

st david's day conference 2024

Inclusive maternity in Wales

1 March 2024

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RCM conference

8-9 May 2024 – ACC, Liverpool

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Croeso/Welcome



Following the successful re-introduction of St David's Day conference in 2023, we are delighted to return this year with an exciting line up. The conference theme for this year is Inclusive maternity in Wales, which has been developed as part of RCM Wales' commitment to raising awareness for equality, diversity and inclusion in maternity services and following discussions with maternity staff and members.

Maternity staff have an appetite to improve knowledge in this area and develop skills to ensure we can support all service users needing our care. The conference will give delegates time to reflect on their understanding of key issues related to inclusivity in maternity care.

Once again this year we are truly grateful for the support of a range of sponsors, especially Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) and the Wales Union Learning Fund (WULF).

There will be plenty of time for conversations and engaging with the experts in the room, spread good practice, and provide an opportunity to build professional networks. A range of inspiring speakers over the day will share expertise and inspire those attending to consider the way that we can support everyone that utilises maternity services in Wales.



Diloch yn fawr iawn/Thank you.

Julie Richards

Director RCM Wales

Meet the RCM Wales team



**Julie Richards,
Director RCM
Wales**



**Vicky Richards,
National Officer**



**Stacey Keane,
Assistant
National Officer**



**Hazel Marsh,
Project Manager:
Wales Union
Learning Fund**



**Pri Patel,
Country
Administrator**

With thanks to the conference planning team

- Hayley Davies, Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB
- Jayne Frank, Cardiff and Vale UHB
- Sian Jones, Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB
- Rhiannon Kozaczynski, Cardiff and Vale UHB
- Angela Phillips, Hywel Dda UHB
- Faith Worrall, Hywel Dda UHB

Programme

Morning

Time	Event
09.45	Title: Welcome and introductions Speakers: Gill Walton CEO and General Secretary, RCM. Julie Richards, Director RCM Wales, RCM (Morning Chair)
10.00	Title: EDI Journey - improving EDI awareness in the working environment Speaker: Sue Tranka, Chief Nursing Officer for Wales
10.30	Title: Cultural awareness in maternity Speakers: Jamie Morris, EDI Lead Midwife for Welsh Government, Christiannah Ugbaja, Trustee Birth Partner Project
11.30	Break, marketplace and networking
11.50	Title: An introduction to LGBTQ+ competency in perinatal services Speaker: AJ Silver, Author and founder, Queer Birth Club
12.50	Lunch, marketplace and networking

Afternoon

Time	Event
13.45	Title: Afternoon welcome Speaker: Karen Jewell Chief Midwifery Officer (afternoon chair)
13.50	Title: Neurodiversity panel Speakers: Sally Brown, Lecturer Cardiff University. Rhiannon Kozaczynski, Preceptee midwife Cardiff and Vale Health Board. Hayley Morgan, PhD candidate Swansea University. Hannah Beth Williams, Community midwife UHW
14.30	Title: Supporting surrogacy Speakers: Ruby Handley-Stone, Professional Advisor for Education RCM. Sarah Spencer, Midwifery Officer Welsh Government, Michael Johnson-Ellis, Co-Founder & Co-CEO, My Surrogacy Journey, Wes Johnson-Ellis BIO, Co-Founder & Co-CEO, My Surrogacy Journey
15.30	Break, marketplace and networking
16.00	Title: Using Welsh in maternity services Speaker: Siwan Humphreys Midwifery lecturer and Catrin Roberts, Midwife Bangor University
16.30	Choir and networking reception

Speaker biographies



**Sally Brown,
Lecturer, Cardiff
University**

Sally qualified as an adult nurse in 2003, working in ITU and the Emergency Department for 10 years. After qualifying as a midwife in 2015 she worked across all areas of maternity care and became a Practice Facilitator in 2019 and an Associate Lecturer in 2020. She moved into midwifery education full-time in 2021 and joined the midwifery lecturing team in Cardiff University in 2022. Sally has a strong interest in neurodivergence which has been developed in her MSc Professional Practice and RCM Leadership course, both of which concentrated on the experiences of autistic birthing people accessing maternity services. Sally is also currently involved in national projects focusing on supporting autistic people both in maternity care and midwifery education.



**Michael
Johnson-Ellis,
Co-Founder &
Co-CEO,
My Surrogacy
Journey®**

Michael is married to Wes and a Dad via UK surrogacy and egg donation. Talulah was born in 2016 and Duke born in 2019.

Michael is multi award winning fertility blogger, author and fertility campaigner driving change related to surrogacy and equitable access to fertility treatment funding. Michael manages the successful social media channel TwoDadsUK® which can be regularly seen supporting the UK fertility industry and educating those interested in UK surrogacy since 2016. Michael contributes on a number of APPG's and has been involved in driving UK legislative and policy changes along with Wes, related to surrogacy maternity services and LGBTQIA parenting and fertility. Alongside Wes, Michael founded TwoDadsUK® The Modern Family Show, and My Surrogacy Journey® In 2021 was awarded one of only 21 purple plaques to be attached to a UK building by CensusUK for his work during lockdown for supporting the fertility community.





Wes Johnson-Ellis, Co-Founder & Co-CEO, My Surrogacy Journey®

Wes has been married to Michael since 2012 and together they have two children via UK surrogacy and egg donation. Wes also has a 19-year-old daughter from a previous marriage. Wes manages the entire UK and international operation for My Surrogacy Journey, and with his team he is responsible for helping #ChangingTheLandscape of UK surrogacy and more recently has developed a brand new pathway in Mexico City, with never before seen support, focusing on ethics and the protection of women with the aim of #SettingTheStandard for Mexico surrogacy.

Wes' Yorkshire tone can often be heard hosting My Surrogacy Journey's number one Podcast, My Surrogacy Journey – The Podcast

Alongside Michael, Wes founded TwoDadsUK®, The Modern Family Show, and My Surrogacy Journey® following the challenges experienced during their own fertility journey, to provide professional, legal, practical and emotional support to support members with their family building options and beyond.



Ruby Handley-Stone, Professional Advisor for Education, Royal College of Midwives

After qualifying as a midwife in Birmingham Ruby began a career in academia alongside her role as a midwife, progressing to become a midwifery lecturer and Deputy Course Lead at Birmingham City University. Within her teaching career Ruby's area of expertise included supporting vulnerable women, birthing people and families, the Newborn Infant Physical Examination (NIPE) and the role of the Professional Midwifery Advocate. At the RCM, Ruby supports the development of i-learn modules and educational resources, including the Student Essentials programme and a neurodivergence toolkit for midwifery educators. She works on a delivery suite at her local Trust, and is passionate about supporting student midwives and the importance of midwives maintaining a dual clinical and educational role, which is the focus of recent research undertaken for her Master's in Professional practice.





**Siwan
Humphreys BA
RM, Midwifery
lecturer, Bangor
University**

Siwan's role includes bilingual lead for the School of Health Sciences, Welsh language lead for the midwifery programme and year 2 deputy lead. Siwan thrives to develop and strengthen Welsh language provision within higher education and is passionate about optimising the teaching and learning environment for midwifery students. She believes that the Welsh language should have an equal status within midwifery education and within health care so that individual choice and cultural differences are respected. Siwan is currently working towards a Master's degree in public health and feels passionate about equality and inclusion within maternity care.



**Karen Jewell,
Chief Midwifery
Officer Wales**

Karen qualified as a nurse in 1986 and then as a midwife in 1988 in Cardiff. Her midwifery career has seen her work across hospital and community settings, setting up a continuity Changing Childbirth team, initiating the first substance misuse midwifery post in Wales and addressing the need for bereavement services to support families. Karen joined Welsh Government in November 2016. In her role as the first Chief Midwifery officer for Wales, she leads policy on maternity, neonatal care and breastfeeding, linking with both the women's health and early years agendas. Since her time in Government, she has led on the vision for maternity care in Wales (2019-24), clinical supervision for midwifery framework and the breastfeeding action plan. More recently she has driven policy change including the maternity and neonatal safety support programme, a review of the Birthrate Plus acuity tool and the Digital Maternity Cymru programme. In May 2023 Karen was awarded an honorary fellowship by the Royal College of Midwives for her outstanding service to midwifery, maternity services, women and their families.





Rhiannon recently qualified from the University of South Wales (USW), where she was president of the USW midwifery society and co-chair of the midwifery class representatives advocating for students, especially those with neurodiversity. Her aim as a midwife is to empower all women and help them be proud of who they are and to encourage acceptance and understanding of our differences and struggles.

**Rhiannon
Kozaczynski,
Preceptee
midwife, Cardiff
and Vale Health
Board**



Hayley began writing about the autistic birth experience in 2015. Pregnant with her second child, her formal diagnosis of autism meant she learned about herself and her child on what would be a beautiful journey. Inspired to learn more about her neurotype, Hayley joined MSc Autism and Related Conditions at Swansea University Medical School. While completing this degree, she wrote for online magazines, blogs and more before submitting her MSc dissertation survey on the autistic birth experience.

**Hayley Morgan,
PhD candidate,
Swansea
University and
co-founder of
the Maternity
and Autism
Research Group**

February 2024 a book Hayley co-authored the topic is released with JKP publishers- a book for maternity professionals, autistic people and anyone who may support them through pregnancy and childbirth. Hayley submits her PhD on the autistic birth experience in April 2024. This work was inspired by specific issues raised from her MSc data i.e. autonomy, consent, capacity and specific barriers.





**Jamie Imogene
Morris
Maternity &
Neonatal EDI
Manager**

A qualified midwife with experience of working within all areas of midwifery, which includes a large obstetric unit, community, and a free-standing birth centre.

Jamie developed a more in-depth understanding of research within maternity having worked part-time as a research midwife alongside her clinical role.

In 2018 Jamie published an article in Midwives magazine surrounding the education of FGM for midwives and virtually presented at the International Confederation of Midwives conference in 2021 on this same topic. Recently, Jamie set-up a Wales wide staff network alongside the RCM for midwives, student midwives and midwifery support workers from the global majority called Wales Inclusive Maternity Network. Currently seconded to Welsh Government until early 2024 as the Maternal and Neonatal Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Manager to support the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan and recommendations from the Maternity and Neonatal Safety Support Programme discovery report.



**Julie Richards,
Director for RCM
Wales**

Julie joined RCM as Director for RCM Wales in August 2022. Julie has 30 years clinical experience as a midwife in hospital, birth centre and community settings and recently moved from her role as Head of Midwifery and Sexual Health for Powys Teaching Health Board. Throughout her Midwifery career, Julie has held a strong belief in what the RCM as a trade union and professional association has to offer midwives, student midwives and maternity support workers. As a previous RCM Board Chair Julie has a working knowledge of the RCM strategic priorities to protect the RCM's assets, continuing to ensure fair pay for midwives, safe staffing levels and the opportunities for leadership and continued professional development for RCM members. Julie is excited and passionate as the RCM Director for Wales as a privileged opportunity to lead on Welsh specific strategies and support the RCM strategic priorities. Julie sees the RCM Director for Wales playing a pivotal role in representing the voice of midwives and maternity support workers across Wales to promote midwives' contributions to safe high quality care that is key to the future health of Wales.





**Catrin Roberts,
Midwife BCUHB,
Professional
Doctorate
Student –
Coleg Cymraeg
Cenedlaethol
and Bangor
University**

Catrin is a second year Professional Doctorate student at Bangor University. She aims to research the experiences of women and midwives using their mother tongue within the birth room. She has been a midwife for 12 years and in this time has had the privilege of supporting and caring for women and their babies, both in the community and in hospital. Catrin has worked for Bangor University as a practice education facilitator and has always been committed to lifelong learning. Throughout her career, Catrin aims to advocate for women, by being current in her field and passionate about the art of midwifery. Catrin likes to travel and socialise with family and friends.



**AJ Silver,
Author and
founder of The
Queer Birth Club**

AJ is the founder of The Queer Birth Club which was founded in 2020 to fill the gap in LGBTQ+ education in the birth and baby sector. Since its founding The Queer Birth Club has worked with organisations such as NHS England, Birthrights, Make Birth Better, The Positive Birth Company, NCT as well as universities, collectives and health trusts across the UK and Ireland. Their debut book Supporting Queer Birth was published in April 2022. Such was the demand for AJ's insight and passion for LGBTQ+ inclusion that stock sold out before publication. www.queerbirthclub.co.uk/





**Sarah Spencer,
Midwifery
officer, Welsh
Government**

Sarah was seconded into Welsh Government in 2021 to support the Independent Maternity Services Oversight Panel during their review of CTM maternity and neonatal services. She then transferred to the office of the Chief Nursing Officer, Sue Tranka, in response to Action 6 of the Quality and Safety framework, namely “national work to be undertaken to lead an all-Wales improvement approach and maximise the opportunity for learning from independent reviews of maternity and neonatal services.”

During her 23-year career as a midwife, Sarah has had the opportunity to work in all areas within maternity and her substantive role is that of Deputy Head of Midwifery. She has supported many families and surrogates during their journeys. One of her outstanding achievements was winning Mums' Midwife of the Year 2018 at the RCM annual awards ceremony for her support she provided to Elouise on her journey to becoming a mum of twin boys and her surrogate Jen.



**Sue Tranka,
Chief Nursing
Officer and
Nurse Director
NHS Wales**

Sue was appointed as the Chief Nursing Officer for Wales and Nurse Director of NHS Wales in 2021. She was formerly the Deputy Chief Nursing Officer for Patient Safety and Innovation at NHS England and Improvement from January 2020 and also held the role of Director of Infection prevention and control leading the national team. Sue has 30 years of experience in nursing, training as a midwife, registered general nurse, mental health nurse and community nurse. Sue's career has spanned both operational and clinical leadership roles. Her passion for patient safety and quality improvement culminated in her establishing and leading a Critical Care Outreach team in a North London hospital. Sue's nurse consultant and leadership roles have predominantly focused in the safety arena and she has a strong interest in quality improvement, human factors and safety systems.

In October 2020, Sue was listed among the Health Service Journal's 50 most influential people in health from a black, Asian and minority ethnic background, and in December 2021 was awarded a fellowship of the Queen's Nursing Institute.





**Christiannah
Ugbaja, Trustee,
The Birth
Partner Project**

Christiannah sought sanctuary in Cardiff and is a graduate of Computer Science with Economics. Currently working with UK City of Sanctuary as Health and Wellbeing coordinator, Christianah has two sons and loves to fight for what is right and to support people, especially those in need and Sanctuary seekers. Christiannah is a member of the Board of Trustees at The Birth Partner Project, a charity based in Cardiff which provides volunteer birth partners to support women seeking sanctuary who would otherwise face pregnancy, birth and early motherhood alone.



**Hannah Beth
Williams,
Community
midwife
operational
lead, University
Hospital of
Wales**

Hannah Beth is a Community Midwifery Manager at University Hospital of Wales (UHW), supporting a team of community midwives. Prior to this, she was a rotational midwife and then worked in the community. Hannah Beth completed her midwifery training with the University of West London in 2017 and then returned to her home city of Cardiff to start her career. She received her autism and ADHD diagnoses as an adult. Her autism sometimes enables her to offer a different perspective on management and midwifery and very much makes her the midwife that she is. She is passionate both about community midwifery and supporting staff with their wellbeing, particularly promoting inclusion and awareness around neurodiversity in the workplace and supporting staff with accessing advice and implementing necessary adjustments.



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[heiw.nhs.wales/
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