



What has the AIMS campaigns team been doing?

[AIMS Journal, 2020, Vol 32, No 4](#)

To read or download this Journal in a magazine format on ISSUU, please click [here](#)

[Other quarterly updates](#)

By the AIMS Campaigns team

- We have continued to review and update the AIMS Birth Information page, "[Coronavirus and your maternity care](#)," and our template letters for [maternity service users](#) and [campaigners](#) in line with the latest guidance from the NHS and the Royal Colleges. This includes the new [guidance to Trusts from NHS England](#)¹ on lifting the restrictions on partners/supporters' presence at antenatal appointments and scans, during labour, and on antenatal and postnatal wards. For details of AIMS' response to this new guidance, see [AIMS comments on latest guidance on birth partner restrictions](#). We also welcomed the efforts being made by NHS England to strongly encourage and support maternity services to re-open access to partners. [Their letter to Directors of Nursing and Heads of Midwifery](#)² (dated September 19) is well worth a read to support your local activity in scrutinising – and challenging, where necessary – the basis for local arrangements.
- For more details of AIMS campaigning on the issue of maternity service restrictions, see the AIMS Campaign report, "[Removing restrictions on partners attending maternity services](#)"
- We welcomed the relaunch of NHS Resolution's maternity incentive scheme and the tightening up of the scheme to make it less open to abuse. Safety Action 9 supports the ongoing implementation of Continuity of Carer, which AIMS wrote about back in June. Although the relaunched scheme has been updated since we wrote about it, our article still offers useful background: Campaign [Update: Incentives for Continuity of Carer now included in NHS Resolution Scheme](#).
- We responded to a NICE consultation on a draft quality standard relating to FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder). We argued that the maternity-related elements of the proposed standard demand further consideration and have been pleased to note that NICE is now taking its time in processing the consultation responses. Find our response here: [AIMS Response to NICE consultation on FASD Quality Standard](#).
- We have submitted comments on two draft NICE guidelines on Caesareans - [NICE Caesarean Section Guideline - Consultation on Draft November 2020](#) and Postnatal Care - [NICE Postnatal Care Guideline - Consultation on Draft November 2020](#)
- We noted the publication of two open access papers evaluating the controversial "Obstetric Anal Sphincter Injury Care Bundle," obgyn.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1471-0528.16396

and bmiopen.bmj.com/content/10/9/e035674.

- We submitted evidence to the Health and Social Care Select Committee enquiry on the safety of maternity services in England. You can read our submission here: [AIMS submission to the Health and Social Care Committee Inquiry: Safety of maternity services in England](#)
- We made a submission to the NHS-commissioned independent investigation into the issues and sequence of events which led to the cessation of community maternity services provided by One to One Midwives: [Why does the NHS make it so difficult for organisations to partner with it successfully, and how can this be changed?](#)
- We welcomed the appointment of Professor Trixie McAree as the national midwifery lead (England) for Continuity of Carer and we are in contact with her to ensure that AIMS continues to play an effective role in this policy area. AIMS looks forward to a time when we no longer talk much about a continuity of carer model of care because this will be the standard model of care offered to all women and families. See AIMS campaign update here: [Campaign Update: Continuity of Carer and Better Births Implementation](#).
- We were pleased to note that the “fresh ears” policy has now been deleted from the Saving Babies’ Lives Care Bundle (SBLCB), following some effective collaborative feedback in which AIMS participated. Find the updated SBLCB document here: www.england.nhs.uk/publication/saving-babies-lives-version-two-a-care-bundle-for-reducing-perinatal-mortality/.
- We welcomed the scrutiny of health and social care services reported by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in their State of Care report 2019/2020: www.cqc.org.uk/publications/major-report/state-care. The report notes that at least a quarter of core maternity services were rated as “requires improvement overall” at the end of March 2020. Whilst risk-based inspections and enforcement action have taken place during the pandemic, AIMS is keen for routine inspections to recommence as soon as possible.
- We read the [BMJ article](#)³ on “Risk of complicated birth at term,” which is discussed [here](#) by Jo Dagustun.
- We read a new book from the Pinter and Martin publishing house (www.pinterandmartin.com), Amity Reed’s *Overdue: Birth, Burnout and a Blueprint for the NHS*. This part memoir/part manifesto for change, and others like it in this growing genre (accounts of the maternity services told from the perspective of healthcare practitioners), provides an important and highly accessible reminder of why we campaign for maternity service improvement. The AIMS Campaigns Team highly recommends this genre to the maternity improvement community, especially those not working with birth and the maternity services on a daily basis. This book is a great up-to-date example of the genre.
- Our Volunteer Gemma McKenzie presented her AIMS-supported research as part of the 2020 Festival of Social Sciences. This included an early showing of a film that Gemma has created to communicate some of her early research material. Whilst Gemma’s research focus is decision-making around unassisted birth, we would recommend her short (9-minute) film to everyone interested in improving maternity services, as it offers an excellent – if heart-wrenching –

commentary on the impact of our contemporary encounters with the maternity services, both positive and negative. We look forward to seeing more of Gemma's authentic and co-created exploration of women's narratives of freebirthing in the UK. Find Gemma's film here:

<https://youtu.be/P38mvu9tIME>

Meetings attendance:

- We participated in the annual meeting of ENCA (European Network of Childbirth Associations), of which AIMS was a founding member: www.facebook.com/encaeurope/.
- We participated in the September and November meetings of the Maternity Transformation Stakeholder Council: www.england.nhs.uk/mat-transformation/council. Jo Dagustun has now taken over as the AIMS representative at these meetings, following in the very capable footsteps of Debbie Chippington Derrick.
- We attended (as an observer) the first ever National Maternity Voices' AGM: nationalmaternityvoices.org.uk.
- We attended an Oxford Brookes University webinar on "Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing and Embedding Change in Maternity Services."
- We attended the International Maternity Experience 2020 conference.
- We attended #MidwiferyHour Facebook live events, including one focussed on "Building Continuity of Care in COVID-19" and "Educating Future Midwives."
- We participated in the #ContinuityofCarer Zoom group.
- We attended the Association of Radical Midwives annual conference, "How Birth Works."
- We attended the Virtual British Intrapartum Care Society annual conference.
- We attended the Cardiff Midwifery Society conference "Beyond the Bump; how ethnic minority families are failed in maternity services."

[See all Campaign Team updates](#)

[1 www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/09/par001599-framework-for-the-reintroduction-of-visitors-throughout-maternity-services-sep-2020.pdf](https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/09/par001599-framework-for-the-reintroduction-of-visitors-throughout-maternity-services-sep-2020.pdf)

[2 www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/framework-to-assist-nhs-trusts-to-reintroduce-access-for-partners-visitors-and-other-supporters-of-pregnant-women-in-english-maternity-services/?fbclid=IwAR2eLfC6uZ47tnPwuk4o3_LXXCsr10rNKpZ2_EJvr6RUavvU_iTOmPusLa0](https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/framework-to-assist-nhs-trusts-to-reintroduce-access-for-partners-visitors-and-other-supporters-of-pregnant-women-in-english-maternity-services/?fbclid=IwAR2eLfC6uZ47tnPwuk4o3_LXXCsr10rNKpZ2_EJvr6RUavvU_iTOmPusLa0)

[3 www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m3377/https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m3377](https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m3377/https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m3377)