

# COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

## January 2017

### Maternity & Infant Health



On 31 January 2017, North Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) held a Community Conversation event to discuss maternity and infant health.

The event took place at Newcastle Children's Centre - 9 people attended to share their views and experiences.

Although the number of attendees was small, we had a mixture of pregnant Mums, parents with young children, providers of local support groups and health visitors.

This report contains a summary of the valuable feedback and makes recommendations which will be used to inform commissioning decisions about maternity and infant health services across northern Staffordshire.

The discussion topics at the conversation event focussed on the following areas:-

- Do you feel that the right options and information were made available to you to make choices about your birth plan? What could we learn from your experiences to change the way people make choices about maternity care?
- What could be done to improve the way women are supported to make choices about whether breast feeding is right for them? What are the barriers to breast feeding?
- What do you think are the barriers to stopping smoking during and after pregnancy? What could be done to help people to quit?
- What local services are you aware of for parents-to-be or new parents? How could we improve access to services to support people with postpartum depression?

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been formulated following the feedback received at the community conversation event:

<p><b>Do you feel that the right options and information were made available to you to make choices about your birth plan? What could we learn from your experiences to change the way people make choices about maternity care?</b></p>	<p>1. Ensure the right information about options, services and support is available and accessible at each stage of pregnancy; (key times include early on in pregnancy, during pregnancy and post-natally).</p>	<p>2. Make sure the option to develop a birth plan is available to <u>all</u> mums-to-be early on in pregnancy; ensuring they have the support and information to develop their birth plan with the understanding that it needs to be flexible and may need to change due to circumstances.</p>
<p><b>What could be done to improve the way women are supported to make choices about whether breast feeding is right for them? What are the barriers to breast feeding?</b></p>	<p>3. Provide mums with the range of information about breast-feeding <u>and</u> bottle feeding to enable them to make an informed choice about whether to breast feed or not, based upon their individual circumstances and needs.</p>	<p>4. Provide mums with access to both professional and peer support whether they decide to breast or bottle feed; ensuring mums are made to feel comfortable to choose and do what is right for them.</p>
<p><b>What do you think are the barriers to stopping smoking during and after pregnancy? What could be done to help people to quit?</b></p>	<p>5. Ensure all relevant information about the impact and risks of smoking during pregnancy and after birth is available to pregnant mums to enable them to make an informed decision about smoking/not smoking. This will include the implications of passive smoking by family and friends.</p>	<p>6. Promote a non-smoking environment on hospital grounds (especially outside the maternity unit) and at other health buildings – targeting staff, patients and visitors.</p> <p>7. Signposting mums/mums-to-be who want to give up smoking to local support opportunities.</p>
<p><b>What local services are you aware of for parents-to-be or new parents? How could we improve access to services to support people with postpartum depression?</b></p>	<p>8. Review the range of information on local services currently available.</p> <p>9. Review current practices by healthcare professionals for identifying whether mums or dads may require help and support for their mental health following the birth of their child.</p>	<p>10. Encourage mums and dads to be aware of their mental health (as well as their physical health and the health of their baby); support parents to be confident to ask for help as early as possible if they have any concerns.</p>