



Royal College
of Midwives

Speakers biographies

Tuesday 28 March

9.30am-10.30am

The work of WHO and how it can support midwifery education



Grace Thomas FRCM MSc, RN, RM, Dip M, PGCE

Head of Health Professions, Director of WHO Collaborating Centre for Midwife, Cardiff University and WHO

Grace is a Reader in Midwifery and Head of Health Professions at Cardiff University. She is Lead Midwife for Education and Director of the World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre (WHOCC) for Midwifery Development – one of only two WHOCCs globally which specifically focus on midwifery education. A Midwife for over 34 years, Grace moved into academia after working across a variety of clinical and managerial roles, including as Consultant Midwife for 10 years. Grace has presented extensively, nationally and internationally and is a Trustee of the Iolanthe Midwifery Trust. In 2021 Grace was awarded a Fellowship of the Royal College of Midwives (RCM) UK and won the Leadership category at the RCM Awards.

Grace is Adjunct Professor at the University of Limerick, Ireland. thomassq4@cardiff.ac.uk

Education 11am–12pm

Decolonisation of the midwifery curriculum

Jayne Bekoe, Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, RCM

Bernadette Gregory, Senior Lecturer, Midwifery and Fair Outcomes Champion, De Montfort University

Sian McClaughlin, Midwifery Programme Manager, Cardiff University

Selena Palmer, 3rd year Midwifery Student, University of Leicester

Priti Patel, Head of Division, Midwifery and Lead Midwife for Education, London Southbank University

Research 2pm–3pm

Advancing practice through research

Ana Gomez

Research Midwife, The Chapter Study

Ana is a clinical academic midwife, currently working on an NIHR programme grant focusing on improving women's experiences of care following perineal trauma. Her passion for this area of women's health arose shortly after qualifying in 2016. The inconsistency in care pathways across the UK for women who have sustained perineal trauma led her to complete a Pre-Doctoral Clinical Academic Fellowship in 2021 which enabled her to undertake qualitative work to explore the experience of recovery following severe perineal trauma. Ana continues to work clinically as a midwife in various settings while championing midwife-led translational research.



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Professor Katie Morris PhD MRCOG
Reader Maternal and Fetal Health, University of Birmingham, Director Birmingham Clinical Trials unit.

Her research aims to improve the care for women with multiple pregnancies, fetal anomalies, growth restriction, reducing infection in maternity and prevention of preterm birth, employing prognostic and diagnostic research, modelling, systematic reviews and clinical trials. She has received research funding from the HTA, RfPB, MRC and charities. She sits on the RCOG Research Committee and Scientific Advisory Committee, RfPB West Midlands Panel, Wellbeing of Women Scientific Advisory Committee, British Maternal and Fetal Medicine Society Executive Committee as President and is Clinical Speciality Lead for Reproductive Health and Childbirth for the West Midlands. Her clinical practice is at Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust where she cares for women with complex pregnancies including maternal cardiac disease, fetal growth restriction and multiple pregnancies including providing fetal therapy. She is lead for the Women's and Children's Health theme of Birmingham Health Partners.

Education 3pm–3.40pm

RCM and research what we're doing for you



Jenny Cunningham
Research Advisor, The Royal College of Midwives

Jenny is a midwife and PhD student at Kingston University and is investigating weight stigma as experienced by higher weight women and people during maternity care. She has completed a meta-ethnography into this topic, and her poster outlines her findings. She is about to embark on her empirical project using a critical participatory action research (CPAR) approach. Jenny also works part time as a Research Advisor for the RCM



Dr Jude Field
Research Advisor, The Royal College of Midwives (

I am a RCM Research Advisor and work with my colleagues to implement the RCM Research and Development Strategy. There are many benefits for all who use and work within the maternity services when midwives are involved in research and I am very motivated to support midwives in this area of our practice. My role with the RCM is part-time, and I am also employed as a Research Assistant on an RCT exploring perinatal mental health provision in England. Prior to my current roles I worked as a clinical midwife, midwifery lecturer and undertook a research study and then a PhD exploring decision making around planned home birth.



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Professor Vanora Hundley

Professor of Midwifery, Centre for Midwifery, Maternal & Perinatal Health Bournemouth University

Vanora is Professor of Midwifery at Bournemouth University. She is an internationally recognised midwifery researcher, having written over 100 peer-reviewed research articles on pregnancy, maternity care and midwifery. She has led a range of studies in the reproductive health field both in the UK and internationally. She conducted one of the first randomised controlled trials of midwife-led care. More recent work has examined the role of labour practices and their impact on maternal and neonatal outcomes, both in low and high-income settings. Vanora is passionate about research utilisation and believes that midwifery research is key to quality maternity care.



Dr. Dominique Mylod

Lecturer in Midwifery and Postdoctoral Researcher, Bournemouth University

I am a midwifery lecturer and postdoctoral researcher at Bournemouth University. Following a career as a teacher of English as a Foreign Language, I qualified in Southampton in 2004 and then slept with a mobile phone for 7 years as a case loading midwife. For my doctorate as a Clinical Academic Midwife, I ran the Ball Assisted Latent Labour (BALL) trial as an RCT looking at using birth balls at home in the latent phase of labour (spoiler alert: it's promising!). For fun, I run the 10% Club to support our students with literacy in a midwifery context. I also co-founded and run Breastfeeding Babes Bursledon as a breastfeeding support group where we always serve tea and cake.
dmylod@bournemouth.ac.uk Twitter: @DominiqueMylod

16.30-17.30 Zepherina Veitch lecture Improving maternity services for the most vulnerable

The Zepherina Veitch Lecture presents the best in contemporary midwifery thought and leadership in commemoration of one of the pioneers of modern midwifery. This year Dr Laura Abbott will deliver the lecture recognising her outstanding contribution to improving maternity services for the most vulnerable, particularly for women who are imprisoned during pregnancy.



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Dr Laura Abbott FRCM DHRes SFHEA

Associate Professor Research, University of Hertfordshire

Laura is an Associate Professor in Research at The University of Hertfordshire, a Registered Midwife, a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and a Fellow of the Royal College of Midwives. Laura's doctorate examined the experiences of pregnant women in prison: *The Incarcerated Pregnancy: An Ethnographic Study of Perinatal Women in English Prisons*.

Laura co-authored *The Birth Charter* for pregnant women in England and Wales published by Birth Companions in May 2016. Laura has contributed to the review of Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Services operational policy for prison staff managing and caring for all women experiencing pregnancy, Mother and Baby Units (MBUs), and maternal separation in prison. Laura has contributed to the review of Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Services operational policy for prison staff managing and caring for all women experiencing pregnancy, Mother and Baby Units (MBUs), and maternal separation in prison. More recently Laura has co-founded Pregnancy in Prison Partnership International (PIPPI) with academics in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA and the UK wide Prison Midwives Action Group (PMAG). Current ESRC and NIHR funded research includes experiences of women and professional staff involved with the criminal justice system being separated from their babies (www.lostmothers.org) and young fathers in prison.

Wednesday 29 March

Education 9am–9.45am Advanced clinical practice in midwifery



Lisa Jesson

Deputy Lead Midwife at Health Education England

Lisa has responsibility for supporting the delivery of the maternity agenda and working with the 7 regions across England. Lisa has been an NMC registrant for over 30 years, having trained as a nurse and midwife. Lisa has previously held clinical and education roles, with experience in senior management, quality enhancement and as an LME. Lisa has in-depth knowledge of higher education systems, including academic governance, policy and regulation. Lisa is a senior fellow of the Higher Education Academy, holds a Master's in Education and Postgraduate Certificate in Research Practice. She is currently undertaking a doctorate and her area of interest is around student midwives' experiences and perceptions of the clinical practice setting. Lisa is passionate about safer maternity care and improving outcomes, and believes that this starts with positively influencing the education and training for the midwifery workforce across England.



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Alison Smith

Senior Project Manager, HEE National Maternity, Neonatal & CYP Programme, Health Education England

Alison is the Senior Project Manager (Maternity Programme) at Health Education England, with responsibility for supporting the delivery of the national educational and training maternity agenda across England. Alison has worked in the NHS for over 35 years with experience in supporting and leading workforce transformational change, business development, patient care and stakeholder engagement experience. Alison has supported the development of the education and training resources and pathways for Maternity services, including Advanced Clinical Practice in Midwifery and the Maternity Support Worker Competency, Education and Career Framework and supported the system to integrate these roles into practice

Research 9am–9.45am Newborn genomes programme



Amanda Pichini

Clinical Lead for Genetic Counselling , Genomics England

Amanda is the Clinical Lead for Genetic Counselling at Genomics England. She provides clinical expertise and leadership across several teams and services, particularly with the Newborn Genomes Programme. Amanda received her Master of Science in Genetic Counselling from the University of Toronto, and previously worked in Toronto and Bristol providing clinical genetic counselling to patients and families with a wide range of conditions. She was involved in delivering the 100,000 Genomes Project and has led the development of pathways to mainstream genomic tests into a variety of specialties. Amanda has also published a number of competency frameworks and resources, providing support to healthcare professionals to facilitate genomic tests and deliver family-centred care.

Education 9.45am–10.45am Challenges facing Midwifery education and what can we do about it?



Nicky Clark

Interim co- Head of School Nursing and Midwifery/Lead Midwife for Education/ Senior Lecturer University of Hull, Chair of the NMCLME Strategic Reference Group SFHEA,

Nicky is the Chair of the NMC Lead Midwife for Education Strategic reference group which is an active stakeholder group for midwifery education across the UK. Nicky qualified as a midwife in 1986. Nicky has undertaken many national and international external collaborations across Europe and Asia providing expert advice on both programme approvals and institutional reviews. Nicky is a NMC quality



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assurance visitor, and a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. Nicky was awarded the Chief Midwifery Officers gold award in 2020 for outstanding services to midwifery. Nicky has and continues to be actively involved at a strategic level in national developments within midwifery. Nicky is extremely passionate about midwifery and is totally committed to ensuring quality and excellence in the education of all those who experience it. Nicky is the lead midwife for Education and the interim co-head of school nursing and midwifery at the University of Hull.



Professor Jayne Marshall FRCM PFHEA, PhD, MA, PGCEA, ADM, RM, RGN Foundation Professor of Midwifery / Lead Midwife for Education Deputy Head of School of Healthcare / School Director of Education, University of Leicester

Jayne was appointed as the Foundation Professor of Midwifery and Lead Midwife for Education at the University of Leicester in 2017 pioneering an innovative 4-year undergraduate pre-registration Master in Science Midwifery with Leadership programme for aspiring leaders of the midwifery profession and the first cohort completed their studies in 2022. Currently Jayne is Deputy Head of the School of Healthcare and the School's Director of Education. Jayne took up appointment as the Head of the School of Midwifery at Kingston University and St Georges University of London in 2014 and in 2016, was promoted to Associate Dean for Practice Education and Workforce Development within the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education- subsequently becoming the first Professor of Midwifery at Kingston and St Georges. Jayne is an educator member of one of the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) and member of the ICM's Research Advisory Network. Jayne's PhD research explored intrapartum informed consent and subsequently her research interests have focused on pedagogical research in midwifery. Jayne received a Gold Medal Award for midwifery excellence from the Chief Midwifery Officer for England in 2022.



**Connie McLuckie
Lead Midwife for Education and Midwifery Lecturer, Edinburgh Napier University**

She completed her PhD at the University of Stirling and has used critical discourse analysis, narrative inquiry and her own novel visual methodology to explore the discourses within which student midwives construct and perform professional identities. She has written a book chapter about the narrative construction of professional identities and is preparing publications from her thesis on this topic. Connie is committed to ensuring that midwifery curricula reflect contemporary perspectives of equality, diversity and inclusion and is developing a project with colleagues and students to explore this. Central to her practice as a midwifery academic is ensuring positive experiences for the students on programmes of midwifery education at Edinburgh Napier University.



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Dr Jenny McNeil

Reader in Midwifery and Lead Midwife for Education, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Queen's University Belfast (QUB)

She currently leads the pre-registration midwifery education programmes at QUB seeking to provide high quality education for students and is actively involved in undertaking research.

Current projects are linked to the provision of continuity of midwifery carer models, breastfeeding, parent's experiences of accessing perinatal pathology services and supporting the mental health of parents of premature and vulnerable infants. Jenny has experience in conducting systematic reviews, systematic reviews of review and meta-analyses across several subject areas including the public health role of the midwife, music interventions to reduce maternal mental ill health and influential factors for providers of breastfeeding support for women.

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Research 9.45am–10.45am The role of the Research Midwife



Amy Corrigan

Research Midwife, University of Edinburgh

Amy originally worked and studied to PhD level in environmental policy she gained her midwifery clinical qualification at 40. Upon completion of her training she worked as a community midwife and had both the pleasure and challenge of being alongside women and families throughout the pandemic. She has always had a keen interest in research and in April 2021 she joined the Theirworld Edinburgh Birth Cohort (TEBC) project team as a research midwife. TEBC is a world leading study aiming to improve the lives of babies born early and their families. She spends a lot of time talking with parents about the study, either before or after they have had their baby, ensuring they have all the information they need and want in order to decide if they'd like to join the study or then collecting and managing data.



Professor Ruth Endacott

Director of Nursing and Midwifery, National Institute for Health and Care Research, (NIHR)

Professor Ruth Endacott was appointed inaugural Director of Nursing and Midwifery at the (NIHR) in May 2021. In this newly created post, Ruth has responsibility for providing professional leadership for nurses and midwives who are supporting, delivering or leading research, promoting nursing and midwifery



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within the NIHR and beyond, and encouraging more professionals to become involved in research. Ruth is Emeritus Professor at Monash University, Melbourne and Trustee/Director at the Intensive Care National Audit and Research Centre (ICNARC).



Holly Lovell

Midwife, Guys and St Thomas Foundation Trust

Holly qualified as a nurse in 2007 in Manchester, and completed her midwifery training at King's College London in 2012. Holly has worked at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust since qualifying, initially working in a caseloading team before moving into research delivery in 2016. She has extensive experience working across studies investigating medical complications in pregnancy, preterm birth, and has led on a multi-centred randomised controlled trial investigating treatment for women with GDM. Holly was awarded her MSc in Advanced Midwifery Practice in 2017, and is pursuing a clinical academic career alongside her research delivery role. Holly works in a busy and very active Reproductive Health and Childbirth Research department at St Thomas' hospital. She is involved in the running and recruitment to studies which explore pre-eclampsia, renal disease, gestational diabetes and obstetric cholestasis



Jamie Morris

**Clinical Research Midwife, Center for Clinical Research –
Research Delivery Unit, Aneurin Bevan University Health
Board**

Jamie has been a qualified midwife for just over 4 years, and works in one of Wales's largest Healthboards, with maternity averaging 6000 births per year. She has experience of working in most areas of midwifery, including labour ward, high risk antenatal and postnatal wards, the induction suite and the post-operative surgical ward. Jamie worked as a community midwife for a year which also covered our free-standing midwifery led birthing unit. Working in all these areas has given her a vast amount of experience of working with diverse women with many different needs. For the past 18 months Jamie has split her role and work as a research midwife and a clinical midwife. Having this dual role enables her to disseminate research within the healthboard, promote evidence-based practice to colleagues and be a familiar face to any of the women who are taking part in the studies we are involved with.



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Education 11.30am-12.30pm
Neurodiversity and education



Emilie Edwards
Midwifery Lecturer, Middlesex University

Emilie is a midwifery lecturer and winner of the Student Nursing Times Educator of the Year Award 2022. Emilie has worked closely with Accessibility and Neurodiversity networks in HEIs and the NHS, as well as the PMA/PNA networks and Capital Midwife Programme to improve support for Neurodivergent colleagues. As an Autistic educator, she is an advocate for neurodivergent students and midwives and is dedicated to designing accessible, inclusive, and interactive content for all learners and to supporting colleagues to achieve this goal.



Nicolette Porter
Midwife, Barking, Havering, Redbridge NHS Trust

Nicolette is a newly qualified midwife who is passionate about promoting personalised care with consideration of inclusivity. Nicolette is an editor of The Student Midwife Journal; alumni of the Council of Dean's Student Leadership Programme and she was the winner of the Nursing Times Student Midwife of the Year Award 2021. Born from her experience as an Autistic midwife, Nicolette has an interest in improving the experiences of autistic women and birthing people using perinatal care services.



Sophie Rayner
Student Midwife, University of Leicester

Sophie is studying an undergraduate in Midwifery with Leadership. She is an Autistic student who has dedicated her time to teaching and advocating for other autistic students, midwives, and service users. Outside of her studies, Sophie has been part of the Council of Dean's Student Leadership Programme, is a winner of the Iolanthe Midwifery Grant and undertook a research fellowship funded by the Wellcome Trust.

Education 1.30pm-2.30pm
Genomics and midwifery: educating the current and future workforce



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Dr Edward Miller

Education Specialist Genomics Education Programme , Health Education England

Dr Ed Miller is an Education Specialist for Health Education England's Genomics Education Programme, which exists to deliver learning and development opportunities to both healthcare professionals involved in NHS Genomics Medicine service and the wider workforce. Ed provides educational steer and input across the programme and leads a number of projects to support the education and training of healthcare professionals in genomics, with a particular focus on the nursing and midwifery workforce. Before joining the Genomics Education Programme, Ed researched DNA damage repair and replication and has a PhD from the University Birmingham.

Research 1.30pm-2.30pm **RCM sponsored research award winners**



Meghan Luton, Lecturer in Midwifery, Middlesex University

Meghan has been a midwife since qualifying from University of West London (formally TVU) in 2010. She is currently a midwifery lecturer at Middlesex University. Meghan has a keen interest in the diversity and intersections of life that affect women, birthing people and their families. She has long been researching, writing and publishing articles on the experience of the deaf community in healthcare, particularly in maternity services, and is currently undertaking a PhD entitled "The experiences of Deaf BSL using women in maternity". Meghan won the 2022 winner of the Iolanthe Midwives Jean Davis/RCM award for addressing health inequalities.



Anna Marsh

Lead Midwife for the Antenatal Clinic, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Anna is the Lead Midwife for the Antenatal Clinic at University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (UCLH) and currently undertaking an HEE/NIHR ICA Programme Pre-doctoral Clinical and Practitioner Academic Fellowship (PCAF) with Bournemouth University. Anna's research area of interest is around the use of social media within midwifery services.

2.40pm-3.40pm



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Improving maternity care through collaboration



Dr Ranee Thakar

Consultant Obstetrician and Urogynaecologist, Croydon Health Services NHS Trust and President of Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) and Honorary Senior Lecturer at St George's University of London

Ranee has been Vice President of Global Health at the RCOG since December 2019, is co-chair of the College's Race Equality Taskforce and has been a member of the RCOG Council since 2016. She is past President of the International Urogynecological Association and leads the national obstetric anal sphincter injuries (OASI) Care Bundle Project. Regionally, Ranee leads the Perinatal Pelvic Health Project and Urogynaecology network for South-West London, developing multi-disciplinary collaboration with urologists, midwives, physiotherapists, nurses and GPs. As President of the RCOG, Ranee works closely with members, to listen to the voices and experiences of women and work with policy makers to improve the quality and safety of maternity and gynaecological care provided in this country and around the world.



Gill Walton CBE

Chief Executive, Royal College of Midwives (RCM)

Gill is Chief Executive of the RCM one of the world's oldest and largest midwifery organisations, representing the majority of the UK's midwives. Gill is a passionate midwife, experienced midwifery leader and NHS manager. She started nursing at University College Hospital, and then undertook Midwifery training at the Princess Anne Hospital in Southampton. She has held Director of Midwifery posts at the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading, Barking, Havering and Redbridge, John Radcliffe in Oxford and more recently at Portsmouth Hospitals.