

Celebrating midwives in England and Wales on International Day of the Midwife

06 May 2025  Lauren Hayes

Celebrating Midwives in England and Wales on International Day of the Midwife: Critical in Every Crisis.

As we mark the International Day of the Midwife, it's a perfect moment to reflect on and celebrate the incredible achievements of midwives in England and Wales. These skilled professionals don't only provide essential care but also innovate, advocate, and educate, significantly impacting maternal and neonatal health during what are challenging times. Their critical role in every crisis underscores the theme of this year's celebration, highlighting their indispensable contributions across various challenging scenarios.

Embracing technology to enhance care

Midwives in England and Wales have had to innovate and adapt to the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic including with the integration of technology into their practice such as the rise of telehealth services and apps like Professor Doshani's Janam app. Expectant mothers can now access vital prenatal care through a range of means maintaining continuity of care and/or addressing different communication needs. Cardiff and Vale University Health Board's first digital midwife has received the CNO Excellence Award for her outstanding work transforming services and increasing safety for families.

Leading in education and public health initiatives

Midwives have long been at the forefront of education in maternal health, and this past year was no exception. They have played a pivotal role in leading public health initiatives aimed at improving outcomes for mothers and babies. From virtual workshops to community outreach programmes, midwives have worked tirelessly to educate families about the importance of maternal health, breastfeeding support, and newborn care, ensuring that knowledge is accessible to all. Midwives from NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership received an award for Excellence in Midwifery Education & Learning due to their work on the Community PROMPT program, which focuses on making emergency maternity care safer in the community—a clear demonstration of their critical role in educational initiatives during crises.

Focus on mental health and supportive care

Understanding the psychological impact of pregnancy and childbirth, midwives have placed a significant emphasis on mental health. They have developed and provided resources and support systems to help mothers navigate the emotional challenges associated with motherhood especially during critical times.

The Royal College of Midwives (RCM), in collaboration with other organisations, has developed resources such as the Perinatal Mental Health Toolkit to aid midwives and other healthcare professionals in providing effective mental health support to pregnant women and new mothers. This toolkit includes guidance on identifying, assessing, and managing mental health issues such as depression and anxiety during pregnancy and after birth.

Recognition and awards

The hard work and dedication of midwives have garnered well-deserved recognition and several awards over the past year. These accolades reflect their commitment to excellence and innovation in maternal and neonatal care. Celebrating these achievements not only honours individual midwives but also highlights the critical role of midwifery in healthcare. Hywel Dda University Health Board's Maternity and Neonatal Risk and Governance Team won three awards at the UK MUM (Maternity Unit Marvels) Awards for their work in improving safety for mothers. University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust also won awards for Providing exceptional care during complications in pregnancy and labour and Excellence in neonatal care at the UK MUM Awards.

The Royal College of Midwives Awards were held, honouring exceptional midwifery teams and individuals throughout the UK, showcasing their excellence in teamwork, evidence-based practice, and their beneficial impact on women, families, and newborns. A total of 14 awards were distributed across various categories such as maternity safety, perinatal mental health care for women, diversity and inclusion in maternity services, and teamwork. Additionally, the future leaders of UK midwifery were recognised in the student of the year category.

Conclusion

Midwives can be a beacon of hope and resilience, particularly during crises. As we celebrate the International Day of the Midwife under the theme 'Critical in Every Crisis', let us acknowledge and appreciate the profound impact these professionals have on the lives of families every day. Their dedication, innovation, and compassionate care continue to inspire and make a difference in the world of healthcare. Here's to the midwives - our unsung heroes whose achievements deserve recognition and celebration, today and every day.

As set out in Sian Brown's article on our Maternity Hub ([Celebrating maternity excellence: Highlights from the MUM Awards](#)), we reiterate the advice that in times where difficulties with maternity services are well documented, we need to keep momentum up and share the positive work going on in the maternity space, to keep staff motivated and inspired to continue on improvement journeys. Honouring achievements through awards and public acknowledgement provides well-deserved recognition for those who go above and beyond, but it's important to reflect on the smaller steps we can all take which can make such a difference to those working in such a challenging field. At a Trust level, this could include: Share good news stories – make these visible, talk about them, consider a maternity safety day to share amongst staff.

- Ensure you have physical resources like a coffee room for shared learning and ideas and a safe space where people feel able to talk.
- Look after staff - listen, be kind. A simple thank you goes a long way. Learn from units with good staff retention.
- Empower people to speak up with concerns, and have opportunities for staff to feedback.
- Don't be afraid to challenge each other.
- Accept when you don't get it right and be honest when things go wrong.
- Make a commitment to safety and improvement at all levels and work together.
- Constantly reinforce safe, ethical and respectful behaviours.
- Have time to reflect when needed.

If you need any support with any of the above please reach out to our specialist maternity team. If you would like further information regarding our services please visit our [Maternity Services Resource Hub](#).

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