

Walsall Midwifery Led Unit Communications and Engagement Plan

1.0 Background

The Midwifery Led Unit was temporarily closed for births due to staffing challenges compounded by the Covid 19 pandemic resulting in safety concerns. The unit is approximately 0.8 miles away from Walsall Manor Hospital.

There were 45 births at the MLU in 2021 which is below the required amount for midwives to remain competent if they only work in the MLU.

Only low-risk women were eligible for a midwifery led birth at a standalone unit. This meant that the criteria was very restricted to women who had no co-morbidities, no concerns in pregnancy with a BMI of less than 30.

2.0 Context

The communication team is coordinating the communication and engagement plan which involves the following:

- Ensuring the plan details how the Trust will involve people and communities in the relocation of the MLU
- Ensuring that the relocation of the MLU considers the impact of local people
- Ensuring Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP) continues to be involved in discussions to relocate the MLU. Preliminary meeting with the MVP have been very positive about the proposed change. There will be further opportunities for the wider public engagement on the proposed change and the improvement and widening of choice for women.
- Supporting the communication and marketing of the MLU at opening and beyond

3.0 Our Involvement approach

As this is a service changed based on where the service is provided from we are proposing the following involvement work which is now underway.

Phase 1- Maternity Voices Partnership:

This phase is now complete as it has been openly discussed with the Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP) since early 2022 regarding the proposal to permanently relocate the MLU. To date there has been full support and enthusiasm from the MVP regarding this permanent move. Minutes of the MVP meeting note the discussion about the MLU.

Phase 2- Listening

This phase will start on Monday 9th January and includes the following activities:

- Electronic and paper survey for local people to complete seeking their views on the relocation of the MLU
- Web copy, socials, PR with links to public conversation doc (case for change) and asking about impact
- A public meet
- Attendance at local mother and toddler groups seeking views of potential impact
- More work with maternity voices throughout the move
- Conversations with new mothers or those who used the MLU (Maternity voices may be able to support this)

This phase will last for approximately four weeks.

Phase 3- Feedback and evaluation

This phase will start in early 2023 and will consist of us publishing the results of the public engagement. For those interested in supporting the development of the MLU will be invited to help influence the environment of the MLU for our new mums-to-be.

3.1 Detailed plan

The following is a more detailed plan of action

It clear though with the move planned for several months away there is still scope for people to influence the way the service supports women and I think it is right that you follow up the pre involvement with Maternity voices with some public/ patient involvement. I would suggest the following:

- A review of any experience data to look at ways to improve existing service
- Staff feedback
- Web copy, socials, PR with links to public conversation doc (case for change) and asking about impact
- A public meet
- More work with maternity voices throughout the move
- Conversations with new mothers or those who used the MLU (Maternity voices may be able to support this)

Action	Status RAG	Start	Finish
Desktop Review of any patient experience data to look at ways to improve the service		Thu-01-Sep	Tue-27-Sep
Outcome of Desktop Review		Tue-27-Sep	Mon-31-Oct
Design of conversation survey and questions		Mon 5 Dec	Fri 30 Dec
Draft press release		Tue 3 Jan	Fri 6 Jan
Listening period		Mon 9 Jan	Fri 3 Feb
Collate feedback from listening		Mon 6 Feb	Fri 17 Feb
Paper setting scene to HWBB and Scrutiny inc. involvement section		Dec	-
Finalise/ design conversation document , webpage, socials		Thurs 5 Jan	-
Launch: Public/conversation exercise on draft plan launched		Mon 9 Jan	-
Pull together analysis of feedback from conversation & listening exercise		Feb	-
Outcome of engagement/conversation exercise shared with OSC's		TBC	
Publish Final Plan		TBC	