



Scottish
Perinatal
Network



Scottish Perinatal Network Annual Report 2022/23



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Foreword

Welcome to the 2022/23 Annual Report from the Scottish Perinatal Network (SPN), the national strategic network incorporating the National Maternity Network (NMN) and the National Neonatal Network (NNN).

Last year we reported for the first time from the perspective of the whole SPN rather than its constituent parts, and we report jointly again this year. This reflects very positively on the evolution of the network, bringing colleagues across maternity and neonatal services together 'perinatally' to address key issues and improve care collaboratively.

Throughout the year the SPN continued to work in partnership, across traditional organisational and geographical boundaries, to realise a programme of work that supports the delivery of maternity and neonatal care in Scotland.

Key priorities for this year related to:

- the safe and effective transfer of women and babies across Scotland to ensure timely access to the right level of care,
- better engagement with maternity and neonatal service users to allow their lived experience to inform service planning and delivery,
- continued provision of neonatal nurse education to meet the needs of Scottish services and staff,

- supporting Boards to improve how they carry out perinatal significant adverse event reviews, and
- establishing more robust processes for national guideline development.

Achieving the progress outlined in this Annual Report would not have been possible without the energy, time, advice and expertise the Network's stakeholders have continued to invest, even in the face of the additional pressures on NHS services during and following the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Network Programme Team would like to take this opportunity to thank members for their commitment and contributions, with special thanks to those who have given their time to chair the SPN's working groups.

*Tara Fairley & Jennie Wild, Lead Clinicians National Maternity Network,
and Lesley Jackson, Lead Clinician National Neonatal Network*



Introduction

In 2017, the Scottish Government published a review of maternity and neonatal services in Scotland, *The Best Start*, providing a five-year forward plan for the improvement of maternity and neonatal services in Scotland. This included recommendations to create National Maternity and Neonatal Networks to promote sharing of experience and expertise and ensure integrated working across NHS Board boundaries. The two Networks were commissioned in 2019 and 2020 and are managed together as the Scottish Perinatal Network (SPN).

The aim of the Annual Report is to provide an overview of the work of the SPN, focusing on key achievements during the financial year from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

SPN Oversight Board

The SPN Oversight Board is chaired by Jane Grant (Chief Executive, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde). Its role is to provide national strategic leadership and advice to the SPN, in line with up-to-date evidence and NHS and Scottish Government priorities. For the duration of the Scottish Government's Best Start Implementation Programme, the SPN Oversight Board is aligned to the Best Start Implementation Programme Board, with shared membership across both functions.

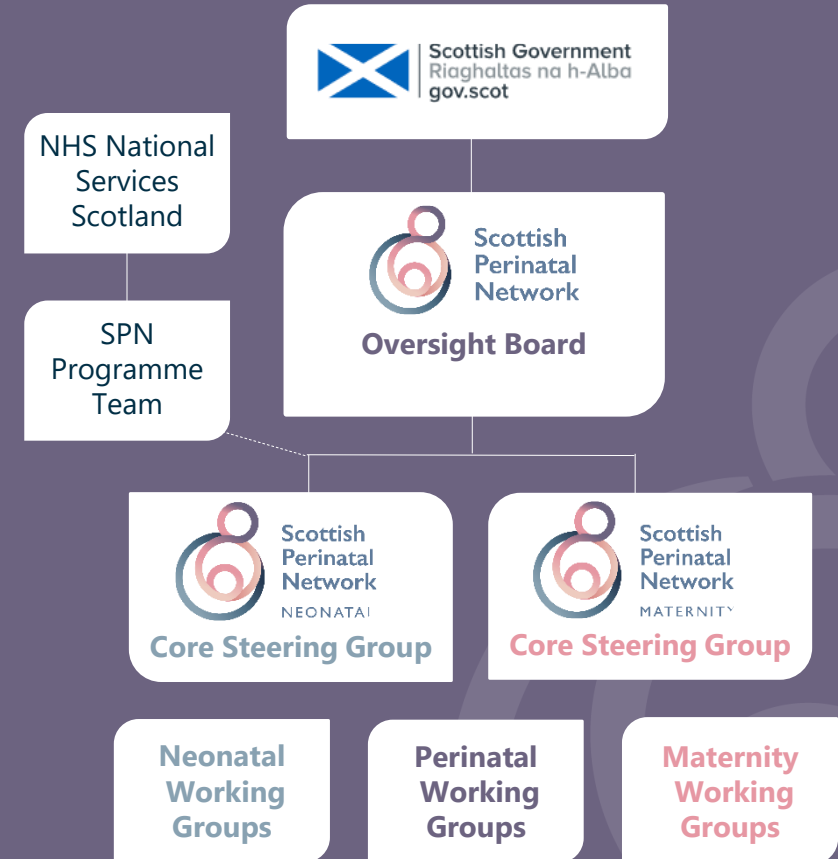
Maternity and Neonatal Core Steering Groups

Reporting to the SPN Oversight Board, the Maternity and Neonatal Network Core Steering Groups are responsible for overseeing the Networks' work programme. They work across geographical and organisational boundaries to support a 'Once for Scotland' approach to the planning and delivery of maternity and neonatal care in Scotland. Each Core Steering Group is chaired by the respective Network Lead Clinicians.

In March 2023, the two Core Steering Groups had their first joint meeting to facilitate more effective and joined-up leadership and decision-making across maternity, neonatal and perinatal programmes of work. This joint approach worked very well, and members agreed that Core Steering Group meetings for 2023-24 should continue to be 'perinatal'.

SPN Programme Team

The **Programme Team** is hosted by NHS National Services Scotland and provides programme management support and coordination to the Network. Jennie Wild joined as Clinical Lead Midwife in September 2022, and extensions of the tenure of both Tara Fairley (Obstetrician) and Lesley Jackson (Neonatologist) were endorsed by the joint Perinatal Core Steering Group in March 2023.





Stakeholder Engagement

Over the course of 2022/23 the Network steadily increased its reach and engagement with its stakeholders through its monthly Sway **newsletter**, the SPN **website** and **Twitter** feed.

Some key metrics on SPN communication channel usage and reach are given below, demonstrating improvements in making Network communication more effective and reach a broader audience.



Newsletter

866

subscribers

With onward cascading to other frontline staff

332

Average monthly views

A 61% increase from 206 last financial year



SPN Website

404%

increase in website users on last year

20,551

website users



Twitter

61%

increase in Twitter followers

(from 562 to 905)

70,603

impressions (views on Twitter)

"... just wanted to say that this newsletter and the resources within is absolutely brilliant! thank you"

Associate Director of Midwifery

"This is a great newsletter. A goldmine of information and resources."

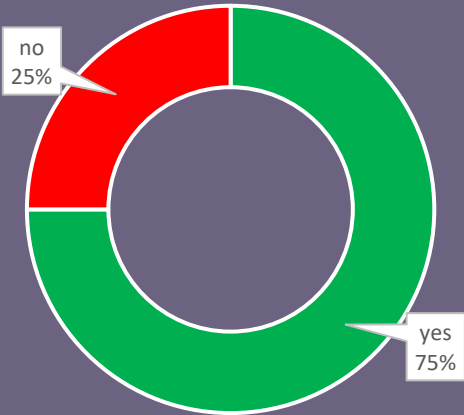
Service User Representative

Engagement in SPN Governance Structures

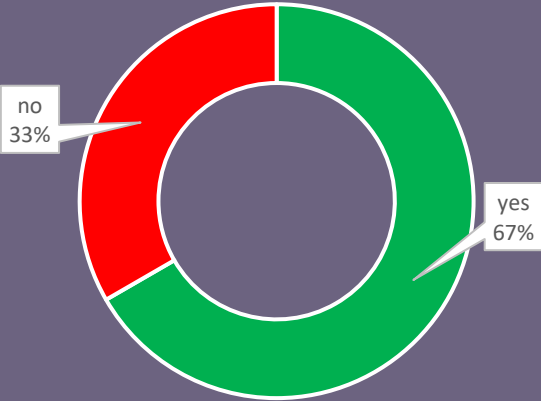
Active stakeholder engagement in SPN governance structures is an essential aspect of working effectively as a national strategic network. Participation in the four Oversight Board and six Core Steering Group meetings held in 2022/23 demonstrated this was consistently achieved, against a landscape of significant and complex clinical and workforce pressures and enduring impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The graphs below show the proportion of those meetings where >60% of group members were present at the meeting. 60% attendance was agreed as an adequate and achievable measure to demonstrate meaningful engagement while accepting that the competing demands on group members may limit meeting attendance. The Network also seeks to be agile in supporting governance group members to engage in whichever ways are most achievable for them (such as by email, directly with the programme team or via MS Teams discussion) .

Oversight Board Engagement



Core Steering Group Engagement



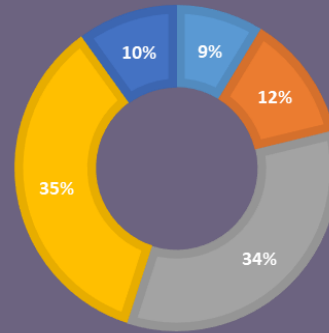
Neonatal Stakeholder Survey

In January/February 2023, the National Neonatal Network surveyed its stakeholders to understand what benefits stakeholders get from the Network, establish their key priorities, and identify areas for improvement in how the Network operates.

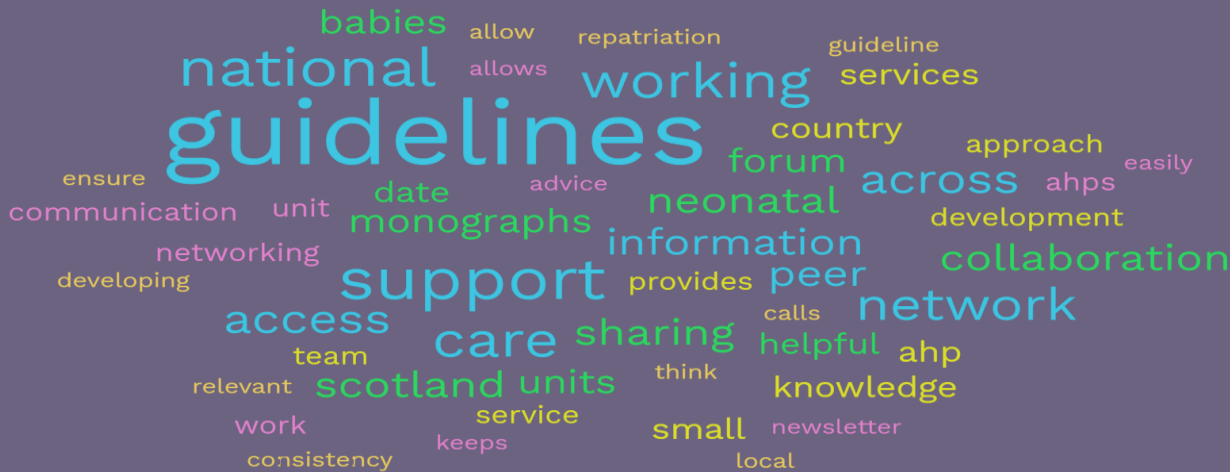
The Network is highly regarded by participants. Stakeholder comments showed clearly that peer support and collaboration to overcome issues was seen as valuable.

The development of national guidance and the hosting of local/regional guidance was rated as a top 3 priority by all 79 respondents. Producing and providing access to guidelines featured as the top answer by clinical respondents. The charts to the right show how often respondents said they accessed guidelines or drug monographs on the SPN website.

Uptake of Guidelines



Uptake of Drug Monographs



Non-clinical respondents valued peer support and news sharing most highly. Overall, collaboration and peer support was seen as important so the monthly grand round, SPN newsletter and stakeholder forums (such as the monthly planning call or the Neonatal Consultants Group) were regarded highly.

Families' experiences are fundamental to the values held by stakeholders and align with the Network's principle of family-centred care.

The word cloud to the left represents the main terms used in survey responses to describe the stakeholder benefits delivered by the Network.

What could we do better? Most respondents praised existing Network services but 25% asked for more Network support for training and education.



Since its inception, the Network has engaged extensively with its stakeholders across neonatal and maternity services, as well as with Scottish Government and partner organisations, to identify how best the Network can support and deliver value to its stakeholders.

On the basis of the intelligence gathered throughout this stakeholder engagement, the Network developed a Strategy that defines how the Network operates and what its objectives and strategic priorities are up to 2024. This Strategy was ratified by the Oversight Board in March 2022.

The following section of this report sets out the progress and benefits achieved during 2022/23 in the delivery of the Network's strategic maternity, neonatal and perinatal objectives, as well next steps for 2023/24.



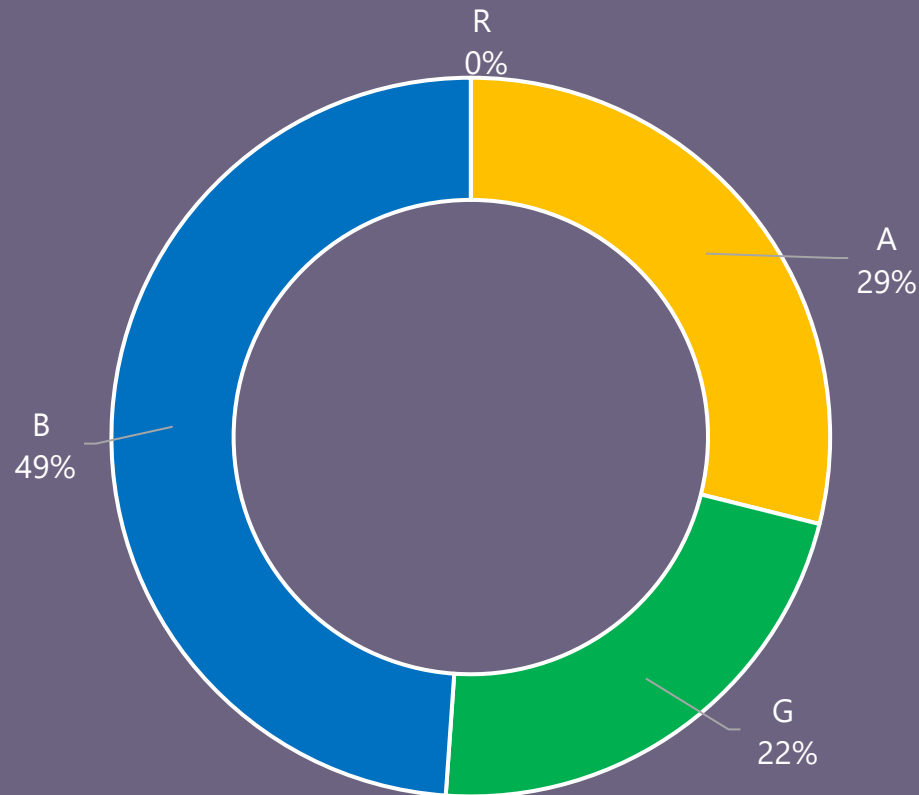
SPN Strategy and Work Plan

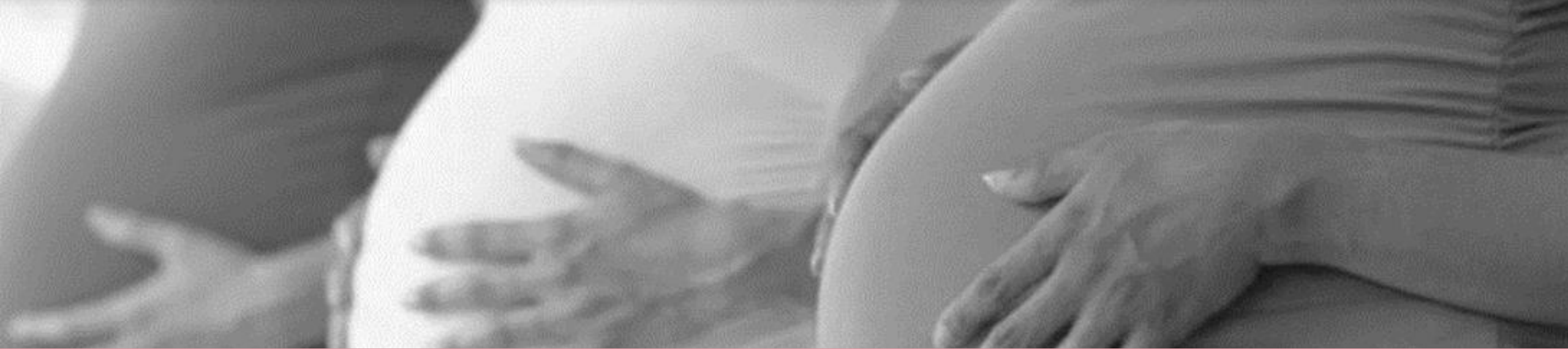
Summary of Progress in 2022/23

The graph below summarises the progress achieved in delivering on the agreed work objectives for 2022/23. There has been progress on all objectives, with 71% of the work either completed or on track to be completed as planned (RAGB status 'blue' or 'green' – as defined below). The remaining 29% of the work has progressed, but more slowly than originally anticipated (RAGB status 'amber').

A more detailed overview of progress against each strategic objective during 2022/23 – grouped by maternity, neonatal or perinatal focussed work – is included in the following section of this report.

- Red (R) The network is unlikely to achieve the objective by the agreed end date / major barriers to progress.
- Amber (A) A risk the network will not achieve the objective by the agreed end date but progress has been made.
- Green (G) The network is on track to achieve the objective by the agreed end date.
- Blue (B) The network achieved the objective.





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MATERNITY

Maternity Priorities





Maternity 1: Develop and support implementation of a national structure for effective service user engagement to ensure the voice of women and families is heard at a local and national level in Scotland

Key activities in 2022/23

- ✓ Lay chairs of the three established Maternity Voice Partnerships (MVP) in Scotland joined the Maternity Network Core Steering Group from April 2022 to represent their maternity service user members and inform Network activities and strategic decision-making.
- ✓ Following a 2020 report by Healthcare Improvement Scotland on **maternity service user engagement in Scotland** and an NMN **Options Appraisal** (2021), Scottish Government commissioned and funded the Scottish Maternity Engagement (SME) project in 2022. The project aims to develop a detailed specification with recommendations for a sustainable 'Once for Scotland' framework for maternity engagement.
- ✓ A Short Life Working Group of subject matter experts (including the current MVP lay chairs, maternity, engagement and policy colleagues) has met monthly between October 2022 and March 2023 to advise the project team.
- ✓ Stage 1 (coproduction and design) is on schedule to conclude with submission of the specification to Scottish Government in April 2023.
- ✓ Coproduction of the Specification was informed by analysis of data gathered through: (1.) Survey of engagement professionals in Boards (November 2022), (2.) Health Inequalities Impact Assessment (December 2022) and (3.) Scottish Maternity Service User Experience Survey (February 2023). 337 maternity service users participated in the survey.
- ✓ SME project stage 2 (implementation and refinement) will follow in 2023/24.





Maternity 1: Develop and support implementation of a national structure for effective service user engagement to ensure the voice of women and families is heard at a local and national level in Scotland

"This is ambitious and full of great ideas. I like that it brings together all the many Scottish assets to develop a structure for engagement that could be hugely beneficial, most importantly for the health outcomes of mothers and babies."

Service user representative

Benefits

- A sustainable national framework of minimum standards to improve quality and consistency of maternity engagement approaches to communicating well with service users; gathering feedback; coproducing local services; influencing national policy and tackling inequalities.
- Implementation of the framework will facilitate service user engagement with maternity services, in the way and to the extent that feels right to them, and support mechanisms through which strategic planning and decision making can be informed by service users' experiences and insights.





Maternity 2: Facilitate improvements in the equitable and consistent delivery of effective care for miscarriage and other early pregnancy loss

Key activities in 2022/23

- ✓ Collaboration with Scottish Government, Tommy's, the Fertility Scotland Network and Public Health Scotland to define current challenges for miscarriage care in Scotland.
- ✓ Support work led by Tommy's to improve the quality of health information for parents about miscarriage and baby loss.
- ✓ During the first quarter of 2023, the Network will scope requirements to develop a suite of national miscarriage pathways, based on strengths of existing local approaches and the additional guidance or pathways required to meet the recommendations of the 2021 **Lancet Series** in Scotland.



Benefits

- Established links between different strategic partners necessary to deliver improvements in miscarriage care.
- A consistent, dignified, compassionate miscarriage service tailored to the needs of women will help address inequalities in service provision and offer person-centred care when, where and how women and families need it.
- Deliver Scottish Government Programme for Government commitments on improving miscarriage care by December 2023.





Maternity 3: Establish processes for the development and management of national maternity clinical pathways, guidance and processes

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ Set up a new Network Guidelines Governance Group, chaired by Dr Marie-Anne Ledingham, to direct the prioritisation and delivery of this work, with oversight from the Maternity Core Steering Group. The group met for the first time in June 2022.
- ✓ A national guideline on **Management of Intrapartum Maternal Pyrexia in Hospital** was published in September 2022. National Guidelines developed by the Obstetric Neurology group were published in February 2023 (**Headache in Pregnancy** and **Pregnancy Standards of Care for Women with Epilepsy**).
- ✓ An SPN guideline development standard operating procedure was developed covering both maternity and neonatal guideline development.
- ✓ Large for Gestation Age Babies was selected as a priority for guideline development. A Short Life Working Group was established in January 2023 and the new process will be tested through a 'proof of concept' approach as this work progresses in 2023/24.

"[The guideline] (...) should reduce confusion and minimise variation. It is also clear about (...) what care should be given if a pyrexia or signs of sepsis are observed."

Professor of Clinical & Health Sciences

Benefits

- Easy access to Scottish guidance from a central repository
- Reduced duplication in developing local guidance and unhelpful variation in clinical practice across Scotland.



Maternity 4: Support national implementation of innovations in maternity care

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ Liaison with the Scottish Government, Scottish Clinical Biochemistry Diagnostic Network (SCBDN) and Scottish Healthcare Technologies Group (SHTG) at Health Improvement Scotland to explore options to introduce Placental Growth Factor testing in Scotland.
- ✓ The Scottish Healthcare Technologies Group (SHTG) published **recommendations for implementation of PIGF testing**, which were accepted by the Scottish Government. A CMO letter was issued in March 2023, instructing NHS Boards to implement the SHTG recommendations.
- ✓ SPN supported dissemination of the SHTG report and its recommendations to Boards.



Benefits

- Increased person-centred choices for service users, in line with the aims of *Realistic Medicine*.
- Consistent implementation of innovative approaches or technologies across Scotland, supporting healthcare professionals to be confident to use them.



Next Steps: Maternity Priorities 2023/24

- Mat-1: Service User Engagement**
 - Implement new model of maternity service user engagement, utilising and building on existing infrastructure
- Mat-2: Miscarriage Care**
 - Support SG with delivery of programme for government commitment on miscarriage care
- Mat-3: Guidelines and Pathways**
 - Establish a Guidelines Development Standard Operating Procedure, through which to prioritise and develop national maternity guidance documents which can be adapted locally
 - Transition the existing Maternal Medicine Group from Best Start to SPN governance and develop prioritised work plan
 - Scope transition the existing Fetal Medicine Group from Best Start to SPN governance and develop prioritised work plan
- Mat-4: Safeguarding Midwives**
 - Establish a Group with SPN governance through which to strengthen the strategic voices of midwives with remit for a safeguarding pregnant women and babies most likely to be impacted by inequalities
 - Establish a forum through which to facilitate confidential, national peer support for midwives in safeguarding roles
- Mat-5: Maternity Audit**
 - Develop audit measures for maternity care to assess effectiveness of maternity services





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NEONATAL

Neonatal Priorities





Neonatal 1: Develop nationally-agreed and standardised processes to manage neonatal unit capacity across the network in support of the new neonatal service model for Scotland

"The guideline and monographs I use regularly but I think the monthly grand rounds have been incredibly helpful and successful".

*Consultant
Neonatologist*

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ Supported weekly conference calls between neonatal units to facilitate effective repatriation discussions. A survey of units showed that all 14 respondents found these calls helpful in improving communication between units.
- ✓ In partnership with NHS Education for Scotland (NES), established a 'Qualified in Specialty' (QIS) working group to improve provision of neonatal nurse education. The QIS work concluded with delivery of a revised competency framework. Further work will focus on other levels of neonatal training and education.
- ✓ Delivered a 'Monthly Grand Round' to provide an opportunity for units to present a clinical case and to promote collaborative working between units and consistency in practice across Scotland.
- ✓ Collated and circulated bi-annual Scotland-wide in-utero transfer data reports to all neonatal units in Scotland.
- ✓ Work on standardised processes for managing neonatal capacity across Scotland was discontinued in favour of linking with national work led by Healthcare Improvement Scotland to develop real-time staffing management tools.

Benefits

- National co-ordination of neonatal capacity to facilitate timely location of required cots.
- Improved repatriation pathways, with home units aware of full details of the care babies received in tertiary units, reducing the risk of babies to require additional transfers
- Sharing of best practice and learning from unique cases among neonatal clinical staff in Scotland to improve patient outcomes and reduce harm.



Neonatal 2: Agree processes for the development and management of national neonatal clinical guidelines and drug monographs

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ Developed a SPN standard operating procedure for guideline development and dissemination (links with Maternity priority 3).
- ✓ Published national guidance on home oxygen, and the management of difficult airway on the [SPN website](#).
- ✓ Transferred hosting of regional guidelines from the now decommissioned Managed Knowledge Network to the SPN website.
- ✓ Development of national guidance on the Management of the Extreme Preterm Infant, to be completed early in 2023/24.
- ✓ Drafted breast milk decontamination and storage guidance, scheduled to be ratified in early 2023/24.
- ✓ Topics selected and development began for national drug monographs.
- ✓ Partnership working on guideline development and governance with the Surgical Conditions Affecting Newborns Scotland Managed Clinical Network (SCANS).



"I find national guidelines and monographs most useful. Scotland is small enough to justify that and the potential risk reduced as a result."

Neonatal Nurse

Benefits

- National standardisation of practice across Scotland, delivering equitable and safe neonatal care through implementation of national difficult airway management and Home Oxygen Guidelines.
- Single set of drug monographs to support efficient and effective neonatal transfers and repatriation and reduce harm.
- Streamlined and efficient process for developing and disseminating clinical guidance





Neonatal 3: Establish current neonatal AHP provision in Scotland and identify models for improving consistency and capacity in AHP provision

"The AHP forum has been helpful to highlight the challenges... for AHPs in Scotland....This forum gives hope that change might happen."

Allied Health Professional

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ Established a Scottish Government funded project to identify current neonatal AHP provision in Scotland and develop discipline-specific approaches to improve AHP input to neonatal care, in line with Best Start and British Association for Perinatal Medicine (BAPM) recommendations.
- ✓ The AHP project team reported a gap analysis on current neonatal AHP staffing levels, compared to national professional standards, to support workforce planning and the delivery of the Best Start model of neonatal care.
- ✓ AHP Forum established to provide sustainable, collaborate working.

Benefits

- Enhanced AHP provision across neonatal services in Scotland.
- Increased capacity for successful and timely repatriation of babies back to home units, ensuring health outcomes for neonates are optimised through appropriate AHP provision across Scotland.
- Opportunities to develop multidisciplinary educational resources for health care support workers, nurses, midwives and AHPs to learn together within neonatal care.



Neonatal 4: Develop national guidance and pathways for effective long-term neuro-developmental follow-up of babies after discharge from a neonatal unit.

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ Developed a core dataset for 2-year follow-up; a data access request to analyse Scotland wide data is awaiting final information governance approval.
- ✓ Designed a 4-year follow-up questionnaire for implementation across Scotland.
- ✓ Established links with Children with Exceptional Needs (CEN) network.
- ✓ National Neonatal Community Outreach Team established. Network of contacts has been developed and this provides a platform to share and discuss best practice in neonatal community liaison work across Scotland.



"Great examples of how units are using their spaces and impressive services. Thanks for sharing"

Community Outreach Nurse

Benefits

- National standardisation of 2-year follow-up assessment and data collection across Scotland to ensure equitable care and regular review of best practice.
- Avoidance of duplication of work through links with CEN network.
- Standardisation of practice delivered by the Neonatal Community Outreach Teams across Scotland, ensuring if a baby is repatriated that they will receive the same level of care and parental guidance.





Neonatal 5: Support national implementation of innovations in neonatal care

"Thank you for the excellent day. It was a useful course and very relevant"

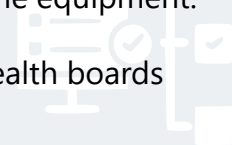
*Neonatal Consultant on the
Therapeutic Hypothermic
Cooling Event*

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ The Network worked with National Procurement in NHS NSS to facilitate national procurement of equipment ensuring consistency and value for money. All interested neonatal units have now purchased the equipment.
- ✓ The Network provided logistical and planning support to facilitate shared innovation across health boards relating to Pulse Oximetry.
- ✓ The Network supported the national implementation of BAPM guidelines related to Therapeutic Hypothermic Cooling and delivered relevant education for neonatal staff

Benefits

- Raising awareness of and providing education of cooling techniques and best practice for referring centres and trainees across Scotland to ensure equitable, timely and clinically appropriate delivery of neonatal cooling where required.
- Ensuring best value for money and standardisation of equipment through liaison and national agreements made through National Procurement.



Next Steps: Neonatal Priorities 2023/24

- Neo-1: Neonatal Unit Capacity**
 - Develop pathways, guidance and parent information for effective and timely repatriation of babies to their home neonatal unit
 - Develop Family Integrated Care approaches in Scotland
 - Establish channels to support development of neonatal community outreach capacity
 - Facilitate national planning of neonatal nurse education provision in Scotland (pre and post 'qualified in specialty')
- Neo-2: Guidelines and Monographs**
 - Establish a Guidelines Development Standard Operating Procedure, through which to prioritise and develop national neonatal guidance documents
 - Develop national guidance for Decontamination and Storage of Breast Milk Equipment
 - Develop a national guideline on management of the extreme preterm infant
 - Develop neonatal blood borne viruses guideline
 - Plan a programme for national neonatal guideline development
 - Agree a standardised national approach to neonatal medicines and develop a single set of drug monographs
- Neo-3: Neonatal AHP Provision**
 - Scope current practice and develop models to address gaps in AHP input to neonatal care across Scotland
- Neo-4: Neonatal Follow-Up**
 - Develop pathways and guidance for neonatal follow-up care
- Neo-5: Parental Engagement**
 - Develop national channels for effective engagement with parents of babies in neonatal care
- Neo-6: Neonatal Audit**
 - Develop capacity to measure and demonstrate effectiveness of neonatal service
 - Support effective participation in the National Neonatal Audit Programme (NNAP)



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Perinatal Priorities





Perinatal 1: Facilitate national consistency and coordination of processes for effective movement of women and babies across Scotland for ongoing or additional clinical care

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ The SPN Transport Group met quarterly to provide oversight and direction to the *In-Utero Transfer* and *Remote & Rural Transport* working groups.

In-Utero Transfer Workstream:

- ✓ Developed the *In-Utero Transfers in Scotland: Consultant Led Unit to Consultant Led Unit*. The pathway was published on 31 March 2023, with a launch event scheduled for 25 May 2023. Initial review to evaluate the implementation of the pathway is scheduled for August 2023.
- ✓ Drafted a Once for Scotland transfer document ensuring referring and receiving units give and have the same information, with the intention of digitising it via BadgerNet once the form has been successfully piloted.
- ✓ Next steps for the IUT group are to look at pathways for destinations for women and babies following unplanned births out of hospital, and remote support mechanisms for healthcare professionals managing pregnancy/birth events out with their common scope of practice (e.g. paramedics)

Remote and Rural Workstream:

- ✓ *Remote & Rural Transport* working group established 1 April 2023, with obstetric and midwifery co-chairs.
- ✓ Developed a pathway for *Transfers from a Community Midwifery Unit to a Consultant Led Unit in an Extreme Obstetric Emergency*. This is in final draft with estimated publication in quarter one of 2023/24.
- ✓ Next step is to look at intrapartum transfers from Community Midwifery Units to Consultant Led Units



Perinatal 1: Facilitate national consistency and coordination of processes for effective movement of women and babies across Scotland for ongoing or additional clinical care

Benefits

- More streamlined and efficient decision-making for in-utero transfers, coordinating both maternity and neonatal service capacity to identify a suitable receiving unit for a transfer.
- By using available technology to more accurately predict the risk of preterm birth, fewer women will need to undergo avoidable transfers. This frees up Scottish Ambulance Service resources, as well as keeping maternity bed and neonatal cot options open in busy tertiary units.
- More streamlined and efficient decision-making process for midwives in a remote & rural community setting, with a documented process to support their decision making in an effective way with Scottish Ambulance Service and receiving Consultant Led Units.
- Promotes working practices recommended by the ESMiE enquiry (Rowe, R, Draper, ES, Kenyon, S, et al. Intrapartum-related perinatal deaths in births planned in midwifery-led settings in Great Britain: findings and recommendations from the ESMiE confidential enquiry. *BJOG* 2020; 127:16651675)

"Great to see this being finalised"

Neonatal Consultant on the final draft of the Extreme Obstetric Emergencies pathway



Perinatal 2: Facilitate national consistency and coordination of processes for the effective management of pre-term labour

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ Held a second annual national learning event in June 2022, for case review of babies born at less than 27 weeks' gestation at a unit without neonatal intensive care (NICU) capacity. The event had obstetric and neonatal co-chairs and, learning from feedback from 2021, focused more on the antenatal journey and collaborative perinatal working which supported the birth and subsequent postnatal and neonatal care. It was attended by 102 perinatal colleagues
- ✓ Planning for a third annual learning event on 2 June 2023: Seven NHS Boards will present cases, and the successful co-chairing approach from 2022 will be replicated with a Neonatal co-chair from NHS Ayrshire & Arran and a Midwifery co-chair from NHS Forth Valley. Registration opened on 28 February 2023 and over 120 event registrations have already been received.
- ✓ Developed an exception reporting pro-forma, based on learning and best practice in the Operational Delivery Networks in NHS England. This was ratified by the both Core Steering Groups and the Oversight Board in March 2022, and implemented as a national tool in Scotland in 2022/23. Uptake was not as hoped, and use of the tool will be promoted further through the third annual learning event in June 2023.

Benefits

- Enhanced collaboration across maternity and neonatal services in Scotland to identify and learn from instances where delivery in a unit with NICU capacity was not possible.
- Improved outcomes for women and their babies.



Perinatal 3: Develop and implement national processes for sharing learning from significant adverse event reviews (SAER)

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ Engagement with Health Boards to learn about local process and challenges and identify how national support can best assist Boards. This is almost complete (four remaining Boards scheduled for early in 2023/24). Consistent emerging themes on staff capacity, training and availability of external reviewers.
- ✓ A Lead Reviewer Forum met twice to explore the skill and capacity requirements to successfully fulfil the lead reviewer role. Discussions identified further work on reviewer competency, working towards a competency framework (with help from NES), and establishing a register of lead reviewers able to carry out the external lead reviewer/panel member role (in partnership with HIS).
- ✓ A draft recommendation is in development, advocating that midwifery colleagues be supported with adequate time and training during working hours to fulfil requirements of midwifery SAER panel membership in a way which is sustainable for staffing levels as well as professional development.
- ✓ Held two SAER Shared Learning Events on 27 May and 7 December 2022, with different Boards sharing their review processes, challenges and successes, underpinned by a case review example. The next event will be held on 30 June 2023 with a view to take place every two months thereafter.
- ✓ Collaboration with NES to produce an animation summarising the May 2022 learning event and to explore other ways of sharing learning, such as podcasts.
- ✓ Linked with SANDS with a view to assess the patient information and letters sent to families about SAERs, to make these more cohesive across Boards and use appropriate and sensitive language. This will progress further in 2023/24.
- ✓ SPN started to explore with Scottish Government and other strategic partners how the shared learning mechanisms and supportive forums established by the SPN can best be supported long term.



Perinatal 3: Develop and implement national processes for sharing learning from significant adverse event reviews (SAER)

Benefits

- Greater capacity to share learning from SAERs across Scotland and the ability to identify issues for national improvement action.
- Fostering a culture of learning over a culture of blame.
- Standardised and appropriate correspondence across Scotland for families experiencing an SAER. This in turn will aid Boards with being open and transparent.
- Support clinical colleagues with demonstrating best practice options in local discussions, based on experiences shared from other Boards having faced similar challenges.
- Improved access to suitable external reviewer, rather than clinicians relying on their own professional connections and goodwill from colleagues.
- A central register of lead reviewers would also reduce the burden on well-known individuals in the clinical community.
- A competency framework of training and skills required for panel members and lead reviewers would support clinical colleagues to develop these skills in a way that is recognised across Scotland



"Open and honest accounts of everyone involved with a clear focus on learning"

Shared Learning Event attendee when asked what they liked best about the event



Perinatal 4: Analyse maternity and neonatal audit data to provide intelligence about effectiveness of care and inform future improvement priorities.

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ Created Maternity and Neonatal Data Hub pages on the [SPN website](#) to provide a central point for accessing information about the Hub's services.
- ✓ Established National Neonatal Data Oversight Group who have commenced work on identifying a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the neonatal network.
- ✓ A clinical review of draft definitions for neonatal core measures was carried out and fed into the development of the national neonatal core dashboard as part of the Maternity and Neonatal Data Hub.
- ✓ Scottish Government negotiated re-entry of Scotland in National Neonatal Audit Programme (NNAP), and the network has re-commenced coordination of data quality checks of NNAP submissions via national data sharing meetings.



Benefits

- Coordination with strategic partners on shared priorities regarding national audit and data.
- Streamlined process for ensuring good data quality in Scottish submissions to national NNAP audits.
- Providing access to clinical expertise in the development of relevant and appropriate core audit measures





Perinatal 5: Develop and implement pathways and guidance for effective perinatal bereavement support

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ New **National Bereavement Care Pathways** (NBCP) had been developed by third sector partners (SANDS) and initially implemented in five early adopter boards. A second tranche of five Boards are scheduled to adopt the pathways during 2023/24.
- ✓ Considering the success of this work, the SPN Oversight Board agreed in March 2023 to discontinue SPN work on developing pathways and guidance for bereavement support. From 2023/24 the SPN will transition to a supporting role around wider bereavement care and focus on supporting SG with its programme for government commitments on miscarriage care (Mat 2)
- ✓ The SPN team prepared to support the work of NBCP, strengthen relationships and alignment of parallel priorities (Mat 1 and Peri 3), as stallholders at the NBCP Event scheduled for 26 April 2023.



Benefits

- Coordinated and streamlined national approach by relevant strategic partners to support Boards in implementing the NBCP.
- Improved bereavement care for families experiencing pregnancy or neonatal loss.





Perinatal 6: Facilitate and coordinate perinatal community engagement in existing national processes delivered by strategic partners, e.g. NHS HIS or NES, and maximise available synergies and efficiencies.

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ Links with key national strategic partners were further developed and enhanced during 2022/23, including with NHS Education for Scotland, Public Health Scotland, the Maternity and Children Quality Improvement Collaborative (MCQIC) and Healthcare Improvement Scotland.
- ✓ A schedule of informal, 8-weekly, 'Perinatal Strategic Partners' meetings, chaired on a rotational basis on MS Teams between SPN and MCQIC, was established and met for the first time in January 2023. Representatives from BAPM were invited to join the forum in March 2023 to facilitate links with wider UK-level developments.
- ✓ Improved links with other related national networks (Fertility Scotland, Perinatal Mental Health Network Scotland and SCANS), facilitated by a closer alignment of these networks within NSD management structures.

Benefits:

- Effective communication channels to utilise synergies across multiple national programmes of work related to maternity and neonatal care.
- Reduced duplication of effort, enhancing efficiencies and minimising the risk of competing demands being placed on stakeholders that are common to these national programmes.



Perinatal 7: Develop effective national approaches to engaging service users

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ Work progressed under objective Maternity 1 will align and dovetail with other related perinatal engagement activities during 2023/24. For example, it will dovetail with the engagement activities for maternity service users who also access NHS or third sector services during pregnancy or after birth, such as neonatal or perinatal mental health services.
- ✓ Parent Advisory Group established within the National Neonatal Network. They are currently inputting on work to develop a parent passport, and the development of Family Integrated Care. Parents are also represented at the SPN Core Steering Groups.



Benefits

- Identified best practice from other parts of the UK to establish viable, sustainable national platforms to enable lived experience of maternity and neonatal care to inform strategy and service planning and delivery in Scotland.





Perinatal 8: Assess and where possible mitigate inequalities in perinatal outcomes

Key Activities in 2022/23

- ✓ The SME project undertook a healthcare equalities impact assessment and will make recommendations to Scottish Government in April 2023 for tackling inequalities in service user engagement through collaboration with third sector.
- ✓ A healthcare equalities impact assessment of early pregnancy care is underway as part of work on miscarriage.
- ✓ The SPN team had initial conversations about how to support the work of the Scottish Government on racialised inequalities.
- ✓ The 'What Matters to Me' neonatal parent passport workstream has undertaken an impact assessment to identify and mitigate against inequalities.
- ✓ The SPN newsletter signposted emerging research and third sector resources to raise awareness of inequalities in perinatal services and outcomes.
- ✓ Supported strategic partners at Public Health Scotland to promote the new Easy Read version of Ready Steady Baby and resources advocating vaccination during pregnancy.
- ✓ A new SPN forum to strengthen the strategic voices of midwives with a safeguarding remit, and the women and families they advocate for, was agreed by the SPN Core Steering Group in March 2023 as an early priority for 2023/24.
- ✓ The 2023/23 SPN workplan has been developed to strengthen consideration of health inequalities within each SPN work stream.





Perinatal 8: Assess and where possible mitigate inequalities in perinatal outcomes

Benefits

- Greater understanding of how SPN work programmes impact on inequalities and how to mitigate against those impacts across all SPN work streams.
- Improved equity, inclusion and accessibility for perinatal service users



Next Steps: Perinatal Priorities 2023/24

Peri-1: Effective Transport

- Improve pathways and support to enable safe and effective maternity and neonatal transport in remote and rural areas
- Improve processes to facilitate effective in-utero transfers and effective management of preterm labour
- Scope national procurement of fetal fibronectin
- Develop supporting IUT document for BadgerNet
- Develop standardised risk assessments for postnatal transfers
- Support implementation of exception reporting and case reviews for babies born < 27 weeks gestation at a unit without a NICU
- Support ongoing annual schedule of learning events for babies born < 27 weeks gestation at a unit without a NICU

Peri-2: Significant Adverse Event Reviews

- Provide national coordination and support to NHS Boards around the implementation of Scottish Government SAER guidance and sharing of learning on effective SAER processes
- Support development of Patient Information Leaflets to support families affected by perinatal SAERs
- Maintain and facilitate ongoing schedule of learning events presented by NHS Boards to inform the development of national responses to improve care
- Lead Reviewer Forum (Peer support and Training)
- Involving Families: Key Contact Forum (Peer support and Training)



Perinatal Priorities 2023/24

Peri-3: Collaboration with Strategic Partners

- Innovate and facilitate ongoing collaboration with strategic partners to share learning through a range of channels
- Coordinate and facilitate a Strategic Partners Forum through which to optimise synergies, efficiencies & opportunities to collaborate towards shared priorities

Peri-4: SPN Communications

- Develop an SPN Strategic Communications Plan
- Restructure SPN website for professional, perinatal audience (unless otherwise stated) and develop project pages aligned with work plan
- Content design and website maintenance
- Manage end-to-end process for monthly SPN newsletter
- Manage corporate SPN Twitter Account
- Maintain and present digital metrics and performance





Finance

The Network is funded entirely by an allocation from Scottish Government to cover SPN Programme Team staffing costs and non-pay expenditure.

It operated within budget for the financial year 2022/23.

For more information about the Network please visit: <https://www.perinatalnetwork.scot/>

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