Aims of the Survey**

1. Map changes to the numbers of consultant midwives in post and demographics in all four UK countries and Channel Islands and Isle of Man.
2. Evaluate succession planning for the role of consultant midwife.
3. Evaluate participation in four domains of the role of consultant midwife.
4. Evaluate impact on maternity services.

**01. 93** Consultant midwives working for the NHS throughout United Kingdom, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

**02. 68** Number of trusts out of 165 that employ consultant midwives.

**03. 75** The largest number of consultant midwives (in England), and the % working fulltime.

**04. +4** Net increase of consultant midwives across the entire United Kingdom and Channel Islands over the two year period between surveys.

**05. MAPPING**

**TOTAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.Ireland</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel Islands and Isle of Man</td>
<td>01</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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England and Wales were the only two countries to report multiple consultant midwives employed within one organisation.

- **Single post**
  - Single consultant midwife employed in their organisations. 73%

- **Multiple posts**
  - Two or more consultant midwives employed in their organisations. 27%

**08. ROLE ISOLATION**

Succession planning in place in trusts or in healthboard. 5%

There is only one identified academic consultant level programme for trainee provided by the South Central Strategic Clinical Network Wessex in England.

**09. MANAGERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Management 1 in 5 consultant midwives reported that 20% of their time was dedicated to managerial responsibilities.

- **Management duties**
  - 10% reported that management duties required more than 20% of their time.
  - 14% reported responsibility for specific individuals, small teams, birth centres or participating in the management on call rota out of hours.

**07. DEMOGRAPHICS**

97% reported to be women.

- **Gender**
  - 52% were reported to be female aged over 50 (a reduction from 64% in 2016 suggesting that many have retired)

**10. HIGHER EDUCATION**

Reported a contribution to Higher Educational Institute midwifery programmes with some further input into medical education, paramedic science and nursing programmes.

- **77%**
  - Formal contractual arrangements with universities contributing to salary, most consultant midwives teaching in universities described a more ad hoc arrangement at local level.

- **2016**
  - Percentage of consultants with more than 10 years of experience.
  - 24%
  - 39%

- **2018**
  - Percentage of consultants with 1 to 5 years of experience.
  - 16%
  - 47%