AIMS For a better birth...

Refocussing our attention on Better Births: The poetry of scrutinising policy implementation

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By the AIMS Campaigns Team

The AIMS Campaigns Team has previously promoted the Better Births vision[1] as a key tool for birth activists in England. In this article, we encourage our readers to re-engage with the vision in preparation for a conversation to mark the fifth anniversary of the Maternity Transformation Programme.

Published in February 2016 as the culmination of the National Maternity Review report,[2] the Better Births vision underpins the ongoing Maternity Transformation Programme in England alongside 28 specific recommendations.

Our vision for **maternity services across England** is for them
to become
safer,
more personalised,
kinder,
professional and
more family friendly;

where **every woman**
has access to
information to enable her to make decisions about her care;

and **where she and her baby**
can access
support that is centred around their individual needs and circumstances.

And for **all staff**
to be supported to
deliver care which is women centred,
working in high-performing teams,

in **organisations**

which are well led and

in **cultures**
which *promote*
innovation,
continuous learning, and
break down organisational and professional boundaries.

February 2021 marks the fifth anniversary of the Better Births report. This anniversary offers a useful opportunity, as a time to take stock and a time for us to reflect together both on what has been achieved since 2016 and on what remains undone. Over the next few months, AIMS will be asking you to join us in these reflections as the #BetterBirths5YearsOn conversation commences. Whether you are someone who is using or has recently used the maternity services, a supporter of service users, or someone who works in the maternity services, we'd encourage you to keep this "poem" close at hand over the next few weeks and months and to use it to reflect on the maternity services as you experience them. In what ways do your experiences align with this vision? In what ways do they diverge?

Please then follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to join the conversation, which we'll be launching in the New Year. We look forward to seeing you there! And if you can't wait to have your say, please feel free to email us now with your reflections, via betterbirthsfiveyearson@aims.org.uk.

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1 "Better Births Basics #1: The Better Births vision | AIMS." 1 August 2018, www.aims.org.uk/journal/item/better-births-vision (Accessed 23 October 2020).

2 "Better Births – NHS England." www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/national-maternity-review-report.pdf (Accessed 23 October 2020).