

# Annual report 2020-21



KERNOW

Maternity Voices

Working in partnership to improve maternity services

**healthwatch**



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# Message from our Chair –



This year has been unprecedented and of course a lot of this report will involve our COVID-19 response, but it is important for us to acknowledge that while COVID-19 has had a huge impact, maternity and neonatal services were already in the middle of massive transformation and high levels of scrutiny. The main work of the Local Maternity and Neonatal System was stood down during the height of the first wave but was reinstated during the Autumn and has continued to move its programme of work forward throughout the winter and second lockdown. We have adapted, and babies have continued to be born throughout. We must recognise the incredible amount of dedication and hard work that it has taken to ensure continued safe care for all people becoming pregnant and giving birth during this year.

## **Kernow MVP update:**

We started this year with Georgie Watson as our Chair and she chaired Kernow Maternity Voices Partnership (KMVP) through to the Autumn when she stepped away to focus on some exciting new opportunities. Georgie was responsible for the incredible support throughout the first lockdown and was a reassuring face to many on our weekly Facebook Live check-ins, ensuring the community could access accurate and up to date information. We are incredibly thankful for the two and a half years she dedicated to KMVP and the massive difference she made to maternity and neonatal services across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (IoS). When Georgie stepped away from chairing, I, as Vice-Chair was asked to fill her post. To do this during a pandemic, with little preparation and remote working was incredibly difficult and I am forever thankful for all the support I received to continue the good work that was already in place. My vision for the future is for us to ensure that KMVP is sustainable, effective and truly embedded within the system. The voices of those that use the services are incredibly powerful and KMVP are the champions of those voices, ensuring they are heard from ward to Board and are effective in influencing the design and implementation of services as well as providing transparency and quality surveillance throughout the system.

Nikki Burnett,  
Chair, Kernow Maternity Voices Partnership



Thank you to every hardworking member of staff within the NHS and local authority that has been there to support families and provide safe care throughout what has been a uncertain, anxious and continuously changing situation



# How engagement changed through 2020/21



## Engagement before COVID-19

### Walk the patch

Monthly attendance at Wheal Fortune and Wheal Rose. Speaking to in-patients and staff. Listening to experiences and highlighting immediate issues.



### Community groups

Regular attendance at groups and events in the community. Well Baby clinics, breastfeeding groups, peer support groups, and specific community centres such as Teyluva.

### Meetings

Face to face MVP meetings, community team meetings, being present in the hospital to speak to staff on the 'shop floor'.

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## Engagement during COVID-19

### Social media



Our reach on social media platforms exploded. Facebook Lives were extremely popular, sharing recorded videos from maternity staff, live Q&A's, sharing regular update posts and receiving feedback from users through social media. KMVP set up a closed group for information and questions specific to Cornwall and IoS, which enabled peer support and meant we could ensure that information being shared was accurate and relevant for our area, in light of the huge disparity of information across the country.



### Online focus groups

We were able to hold topic specific online focus groups through Microsoft Teams which have included personalised care planning, health visitor experience and theatre birth experience.



### Surveys

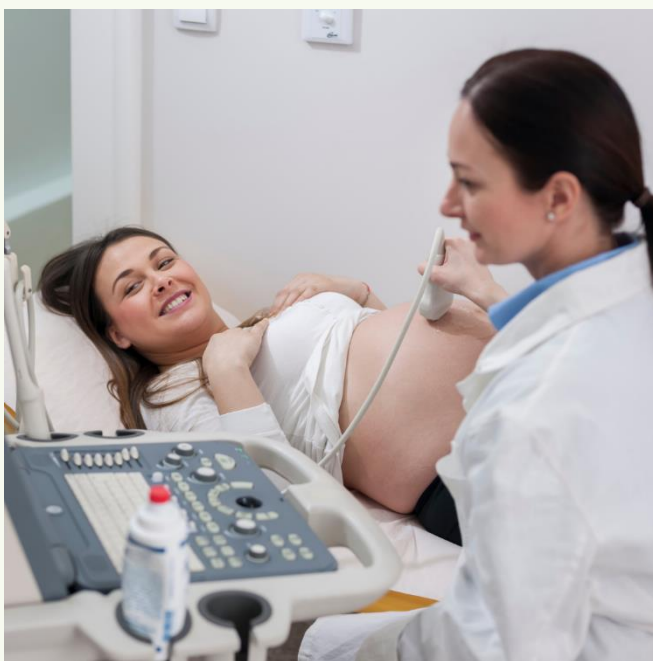
Surveys hosted online and shared through social media and email have given us the opportunity to look at general feedback and specific topics such as electronic patient health records (ePHR).

In August 2021, we launched an updated version of the Friends and Family test in partnership with the Patient Experience team at Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust (RCHT).

## Experiences during COVID-19

"My partner has hated not being at these 2 scans. He was lucky enough to be at our 12 week one because it was the week before lockdown. We had a miscarriage 2 days before Christmas and he knew how anxious I was over the big bleed at 15 weeks and he was gutted he couldn't be there to hold my hand when I didn't know if baby was OK or not. He was also so worried himself. After I came out of the 20 week one in a state he said "I hate not being there because I can ask the questions and reassure you and I cant do that and feel useless". We are now going for a private scan on Saturday to check that everything is ok and so he can see her again and we can both have the reassurance."

"My wife was induced and was so anxious about being alone and me missing the birth she made me promise to stay nearby. I spent 18 hours in the car park, sleeping in my car so she knew I was close by. She was left pretty much on her own the entire time and felt totally abandoned, even the phone signal was bad. Lucky I stayed as she was only moved at the last minute and if I was at home an hour away I never would have made it. If we had known what it would be like we never would have agreed to the induction"





# Highlights 2020/21

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## Local Maternity and Neonatal System (LMNS) redeployment

The LMNS was stood down when the pandemic hit. This meant the staff were redeployed to roles in response to COVID-19 and project work, deadlines and reporting were all paused. This included a lot of the work that KMVP were involved in and subsequently meant that KMVP resources were prioritised in other areas such as communication and information.

## Facebook community check-ins

In March 2020 KMVP launched a weekly community check-in, live on Facebook on Friday evenings. This enabled service users to ensure they had up to date information about restrictions and were offered signposting as well as reassurance at a time when information and support were difficult to access, and the situation was changing rapidly. The average reach of these 'lives' was 500-2500 viewers.



## Maternity Natters

Maternity Natters started as a monthly Facebook Live from May 2020, run by members of staff including midwives, obstetricians and maternity support workers. Each session had a different topic and invited specialist staff to answer questions from the public. The sessions reached anywhere between 1000-3000 people. It's now developed into a digital online offer of antenatal education sessions run by each community midwifery team to support in sharing information and building relationships with midwives.

### Contact us to get the information you need



If you have a query about a health or social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Kernow Maternity Voices and Healthwatch Cornwall are here for you.

**Website:** [www.healthwatchcornwall.co.uk/maternity-voices-partnership](http://www.healthwatchcornwall.co.uk/maternity-voices-partnership)

**Telephone:** 01872 273501

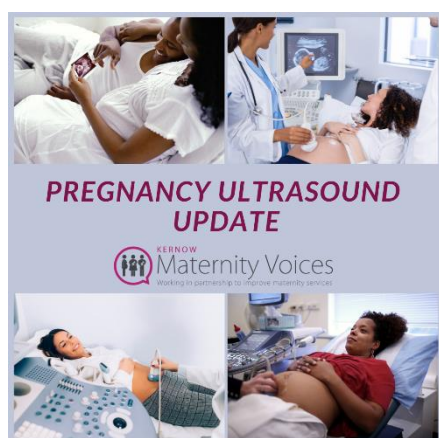
**Email:** [info@kernowmvp.org.uk](mailto:info@kernowmvp.org.uk) or [enquiries@healthwatchcornwall.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchcornwall.co.uk)





## 15 steps report

In January 2021 we published our long awaited '15 Steps for Maternity' report. The report followed the 15 Steps Quality Improvement (QI) framework and we visited all the maternity and neonatal areas in Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust with a group of service users. The report made 13 recommendations for change which have been brought together into an action plan, overseen by the Maternity Leadership Team.



## Ultrasound feedback

Women and pregnant people were having to attend all their antenatal scans alone, which meant that fathers and partners were not able to be part of this experience. When scans picked up unexpected news there was nobody there to support the woman through that conversation. KMVP carried out engagement through social media and produced an article highlighting the feedback which was shared with the leadership team and informed a co-designed pathway to support involvement of partners.



## ePHR evaluation

In March 2021 KMVP created and hosted an evaluation survey to assess how well-used the maternity ePHR system was, and how service users found it. The digital platform is the home of much of the patient information as well as maternity records.

The outputs were presented in a report that identified areas which needed work, and informed an action plan to improve.

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## Communications and support

KMVP's focus during 2020/21 was on compassionate communications and ongoing support for both the service and the users. This continued to be difficult with the limitations of lockdown, and the reliance on social media meant there was a portion of the community we were unable to engage with. A lot of our communications were focused on up to date information about services, restrictions and signposting.



## Perinatal quality and safety surveillance

In December 2020 NHS England launched the revised 'Perinatal Quality and Safety Surveillance Framework' which signified a change in the way local maternity systems functioned, and the role they played. This has meant the MVP has had to broaden the remit of our work, and during the first quarter of 2021 we started to look at how we could increase our capacity and strengthen the MVP team. This new area of work includes involvement in maternity governance, safety champions work and having an overview of safety at the Trust. The MVP acts as a critical friend, offers positive challenge and has a system wide view of the ever changing safety landscape to highlight any concerns early, in partnership with the Non-Executive Director and LMNS partners.



## Engagement and involvement

Being restricted to online involvement and engagement continued to be challenging. We ran online surveys and supported involvement by service users at some online focus groups looking at the impact of COVID-19 on services. During the first quarter of 2021 we supported volunteers to engage online and feedback on various pieces of work such as virtual reality (VR) tour scripts and patient information leaflets.



Find out more about us and the work we do

**Website:** [www.healthwatchcornwall.co.uk/maternity-voices-partnership](http://www.healthwatchcornwall.co.uk/maternity-voices-partnership)

**Twitter:** [@KernowMVP](https://twitter.com/KernowMVP)

**Facebook:** [@KernowMVP](https://www.facebook.com/KernowMVP)

**EXPECTED ANTENATAL APPOINTMENTS- CORNWALL & IOS**

8-10 weeks - Telephone appointment  
12 weeks- Dating scan  
16 weeks- Midwife appointment  
20 weeks- Anomaly Scan  
25 weeks- Midwife appointment (1st baby)  
28 weeks- Midwife appointment  
32 weeks- Midwife appointment  
36 weeks- Midwife appointment  
38 Weeks- Midwife appointment  
40 weeks- Midwife appointment (1st baby)  
41 weeks- Midwife appointment

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 **NHS**  
Royal Cornwall Hospitals  
NHS Trust



**Please let us know if you have any of the following before your appointment**

- New continuous cough**
- High temperature**
- Change in sense of taste or smell**

If you have recently tested positive for COVID19 or the appointment falls during an isolation period, please call your community midwife beforehand so we can make appropriate arrangements.

This is to allow for individual risk assessments to ensure all urgent and important care is provided in a safe way. Disclosing symptoms will not impact your ability to access safe, personal and kind care.

**Cornwall 24 hour Maternity Triage line**

**01872 258000**

Please call this number with any maternity related questions or if you are in need of advice. The line is staffed by midwives 24 hours a day.

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**What to pack- Labour bag for birthing person**

- Comfortable pants
- Sanitary pads
- Breast pads
- Flannel
- Leggings
- T-Shirt, vest tops
- Charger
- Hair bands
- Toothbrush and paste
- Water bottle with straw
- Headphones
- Playlist on a device
- Flip flops or slippers
- Snacks
- Fluffy socks
- Scarf, shawl or blanket

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Examples of some of the information and communications that were designed and created by KMVP during COVID-19



# Social media

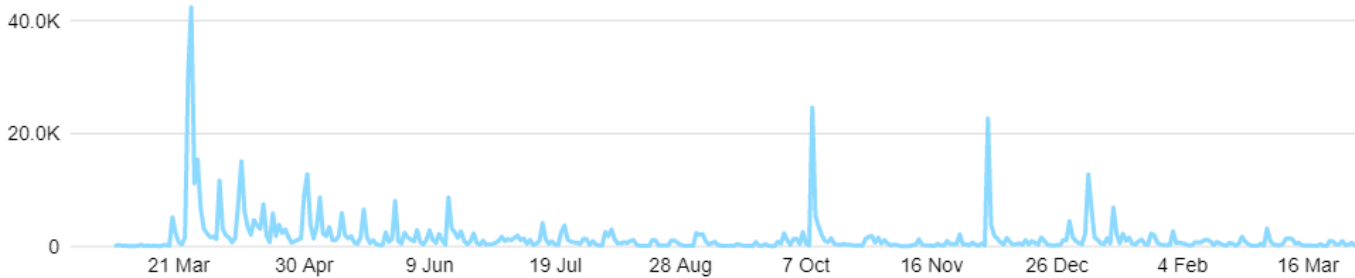
**Followers:** Our Facebook following grew from 300 at the start of March 2020 to 2600 in March 2021

**Reach**

From March 2020 to March 2021 our KMVP Facebook page reached 178,581 people. The best performing post, about the 24 hour maternity triage line, had a reach of 69,000 people!

Results

Facebook Page reach  
178,581 ↑ 1.1K%



# Finances

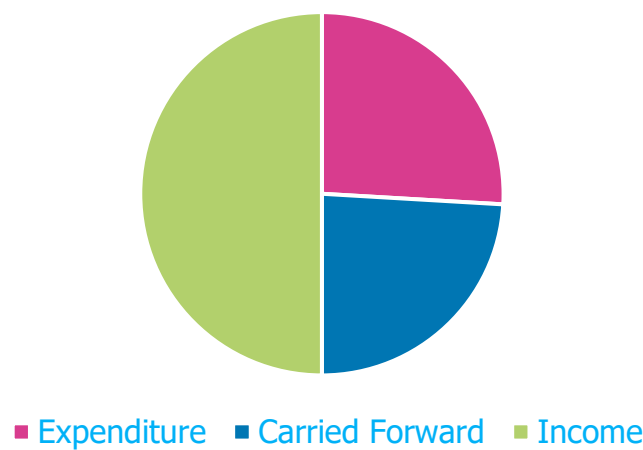
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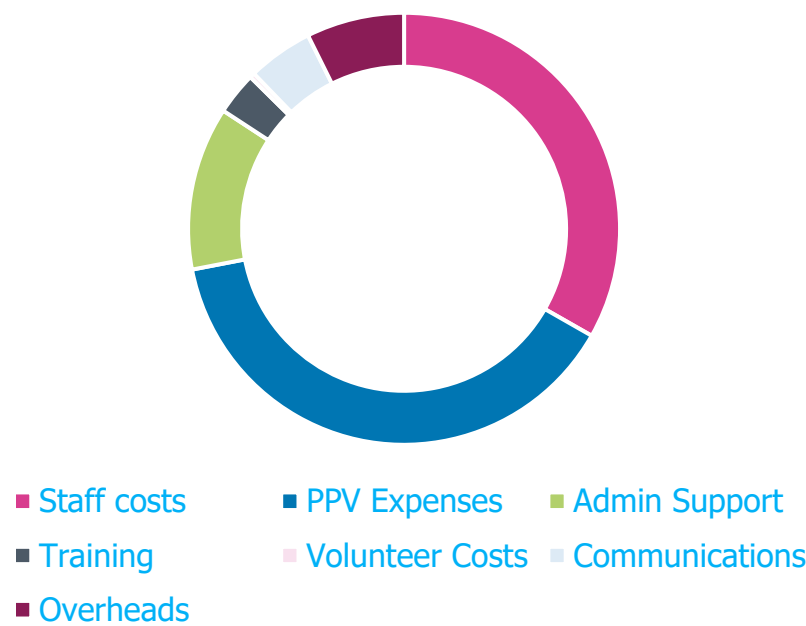
We are funded by Kernow Local Maternity and Neonatal System.

In 2020-21 we spent £40,864. Due to the reduced activity during this financial year, we carried forward £37,931 to 2021-22.

Budget 2020-21



Expenditure 2020-21





# Our plans for next year

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### Priorities for the next year:

- **Kernow MVP expansion for sustainability and resilience**
- **Equity and equality strategy**
- **Ockenden report – Evidence review and submission**
- **Community engagement – Return to the community**
- **Continuity of carer – Plan for full scale rollout**
- **Perinatal Pelvic Health early implementer project**
- **Personalised care plans**



#### Share your views with us

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# Thank you

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**Thank you to everyone that is helping us put people at the heart of maternity and neonatal services, including:**

- Members of the public who shared their views and experience with us
- All of our amazing staff and volunteers
- The voluntary organisations that have contributed to our work
- The NHS teams that embrace our input to co-create great services





# Contact us

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6 Walsingham Place,  
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