AIMS For a better birth...

Doula UK online Conference 2024: Inspire & Connect

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By Anne Glover

This annual conference, held from the 22nd to the 24th of March, was as interesting and packed with pertinent topics as ever! The 3-day schedule was well thought out with quick breaks between talks and introductions presented by various leadership members. The theme this year was 'Inspire and Connect' and it was great to see collaboration with so many widely respected faces in the birthing world. The conference ran online from Friday afternoon until Sunday lunchtime, with 12 external presentations and introductions to the leadership team and sponsors. There were over 100 participants including Doula UK members and birth professionals from around the world attending the event.

The event covered a wide variety of topics including hypnobirthing, biomechanics, breastfeeding, postnatal support, neurodiversity, induction, high BMI, the 'Born at Home' film and a spiritual dimension of pregnancy in a secular world. Some of the talks were focused on the role of doulas supporting families, for example supporting neurodivergent birth and supporting families in sleep crisis, but anyone interested in birth and life with a newborn would have found these talks informative and inspirational.

Hot topics such as high BMI, neurodiversity, birth trauma and induction kept us all informed on the latest

information accessible to doulas and parents. The collaboration between Doula UK and AIMS continues as Nadia Higson from AIMS shared her expertise on induction, engaging doulas about the latest evidence based information and sharing information on where to signpost clients to. This was based on the AIMS workshop 'Focusing on Induction of Labour' which has now been accredited for CPD by Doula UK, along with other topics. Buy tickets for AIMS workshops here.

Connecting with other attendees was limited to the chat box on Zoom, and there was also the opportunity to put questions to the presenters in the Q&A box which were addressed at the end of each presentation. The event ran smoothly from one presentation to the next with good time-keeping!

It was really useful to have the recording of the whole event available for 30 days after the conference, simply because there were so many interesting presentations and I certainly didn't want to miss any!

Over £4,000 was raised for the Doula Access Fund, which provides free doula support during pregnancy, labour and after the birth of a baby to those most vulnerable. Referrals can be made to Doula UK by a healthcare professional, social worker or charitable partner. Please see thewebsite for more information.

Author Bio: Anne has been working as a doula for almost 9 years in Northern Ireland and has supported well over 150 women at some stage in their birthing journey. She currently volunteers on the AIMS Campaigns Team