AIMS For a better birth...

Every reason

AIMS Journal, 2017, Vol 29 No 1

Michelle Quashie tells us why women, midwives and everyone has reason to be concerned

For the past few weeks I've had this grey cloud hanging over my head. It stops me from returning to sleep when I wake in the night to feed my baby. When I do eventually get to sleep I wake up hoping that it was just a nightmare but then the realisation returns....

My mind is haunted with the knowledge that some pregnant women have had their chosen midwife taken away from them, a midwife who they know and trust. I hear from women that they are experiencing feelings of fear, vulnerability, helplessness, solitude, all adding to their feelings of anxiety. Feelings I can relate to. I worry for these women and the impact these feelings are having on the future of their growing babies....

It has only been a matter of weeks since I had experienced a form of care that I had never experienced at any of my previous three births. It was a form of care that met my needs physically, emotionally, fully respected my choices and ensured I was safe whilst I birthed my baby. This new-found care was provided to me by independent midwife Kay Hardie. It was a revelation, a gold standard form of care that has my full support and approval. The type of care that I would only ever expect and seek for my daughter, my nieces, my loved ones, my friends and for all women....

I am pleased to see that many are finding the actions of the NMC concerning. If you have a daughter, a niece, a wife or care about women and society as a whole, then you too should be concerned about the NMC's latest decisions. One day a woman who is close to you may find themselves pregnant with limited choices regarding her maternity care and birth, possibly limited or no midwifery support, during a monumental time of her life.

This is a time when a woman leaves her footprint on the world and time when a mother is born. Birth has the ability to shape a woman for life and will effect who she is as a mother and a member of society as a whole.

Michelle Quashie