

NHS London Board

19th October 2011

Title:	The Local Supervising Authority Annual Report, 2010-2011		
Agenda item:	4.5	Paper	M
Action requested:	For information		
Executive Summary:	<p>The purpose of this report is to inform NHS London, the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) and the public how the Local Supervising Authority (LSA) of NHS London met the standards set within the Midwives Rules and Standards (2004).</p> <p>This report is an analysis of the information provided by the Trust teams to the Local Supervising Authority (LSA) for the 10/11 year. The focus of the report this year has been to highlight the challenges to the supervisors of midwives and report on the LSA's action in response to these.</p> <p>The strategic role of London LSA is to set the direction of the supervision of midwives in line with the Nursing and Midwifery Council. The LSA ensures that there are systems and processes in place to monitor the performance of the supervisors of midwives and midwives within the area.</p> <p>The key headlines from this year are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The birth rate has risen but only by 0.6% compared to 2%/ year for the last four years. • There has been an increase in the funded establishment of midwives overall but a decrease in some units funded establishments • The midwifery vacancy rate has decreased from 16% last year to 12% this year. • The Pan London Maternal Death Review was published. • 18% of midwives are eligible for retirement now and a further 11% will become eligible in the next 5 years. • The caesarean section rate continues to increase. • The home birth rate has decreased by 0.2%. • Temporary suspensions of maternity services have increased and, as in the previous three years, most occur in SE London Cluster. <p>Supervisors of midwives are emerging as leaders and catalysts in the implementation of national drivers to improve genuine choice, access, safety and satisfaction for future users of the maternity services.</p>		

Summary of recommendations	This report is sent to the Board for information.						
Fit with NHSL strategy:	This report was produced in order to meet the requirements of Rule 16, 'The midwives rules and standards' (Nursing & Midwifery Council 2004).						
Reference to other documents:							
Date paper completed:	7 th September 2011						
Author name and title:	Angela Helleur, LSA Midwifery Officer			Director name and title:	Trish Morris-Thompson, Chief Nurse		
Date paper seen by EMT	28/09/11	Equality Impact Assessment complete?	no	Risk assessment undertaken?	no	Legal advice received?	no

The London LSA Annual Report to the Nursing and Midwifery Council 2010/2011

1 Introduction

This report covers the period from 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011 and was produced in order to meet the requirements of Rule 16, 'The midwives rules and standards' (Nursing & Midwifery Council 2004). The appendices in this report contain information related to activity of the London LSA.

The purpose of this report is to inform NHS London (NHSL), the Strategic Health Authority, the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) and the public how the Local Supervising Authority (LSA) of NHS London met the standards set within the Midwives Rules and Standards (2004).

This report is an analysis of the information provided by the London Supervisors of Midwives (SoMs) to the Local Supervising Authority (LSA) for the 10/11 year. The focus of the report, this year, is to demonstrate how the London LSA is meeting the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) standards for LSAs and to highlight the contribution of SoMs towards improving the safety and quality of maternity care for mothers and babies in London. It will also highlight the challenges facing SoMs and report on the LSA's action in response to these.

2 Summary of Key Headlines

This report has identified a number of key issues in relation to the statutory supervision of midwifery and for London's maternity services.

Supervisors of Midwives:

- The London LSA has increased the number of SoMs by 20 in total in the last year. This includes 36 appointments and twenty resignations, mostly due to retirement. The number of midwives applying for SoM preparation courses has increased by 50% in the last three years.
- The London SoM: Midwife ratio is 1:16; this does not meet the NMC standard of 1:15. There is variation across London in terms of the SoM to Midwife ratio.
- The LSA team is supporting SoM teams where required with SoM investigations, advice and support.
- All SoMs in London (345) are reviewed by the LSAMO or Assistant LSAMO to review performance and to discuss developmental needs.
- All SoM teams have had development in the form of team development, leadership programmes, LSA conferences, Fitness to Practice Master Classes and other programmes of development.
- The report describes how the London LSA ensures that all midwives have 24 hour access to a SoM, the practice of midwives is supervised and how it ensures that the statutory function is maintained in line with the LSA standards.
- A number of challenges for supervision have been identified; scrutiny and review from external organisations has generated a significant increase in SoM workload to ensure that action is taken to improve the safety and quality of maternity services, the performance of some SoM teams and individual SoMs has needed to be

supported, dedicated time for SoMs has been a challenge particularly for those who are clinically based, not all midwives have had an annual review in a timely manner.

Developing trends

- Activity has increased by 0.6%, 134,544 births, compared to a 2% increase in the previous three years.
- There were 31 complete suspensions of services in year. The majority of these occurred in maternity services within the North West Cluster (12) and the South East Cluster (12). There were several more partial suspensions of services e.g. home births, midwifery led units, however, this has not been reported on as not all units reported this consistently throughout the year. The system has been modified to collect this data and will be reported on in 2011/2012.
- The Caesarean section rate continues to increase; the Pan London rate for 2010/2011 is 29%, which is an increase of 0.3% in year.
- Home birth rates have decreased by 0.2% this year.
- A Pan London review of Maternal Death was undertaken and a report produced. This has been discussed previously.

Midwifery Practice

- 89 SoM investigations were undertaken involving 126 midwives.
- A number of themes in relation to concerns around practice and organisational (system) issues were identified. The most frequently identified concern around practice was failure to recognise or to take appropriate action with a deviation from the norm. The most frequently identified organisational issue was insufficient support for newly qualified midwives.
- There were 61 programmes of developmental support and 20 programmes of supervised practice undertaken by midwives. There were two suspensions from practice and referrals made to the NMC.

Midwifery Workforce

- There were 5575 midwives employed in London in 2010/11, equivalent to 4430 whole time equivalent. This is an increase of 79 whole time equivalent midwives. This gives a Pan London midwife to woman ratio of 1:31. There is significant variation across London and some units have seen a decrease in the funded midwifery establishment.
- There is little change in the pan London age profile of midwives since 2010/11 which shows that the average age of midwives in London is 43 and that 18% of midwives are eligible for retirement now. A further 11% will be eligible to retire within the next 5 years. The NHSL workforce planning team in collaboration with the LSA have used this information to scrutinise local workforce plans and to commission university places for midwifery training.

3. Next Steps

The LSA will develop an action plan from this report following the NMC's analysis and recommendations. The LSA is due to review the London LSA in October 2011.

The full report is available for information.