



SOUTHERN WEST MIDLANDS NEWBORN NETWORK

Hereford, Worcester, Birmingham, Sandwell & Solihull

ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009



NHS NETWORKS NETWORK OF THE YEAR 2007

This is the third Annual Report of the Southern West Midlands Newborn Network (SWMNN). The aim of this report is to demonstrate the achievements in 2008-2009 on behalf of our constituent organisations, individual clinical staff and everyone involved with maternity and newborn care.

The work of the Network has continued to strive toward improving care for the babies within the Southern West Midlands. In our Business Plan, we set some important challenges for 2008-2009 which were inline with the Department of Health Audit Report published in December 2007, and you will see from the report that the Network has made some excellent progress.

The Network parents continue to have a voice. Jo Bussey, with assistance from Andrea Goan, continues to have parents meetings. These groups will continue to be held on a Saturday morning once a month and we use this forum to get views from several parents with different experiences on different units. The aim is to have a second group in the south of the Network.

Vicki Bailey and Andrea also attended a National Parents Conference in London on user involvement in Networks, at which Vicki was an invited speaker. I would like to say a personal thank you to all of the parents who work with us to assist the Network in supporting parents and ensuring the Network stays focused on the real issues around care.

The work of the SWMNN parent reps was also recently acknowledged by Zoë Chivers, Innovations Project Officer at BLISS, who says:

“At SWMNN they have trust in their parents and value the work they do. Parent reps have a high level of input which has come through the dedication of the entire Network team. They have formed relationships beyond the remit of the role, giving parents more empowerment to their voice. It’s great to see that these partnerships can be achieved in neonatal services.”

As a Network, our aim is to improve Neonatal Care. There has been a reduction in the Perinatal Mortality rate in the SWMNN, but the rate remains high. We can and will do better, forging good working partnerships with each other, maternity service providers and most importantly, our parents.

The Network in April 2009 launched the Clevermed Neonatal data collection system (Badger). Prior to the launch, the system was piloted at Heart of England Foundation Trust on behalf of the Network. There was an overwhelming demand from the clinical teams around the Network to move to this system which is being used nationally. We look forward to improvement in data collection and an opportunity to benchmark care nationally.

The Transport Team is now fully established and in July two brand new ambulances with drivers will be operational for the sole use of the Transport Team. This is a great achievement which will continue to ensure that babies are now being moved appropriately, ensuring that babies receive appropriate care in the right place at the right time. The Transport Team will then meet all the standards being set by the Department of Health.

This year has also seen the appointment to two new Network posts; Vishna Rasiah as Audit Lead, who has already successfully instigated the Badger system; and Alex Philpott, who has already successfully increased NLS training within the Network.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to Peter Thompson who has been our Lead Obstetrician since 2004 and is stepping down to concentrate on his busy role as Medical Director at Birmingham Woman’s Hospital. We welcome Bill Martin as the new Network Lead for Obstetrics. Also thanks to Mick O’Donnell who has been our Lead Commissioner since 2005. He has worked very closely with the Network and has moved to a new post at Worcestershire PCT. Both will be missed and their contribution has been invaluable to the continuing success of the Network. We welcome Melody Bridges to the Commissioning team.

To everyone who is involved, thank you for your contribution and your continued support.



Robert Bacon,
Chief Executive Sandwell PCT and
Chair of SWMNN Board.

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Communication and Stakeholder Engagement

The aim of the Network is to engage all stakeholders to ensure we work together in the best interests of the babies. Good communication is central to achieving this, and it is a two-way process. The various Network meetings are a forum for communication and work well, with good representation from all units across the Network. The Network covers a wide area geographically – covering Birmingham, Herefordshire and Worcestershire, and it is only by the engagement of stakeholders across the Network that we are able to achieve successful communication across such a wide area.

The Network team also believe it is important to have active involvement with the units it represents. Members of the team visit all units as often as possible and are members of project groups within several units. The Network is a focus for communication and sharing of good practice between the units within the Network and beyond. The Network office provides a central base for receiving and distributing information, and is always happy to help with any queries. Contact details and further information about the Network office can be found on page 25

We were pleased to receive the following comments from Mick O’Donnell when he recently left his post as Commissioner with the Specialist Services Agency, which seem to encompass what we seek to achieve within our communication strategy:

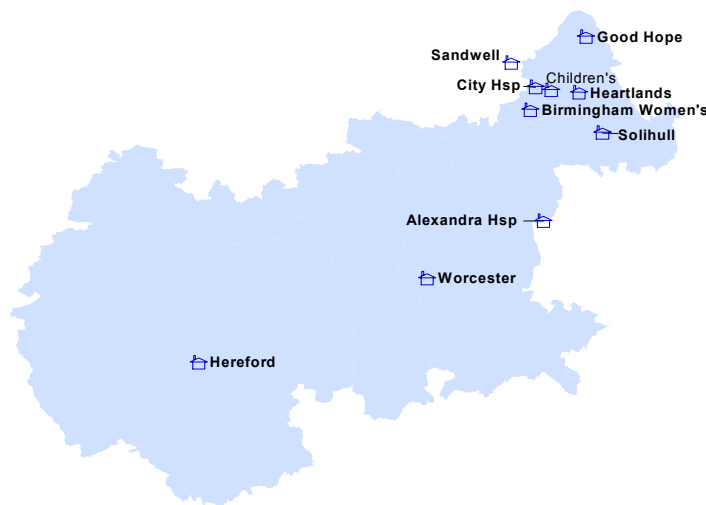
“I had very happy times working within specialised services and always found the contact with the services the most interesting and rewarding part of the job. Within that it was particularly good working with the Newborn Networks, because the Trusts and Clinicians were working together and there were already realistic proposals in place about how to improve services, which just needed commissioner buy in and agreement to fund. When you step back and think about it the change in neonatal service provision that the Network has delivered since its first meeting is hugely significant and wide ranging (designation, additional staff, dedicated transport service, joint audit and protocols, training programmes, neonatal surgery etc). I doubt if many other services can say they have made such wide ranging improvements particularly across a wide number of Trusts, and that is a great tribute to the Network. It was always a pleasure to be part of the Network and I will miss the involvement”.

INTRODUCTION

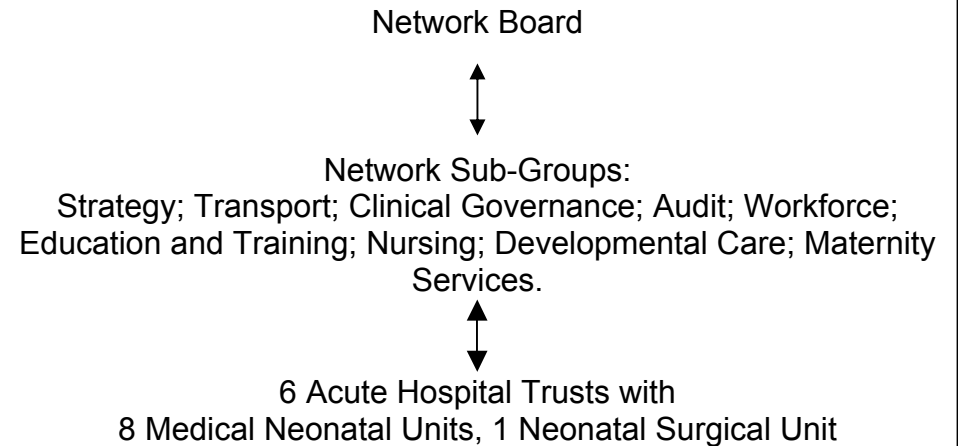
The Southern West Midlands Newborn Network (SWMNN) continues to work to ensure that mothers and babies are cared for as close to home as possible, and that the smallest and sickest babies are cared for in recognised specialist care centres.

The development of the Newborn Transport Service has ensured that the care pathways for all babies have improved. The development of clear care pathways, with signed agreement to the Network designation, has had a significant impact and an increase in occupancy rate in the two level 3 units within the Network. The units in the Network are working together to provide step-down care and freeing up of level 3 cots.

The parent involvement in the Network continues to be of great benefit. The parents, under the direction of Jo Bussey, recently held a successful parents day which was well attended, with parents coming from as far as Bolton. The parents continue to have their say in all changes to neonatal services.



Organisational Structure



Solihull Care Trust hosts the Network, which is chaired by Robert Bacon, Chief Executive of Sandwell Primary Care Trust. The Network Board is responsible for leading the Network and is made up of the Network Lead Clinician; Network Manager/Lead Nurse; a Lead Clinician and Nurse/Manager from each of the Acute Trusts; Chairs of the Network Sub-Groups; parent representation; commissioning representation; a Public Health Lead; ambulance services and invited speakers.

The SWMNN continues to impact on the service provided for neonatal care and has made significant progress since it was established, achieving the goals set in the first annual report in 2006/07.

The Network website is a valuable resource, providing up to date information on Network activities for professionals, parents and the public. <http://www.newbornnetworks.org.uk/southern/>

SOUTHERN WEST MIDLANDS NEWBORN NETWORK ACTIVITY/WORKLOAD

Unit activity/workload data 1 April 2007-31 March 2008

Between 1 April 2007 and 31st March 2008 the Units within the Network admitted 2,878 babies requiring 4,365 intensive care days, 4,720 high dependency days, 24,063 special care days

The split of activity in each Unit is demonstrated in the table below: information is not available from the Heart of England (Heartlands and Solihull Sites) for this period of time.

Unit	Designation of unit	No: of Births 2006/07	No: of Births 2007/08	Admissions to NNU	Multiple Episode Admissions	Intensive care days	High Dependency Care	Special Care Days
Birmingham Woman's Hospital	Level 3	6,951	7338	859	169	2147	1681	6453
Heart of England	Level 3	5027	5047					
City Hospital	Level 2	3413	3550	402	102	1377	1154	3810
Worcester Acute	Level 2	3818	3900	491	161	470	850	3942
Good Hope	Level 1	3328	3561	392	123	170	356	3557
Hereford	Level 1	1867	1833	214	46	136	294	2562
Sandwell	Level 1	2540	2605	336	114	35	346	2543
Redditch	Level 1	1832	1800	184	105	30	39	1196
Solihull	No neonatal unit	Not available	2581	0	0	0	0	0
Total		31,018	32,215	2,878	820	4,365	4,720	24,063

Source: West Midlands Neonatal Register 2nd Report – April 2007-April 2008- and each of the units within SWMNN

Heartlands (Information not available for 07/08)

The Network changed to Badger-Net from the 1st April 2009 and will expect quarterly reports on activity and these reports will be discussed at the Network Board. The aim is to ensure that babies receive appropriate care within the Network.

KEY MILESTONES AND ACHIEVEMENTS 2008 – 2009

➤ **Transport Team**

The two Networks – Shropshire, Staffordshire and the Black Country Newborn Network (SSBCNN), and the Southern West Midlands Newborn Network (SWMNN) - in partnership with Birmingham Women's Hospital and Specialist Commissioning Services, have completed a tendering process and secured a contract with Patient First. This means that from July 2009 the team will have two ambulances and drivers on site, only available to the transport team. This will provide a quicker, smarter service.

➤ **Active parent involvement in all aspects of the Network.**

- Parent groups
- Local and National Conferences
- Talk on Network study days
- The Network is funding one of our parents to undertake a counselling course
- Phone call advice for new parents
- Working closely with BLISS
- Organised and ran the West Midlands BLISS family support day

➤ **Appointed**

- Network Consultant Education post.
- Network Consultant Audit post.
- Re-appointed into Lead Obstetrician post.

➤ **Partnership working with Worcester University which has resulted in the development of a pre-registration neonatal nursing course.**

- One nurse currently on first course
- Five more Nurses to enrol from September 2009

- **Worked with neighbouring Networks to ensure the continuation of ANNP training in the West Midlands, of which the second intake starts September 2009.**
- **Working with West Midlands Specialist Services Agency (WMSSA) and neighbouring Networks to produce care pathways for neonatal surgery for the West Midlands.**
- **Inclusion of all Units in Network processes, with strengthening cross-Network links and tri-Network study days, stakeholder's events and conferences.**
- **The majority of the original targets in the Network Strategy document have been met.**
- **Held third Stakeholders day on 16th May 2008.**
- **Second Quad Network event/Network training day held in January 2009.**
- **Increased the number of Newborn Life Support trained staff.**
- **Network induction program for new and established staff continues.**
- **Core management skills training days for all Band 7 Nurses within the Network.**
- **Network has contributed actively to the Department of Health Neonatal Taskforce.**
- **Network staff have been invited to speak at national conferences.**

FINANCIAL REPORT 2008/2009

The West Midlands Specialist Commissioning Team (WMSCT) holds the nationally allocated neonatal funding for the Newborn Networks within the West Midlands. The SWMNN was allocated £982,000.

£139,000 was allocated to Solihull Care Trust, host of the Network infrastructure. This money goes towards salaries for the Network Manager/Lead Nurse, Clinical Leads, Lead Obstetrician, and Network administrator. We have in this financial year moved the Education Lead and Development Lead post into the Network team at Solihull Care Trust, increasing the infrastructure cost to £182,000.

Southern West Midlands Newborn Network's commitments on the 2008/2009 allocated monies

National Funding	£890,000
Transport Funding	£108,000
ENB Funding	£92,000
2007/2008 recurrent funding	£430,000
2008/2009 recurrent funding	£379,500
Total	£1,899,500



Recurrent

Network Infrastructure	£182,000 paid on invoice
HOE 2 ANNP's	£80,000 paid within contract
HOE Consultant x2	£215,000 paid within contract
HOE 5.75 nurses	£184,000 paid within contract
HOE 5.75 nurses PYE (6 months)	£94,875 paid within contract
HOE Development Care Co-Coordinator	£18,000 paid within contract
City Hospital Consultant	£105,000 paid within contract
Hereford 2 band 5 nurses	£75,000 paid on invoice
BWH Consultant	£110,000 paid within contract
BWH 3 band 6 nurses	£98,597 paid within contract
SWB Breastfeeding advisor	£14,000 paid within contract
SWB 5.75 Nurses PYE (2 months)	£31,625 paid within contract
Network Transport Consultant	£105,000 paid within contract-Hosted by BWH
Network Transport Nurse Consultant	£54,000 paid within contract-Hosted by BWH
Network Transport ANNPs	£214,000 paid within contract-Hosted by BWH
Network Transport nurse	£32,000 paid within contract-Hosted by BWH
Network Respiratory Physiotherapist	£28,644 paid on invoice

Total **£1,641,741**

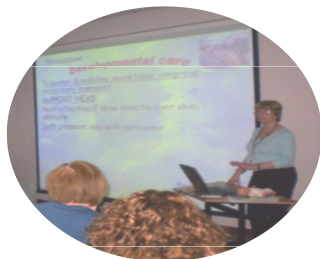
Total Expenditure **£1,896,110**

Non-Recurrent

BWH Fetal Fibronecting testing	£4,000
BWH ECHO equipment	£2,761
BWH Cold lighting replacement	£1,173
BWH support for breast milk bank	£4,847
BWH discharge planning nurse	£15,561
HOE development of breastfeeding room	£3,000
HOE Neonatal Net	£8,750
City Upgrade to parent's accommodation	£20,000
City Equipment	£20,000
Hereford SLE	£4,000
Hereford Band 6 nurse	£35,000
Network Blenders	£44,892
Network Badger system	£90,385

Total **£254,369**

Specialist Lead Roles – Working Together to Improve Practice



Nicky Hawkes,
Respiratory
Physiotherapy Lead



Katie Thompson,
Developmental Care
Lead



SWMNN Respiratory Physiotherapy Lead 2008-2009

I am really enjoying my post and the teamwork within this Network. I am continuing to teach theoretical knowledge and ensuring a high standard of skills in the use of respiratory physiotherapy in the management of the babies. This has included the introduction of vinyl palm cups for percussion which have been enthusiastically received. I have had the opportunity to teach the wider multi-disciplinary team, and it has been very good to see techniques being used more selectively and therefore effectively.

This post dovetails closely with Katie Thompson, as excellent standards of developmental care are emphasised throughout all interventions.

The Network respiratory physiotherapy guidelines will be released subject to approval in May. Following this, practice will be audited.

It has been very encouraging that the Birmingham Children's PICU/ward multidisciplinary group which I facilitate has grown in numbers. This has meant that new innovations have been implemented and information shared.

During the coming year I intend to continue advancing practice and raising the profile of this unique post both regionally and nationally.

SWMNN Developmental Care Lead 2008-2009

Developmental Care is continuing to become an integral part of Neonatal Care, with the profile being raised nationally in the draft standards of the Neonatal Taskforce.

My role is to lead the Network Neonatal Units towards more developmentally appropriate practices. Education and training, advice, research and dissemination, all continue to be ways towards achieving our target of equitable Developmental Care provision.

The Developmental Care Sub-Group continues to be very well-attended by both nursing and therapy staff and as a group has worked on a Kangaroo Care Guideline. A launch is planned to coincide with Breastfeeding Awareness Week in May. An audit of staff assessment of change in both attitude and practice over the past year has shown a promising trend towards improved practice and understanding.



Achievements

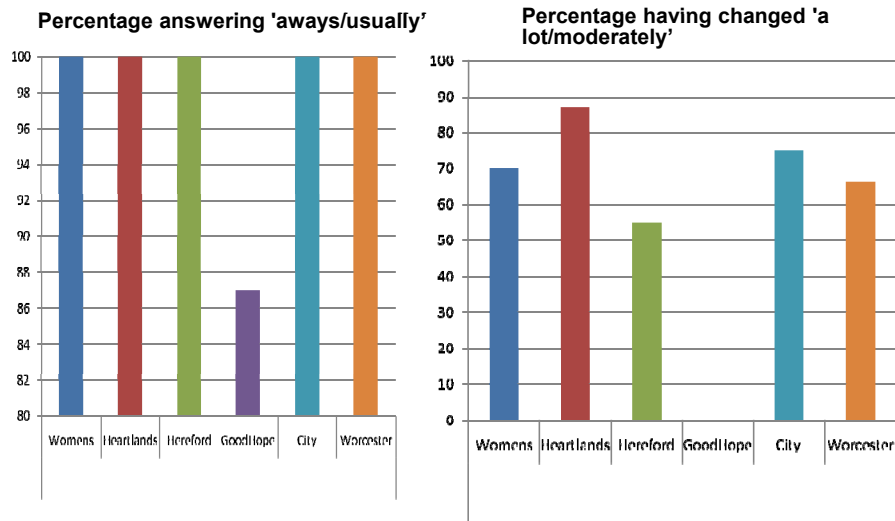
- Teaching:-** 3 Study days – "Making it Better for Babies and Families". Individual and joint teaching sessions to all grades of nursing staff. Sessions at regional SHO Study Days. Neonatal Pathway, BCU. PICU Foundation Course.
- Conferences:-** Attendance at key international and national conferences; Invited to give presentation at Quad Network Conference.
- Consultancy:-** Advice and introduction of new equipment, including neonatal percussors. Involvement in Unit design.
- Networking:-** Involvement in Neonatal Taskforce. Bliss Special Interest Group. Links with Specialist staff nationally.
- Guidelines:-** Kangaroo Care Guideline. Respiratory Physiotherapy Guideline (being submitted for Board approval in May 2009).

Developmental Care Sub-Group

Sample results from the Audit to identify staff views of changes in attitude and practice

A sample of ten staff per Unit were asked to answer questions on change in attitude and practice in the last year

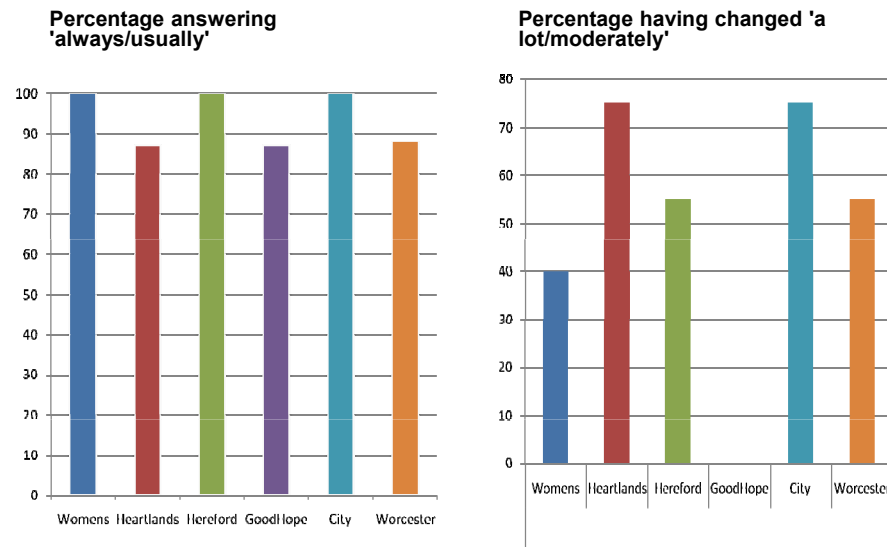
Q1 Do I support a quiet environment?



In general there appears to have been a pleasing trend towards change in both practice and attitude in the last year.

Audit from :-Robison LD 2003 *Evaluating Your Practice According to Four Standards of Developmental Care*

Q4 Do I explore every family's interest in skin-to-skin holding?



Strategy Implementation Group

Work for the next year

There are clearly many areas to consolidate and continue to improve. The main next steps are to ensure that any further developments in newborn service delivery are in partnership with maternity service providers. There has been more engagement and a partnership is now being developed between Maternity and Newborn service providers. The aim is to work together to implement the West Midlands Maternity and Newborn Care Pathway (the “Darzi report”), and to implement care pathways according to the Standards as set in Maternity Standards (June 2008), and based on “Safer Childbirth” (October 2007), but with choice guarantees of “Maternity Matters”. We are extremely fortunate in having Bill Martin step into Peter Thompson’s place as Obstetric Lead for the Newborn Network, and have full confidence in his guidance.

Maternity Matters

Sets out 4 National choice guarantees:

1. Choice of how to ACCESS maternity care – GP or midwife
2. Choice of type of antenatal care – Midwifery or Multidisciplinary team
3. Choice of place of birth: 3 options for place of birth:
 - Home
 - Midwifery-led unit (MLU),
 - Hospital (Standards all are described in detail in Safer Childbirth). Providers offering high quality services AND can meet local needs are encouraged to increase capacity. (p12) This is where the partnership with Newborn Networks comes in.

The overarching aim for reorganising services is to improve the quality of service, concentrating on safety and working towards better outcomes and satisfaction for all women and their babies. B1 p36

Safer Childbirth (October 2007)

Sets out minimum standards for the organisation and delivery of care in labour, following concerns raised by CEMACH, CESDI, CEMD and the Healthcare commission. The document very much acknowledges the importance of team working. There is recognition of the changes in experience of junior medical staff and the importance of consultants on the labour ward.

There has been a reduction in the Perinatal Mortality rate in the SWMNN, but the rate remains high. We can and will do better, forging good working partnerships with each other, maternity service providers and most importantly, our parents.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In September 2008 reconfiguration of the Workforce, Education and Training sub-group resulted in the development of a separate sub-group for Education and Training. The sub-group, led by Jackie Stretton and Alex Philpott, incorporates the Practice Educator's group.



Alex Philpott
Lead for Education

Alex's role

In September 2008 I joined the Network team as the medical lead for Education and Training. My aim is to coordinate education and training across all units in the Network and the West Midlands.

Jackie's role

In September 2008 I increased my hours, joining the Network team on a full time basis with half of my time dedicated to the WM Workforce Deanery Pre-registration Pilot project in the capacity of Project Manager. My Network contribution continues as the lead for Practice Education, contributing to the workforce development across the neonatal units.



Jackie Stretton
Lead Practice Educator

Achievements

- Pilot project Sept 08- pre-registration nursing neonatal pathway.
- 6 ANNP students are successfully progressing through the pathway.
- Change in Practice award – Amanda Dudley & Sarah Wellings (NANN annual conference, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA).
- Neonatal nurse induction (4 day programme).
- Coordination of Tri-network NLS course (financially supported by West Midlands Deanery).
- GIC course (City hospital - Deanery supported).
- Development of SWMNN NLS database.
- New courses:
 - “Making it better for babies”.
 - Funded management training for 22 Band 7 Nurses across the Network.
 - Funded “Chairing meetings” training for Network staff.
- Parent representative study day
- Transport team training day



Main Activities

- Consultation with all Units regarding educational and training needs.
- Support for Network study days.
- Careers advice.
- Academic tutorial support.
- Attendance at national and regional meetings.
- Ongoing development of Network Education Standards.

Research

Research activity continues across the Network. The Pulse-ox study (Birmingham Women's Hospital and collaborating centres) has finished recruiting. Recruitment into BOOST-2 continues, and a study of PCR in the diagnosis of early onset infection is ongoing (Birmingham Heartlands Hospital Research Fellow supported by SWMNN). The I2S2 Study is awaiting initiation at many Units.

Future Plans

- Recruitment onto pre-registration neonatal pathway.
- Co-ordination of SWMNN resuscitation courses, including NLS-GIC course, and collaboration with neighbouring Networks.
- Development of further Network study days.
- Recruitment to new ANNP programme (commencing September 2009).



Cheryl Lewis, ANNP, BWH and
Vicky Shaw, Physiotherapist, BWH
Teaching baby massage to parents



Harrogate
June 2008

NURSING/BENCHMARKING GROUP

- The Nursing group was formed to promote and establish good practices in the provision of nursing care in the SWMNN Neonatal Units.
- The aim of the group is to support and develop nursing by identifying areas that need to be developed.
- The group makes recommendations to the Board on priorities for nursing. Nursing staff are encouraged to talk about issues and share practice.
- The group is benchmarking breastfeeding, and producing guidelines, policies and parent information documentation with an aim to standardising practice within the Network Units.

Nursing Group Achievements:

- New breastfeeding chairs in place in each Unit.
- Continuing to work with Rhys Daniels Trust to provide parents accommodation within the Network.
- Encourages nursing staff to talk about issues and share practice.
- Established benchmarking group
 - Benchmarking group looking at discharge planning
 - Transitional Care
- Produced information leaflets on:
 - Donor Breast Milk
 - Use of dummies
 - Breastfeeding
 - Benefits of breast milk
 - Expressing your breast milk
 - Providing milk supplements for your breastfed baby



Mary Passant
SWMNN Manager/Lead Nurse
Chair, Nursing sub-group

NETWORK PHILOSOPHY

Within the Southern West Midlands Newborn Network we believe each baby is a unique individual as well as part of a family.

Our aim is to maintain a “needs led” service that promotes partnership for everyone involved in the care of the newborn.

High quality evidence-based care will be provided by appropriately trained health care professionals within a family centred environment.



CLINICAL GOVERNANCE SUB-GROUP

The Clinical Governance Sub-Group have spent another year busily working on Guidelines and Incident analysis.

The group, comprised of staff from each unit and chaired by Dr Phil Simmons, a Consultant based at Birmingham City Hospital, have met every six weeks in Solihull. Network parent representatives regularly participate in our meetings.

I would like to thank all group members for their hard work this year.



We are always keen to welcome new members so if you would like to get involved feel free to contact Phil for information phil.simmons@swbh.nhs.uk or simply come to a meeting – dates are on the Network website.

We look forward to meeting you !

Guidelines

The group aim to produce clinical guidelines for use across the Network, based upon the best available evidence and expert opinion.

The guidelines are designed to be internet based and incorporate links to the evidence and related information sources for staff and also parents.

Of note this year was the completion and approval of a clinical guideline concerning the treatment of extremely preterm infants in the first hour of life. Sometimes called ‘the golden hour,’ the treatment within the first hour of any emergency is extremely important and can have long lasting effects. We now hope that preterm babies will receive the same standard of early care in all our units.

Other guidelines developed this year cover aspects of Developmental Care, and the use of Sucrose for analgesia, as well as guidelines for Retinopathy and Hearing Screening.

We have also been working on joint guidelines with the Neonatal Surgeons at Birmingham Children’s Hospital. Guidelines concerning management of infants with Gastroschisis, Exomphalos and Tracheo-oesophageal fistula have been approved. More will follow ...

Clinical Incidents

We initiated a new system of Clinical Incident analysis and feedback this year, with the publication of Network ‘Learning Letters.’

The quarterly letters highlight learning points formulated during local unit meetings, during which the care of the sickest babies and those that have died are discussed.

The information shared is treated in confidence so neither individual patients nor the unit is identifiable.

We hope that all units within the Network will share this information, so that we can all learn lessons from each other.

Audit

A significant change for the group this year has been the appointment of Dr Vish Rasiah, as Network Audit Lead. Vish will now be able to dedicate more time to Network Audits, and help fulfil one of the initial Network Objectives.

We wish him every success in his new role.

Phil Simmons
Chair, Clinical Governance Sub-Group

Clinical Audit Sub-Group

It was a pleasure to be given the opportunity to lead the SWMNN from a clinical audit perspective. I took up the post in October 2008. The main aim of the group was to undertake regular clinical audit based on the standards set out by the Clinical Governance Subgroup.

It was very clear from the start that, in order to be able to audit practices within the Network, we needed a robust data collection system. The systems varied between the units in the Network. This was my main priority and challenge; to address the issue about data collection. It was also brought to my attention that as a Network we were not supplying regular data to the NNAP (apart from Heartlands who were already using the Badger System).

Following various demonstrations and a workshop by the Badger team, I am pleased to say that all the other neonatal units within SWMNN have now started using the Badger System as of the 1st of April 2009. More recently, I have also convinced Birmingham Children's Hospital to adopt this system for all neonatal surgical babies. This unifying system within SWMNN will allow for continuity and ease of transfer of neonatal patient data. This will also help with future data collection and analysis from a clinical audit perspective. We must be grateful to the commissioners for their financial support in setting up this service within the respective units.

Now that all the units in the SWMNN are using Badger, we will automatically be submitting data to NNAP. The commissioners have also provided an incentive of 0.5% of the individual neonatal budget if we continue to submit data on a regular basis. Once we are confident about our data quality, we can start auditing our practice in the coming months.

I have reviewed and presented the Hypothermia audit which was carried out in the past. It was clear that there was room for improvement as some units were doing better than others. We hope to share their good practices.

Proposed Audit projects for 2009

- First Hour Guidelines
- Re-audit Hypothermia
- Newborn Hearing Screening
- Transfers out of region
- Surgical transfers

Our clinical audit group is rather small at the moment having just been born and its members comprise of the respective staff from each unit in the Network. We encourage and welcome anybody interested in joining us, particularly if you have any ideas about areas we should audit. To get involved or for more information, please contact Teresa (teresa.meredith@solihull-ct.nhs.uk) or myself (vishna.rasiah@bwhct.nhs.uk).



Vishna Rasiah
Audit Lead, SWMNN

Workforce

We continue to be centrally involved with the Strategic Health Authority, Universities and the West Midlands Workforce Deanery in developing an appropriately trained workforce. The number of ANNPs recruited to training is increasing and ANNPs are now properly integrated within the workforce. The second Birmingham ANNP course will start in September 2009. Candidates have applied from all three Networks in the West Midlands. We have still to develop a more robust career structure, and some Trusts are still not fully signed up to providing employment for ANNPs to ensure EWTD compliance on junior doctors rota - but progress has been made. We need to increase the number of Neonatal Consultants on the level 3 units to ensure 24 hours on-site cover.

The number of nurses recruited to train as neonatal nurses is also increasing. The aim is for all neonatal units to be able to meet the new Department of Health nurse staffing: 1:1 care for an ITU baby, and 1:3 for a special care baby.

We had a very interactive meeting with the NHS Workforce leads on 30th April 2009 to share experiences and problem areas with managers and commissioners.

The Network will continue to look at ways to develop a robust workforce for the future, and to work with maternity services around the configuration of care needed to ensure we meet the standard set out in "Safer Childbirth (October 2007)."



Alison Bedford Russell
Workforce Lead

West Midlands Neonatal Transfer Service (NTS)

Demand for the West Midlands Neonatal Transfer Service has continued to grow over the past 12 months. Despite difficulties with ambulance provision and unoccupied vacancies, the NTS has continued to provide transfer service 24 hours a day 7 days a week for infants in the West Midlands area.

The Department of Health is in the process of developing national standards for neonatal transfers www.neonatal.org.uk/standardsquestionnaire which NTS is already well on the way to meeting.

Activities

2008/09 transfer requests averaged at 128 per month, a slight increase over the previous year (106). NTS performed 83% of transfer requests during this period. The busiest months during 2008/09 were November and December where requests exceeded 150 per month. (Fig 1)

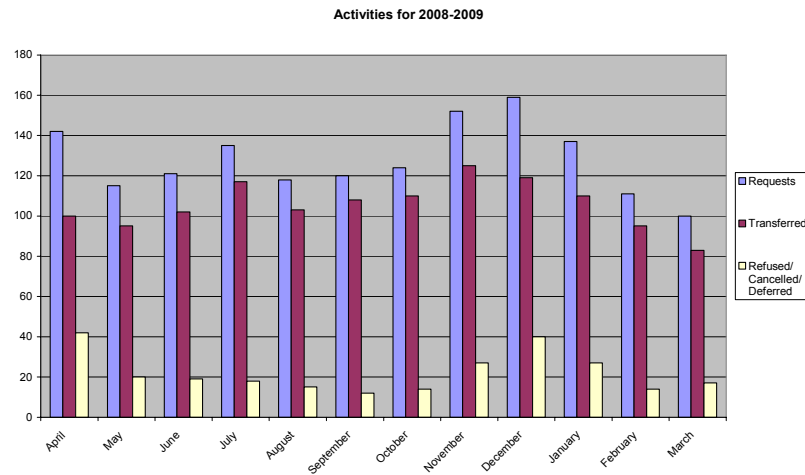


Figure 1

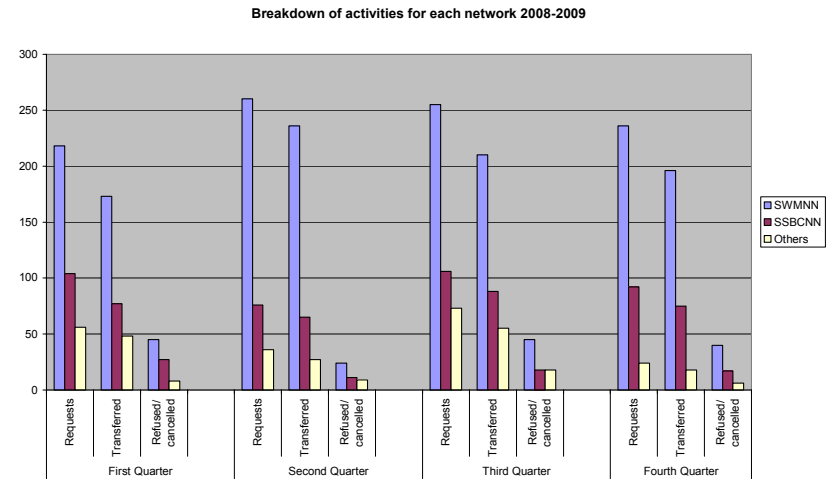


Figure 2

There were more requests and more transfers performed for the SWMNN (64%) than for the SSBCNN (24%)

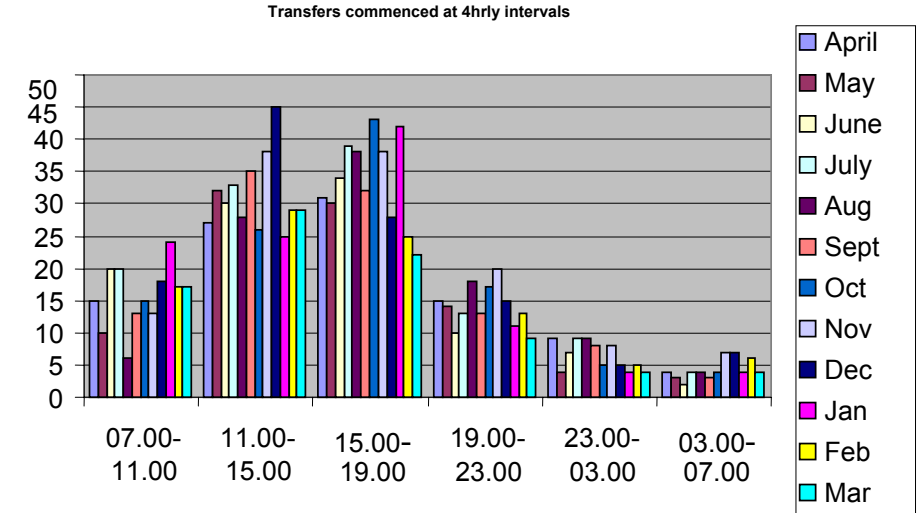


Figure 3

The busiest period for the NTS remains between 1100-1900. Most units are now booking back transfers in advance thus helping to increase the number of transfers between 0700-1100

Funding

The NTS received additional funding to operate a cot locator service from July 2008. All units within the West Midlands are telephoned twice daily to determine cot status; this information is then posted onto the website www.bwhct.nhs.uk/cotlocator. The service runs 0900-1700hrs Monday-Friday.

Commissioning for a dedicated ambulance service took place during 2008 and the successful company will be providing a service from 1st July 2009. This will significantly reduce response time and in turn provide a better service.

Staffing

The team currently consists of:

- 1 Nurse Consultant
- 1 Transport Fellow
- 3 Advanced Neonatal Nurse Practitioners
- 8 Nurses (7.3 WTE)
- 1 Cot Locator Clerk
- 1 Administrator

Two additional Nurses (1.6 WTE) have recently been appointed and will take up their posts in May 2009. An advertisement for the vacant ANNP will be posted in May 2009.

Education

A joint transport study day was hosted at Glenfield Hospital by the Central Newborn Network in March 2009 which proved to be a great success. The NTS will be holding a training day at the Birmingham Women's Hospital during autumn 2009.

Equipment

A new transport incubator was donated from charitable funds by local radio station Heart fm.



Staff have now received training on use of nitric oxide and this will be available for use from May 2009. 1 transport incubator has been configured to administer nitric oxide and a second will also be modified to provide a back up.

An order has been placed for an I-STAT machine which will be operational from June 2009.

Clinical Governance

A total of 76 incidents were reported during 2008/09, this equates to 6% of total transfers undertaken. No high risk incidents were reported, 14% were of significant risk, 49% were of moderate risk and 37% low risk. Incidents were broken down as follows:

NTS incidents	1
Temperature	10
Staff shortages	1
Clinical information	6
Clinical condition	15
Communication	17
Ambulance	12
Equipment	6
Beds cancelled	2
Personal accident	4

PARENT GROUP

It has been another productive and busy year for the parents involved with the SWMNN, and the associated BLISS Birmingham Family Group. We have increased our numbers to 5 and we are continually involved at all levels with the Network, attending Board and sub-group meetings, ensuring the parent's and overall family's perspective is always considered. Our parents have been very active over recent months, speaking at many events: training and induction talks for neonatal nurses, parent resuscitation training, breastfeeding and developmental care study days. Many thanks to Vicki Bailey, Jo Gill, Andrea Goan and Joe Weston.

The Network continues to invest in and utilise the parent representatives in the Network, in all of their work. Some of the projects that parents have inputted to this year have included:

- Attending transport team ambulance purchase tender meetings.
- Meeting with commissioners in London.
- Meeting with the Surgical Project Manager to begin links between BWH and BCH surgical services.
- Attendance on the Women's Council at Birmingham Women's Hospital.
- Attendance on BLISS Parental Advisory Panel.

The monthly BLISS Birmingham Family Group which is strongly supported by SWMNN continues, with new members joining all the time. We have a good spread in ages of the children now, from a few weeks to 3½. We are pleased that a number of Dads regularly come to the group and find it fun and beneficial. We run on a monthly basis on the Eastern/Central side of Birmingham in a SureStart Children's Centre. We are hoping for 2009 to set-up another weekly group on the south side of the city, covering the vicinity of Birmingham Women's Hospital. The bi-weekly group that was set-up last year has sadly had to stop running due to a lack of numbers and work commitments of the lady who ran it. The group have been fundraising by 'Invitation' discount books, raising over £600, organised by one of the group's parents, Tracey Britton. We hope to use these funds to help advertise and promote the group, as well as arranging some activities and trips for the children over the coming months.

On 14th March I spoke at a celebratory event in honour of the neonatal unit at Birmingham Women's Hospital, which undertakes the start of the project to re-build the neonatal unit. The service was held at St Phillips Cathedral in Birmingham and was to celebrate all of the good work the unit has done over its 30 years so far, as well as looking forward to the new unit. It was a touching service with several families attending.

The biggest event so far this year for the Parent Representatives and BLISS Birmingham Group was the Family Day, held on Saturday April 25th. The day involved a number of speakers giving advice and running Q&A sessions, a baby massage workshop and the opportunity to meet new people and children who have been through similar experiences. Several families came to the day, from as far a field as Bolton, and all commented on how useful and enjoyable they had found it. The smooth running of the day and its overall success would not have been possible without the tremendous support from the Network, particularly with all of the speakers donating their time free of charge. The day also offered parents the opportunity to find out about support locally, once they have left the unit, from members of the Family Group.

Projects that we are in the process of starting and will carry forward into 2009/2010 are:

- Parent Representative Input on the project team for the re-build of BWH neonatal unit.
- To raise awareness of the support available to parents by parents through advertising – in addition to our posters, flyers and BLISS web page, stickers with contact details will be stuck into the 'red book' of every child leaving a neonatal unit in the SWMNN.



Joanne Bussey – SWMNN Parent Representative

I have now been with the Network for some time and feel that we should be proud of what we do – even though we are one of the newest we seem to have got it right. Over the last year as a team we have been very busy since the stakeholder meeting.

The commissioning meeting we went to in July proved to be interesting, trying to explain designation and the need for it. Along with various other specialist services we tried to understand what it is that commissioning needs us to do to help make sure we spend the money in the right places. As a Network we have done well with our designation status and seem to be doing right time, right place.

As parents we like to attend the Board Meetings whenever we can as this is definitely an important part of the role. I feel it is important that we have an overview of the way the Board wants the service to run. Clinical input is absolutely essential but we need to keep our goal in sight which is, of course, the babies.

The big event for me in 2008 was the Parents and Professionals – Working together to improve Neonatal Services. It was held at Guys and St. Thomas' and was an amazing day. I spoke on behalf of the Network giving the parent perspective and why I am so passionate about what I do. Also speaking at the conference was Dr Andrew Gibson – a Research Fellow from the University of Warwick. He presented his paper – The Role and Impact of User Representation and Involvement in Neonatal Network Boards. At the Network we have been lucky enough that he has asked our opinion about how 'users' should be represented, and not just be that token tick in a box.

The connection between services should be seamless and hopefully that will be part of the remit between Women's and Children's Surgical Services. I have met with Jenny Turton, Project Manager, to try and get this stressful and confusing time as easily explained as possible. The need for both sites to be linked will be so important and hopefully adding the details that are important to parents will ease this time in the families' lives.

March 4th 2009 was the Neonatal Stakeholder Day in London. SWMNN is proud of its achievements (and we have the award to prove it) but going to this day made me realise that we are all trying to put babies first but are not always allowed to. With the Network being designated already we have taken a big step towards this goal but others have not yet. Meeting up with Bliss representatives and parent reps from up and down the country certainly gives a feeling that we are doing the right thing but just need to keep going until it is right.

I was honoured to be asked to speak at one of the Network induction days – trying to get across to these new nurses that they are what will make the difference at ground level. I am passionate about how our newborns are looked after and hope that my story will have made some difference to how they view their patient and more importantly the family, as they are all part of being the 'user'.

I feel this has been a successful year for us in the Network and we hope that we are able to make more differences in 2009/2010. If we are able to get it right place, right time we are getting there.



Vicki Bailey - SWMNN Parent Rep

We are now in our second year as Parent Reps with SWMNN and enjoying the role, having the opportunity to represent parents' views to stakeholders in neonatal services. Tony and I have been involved with the Bliss Birmingham Family group for a number of years. The Bliss monthly group has gone from strength to strength and we are proud to be a part of the group which prides itself in supporting families with sick and premature children. We have kept close links with Heartlands Neonatal Unit, the unit who cared for our daughter, and nursing staff from the unit will often voluntarily attend the Bliss Support groups to introduce families to the support that we offer.

Our recent Bliss Family Day was a huge success with many families from near and far benefiting from the presentations and being able to ask questions and advice from our consultants, breast feeding specialist and developmental care experts from within the Network.

Currently we are involved with a new pilot project with Bliss working with BACP accredited counsellors to support parents of sick and premature babies, which we are sure would be a great benefit to many parents who have experienced life on a neonatal unit.

Over the last two years we have worked closely with Gill Warwood in attending training sessions for nursing staff, aimed at teaching parents basic life support techniques for when they leave the neonatal units. From my own experience with having a premature baby on a neonatal unit it gladdens me to know this is now carried out as standard on all our units in the Network. I have attended a Public and Patient Specialised Commissioning Team Workshop (West Midlands) to look at ways of improving services locally, and improving communication channels and utilising existing groups such as the Bliss Birmingham Family Group and the SWMNN. We have now developed links with the new Commissioning Manager for Specialised Children's Services, Melody Bridges, who recently attended the Bliss Family Day, and we are pleased to be able to host a visit from Melody to our next group to meet with parents to find out about their personal experiences of neonatal care and any suggestions for ways forward.

The Parent and Professional Working Together to improve Neonatal Service Day held at St Guys and St.Thomas' highlighted the importance of involving parents, and recognised the excellent work that goes on in the SWMNN Network and other Networks throughout the country. We hope to build upon the success of the group and to continue to advocate on behalf of service users in our role as Parents Representatives for the SWMNN during 2009/2010.

Andrea Goan – SWMNN Parent Representative
Tony McPhillips – SWMNN Parent Representative



PLANS FOR THE NETWORK OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

Priorities for the Network taken from the Business/Operational plan 2008/009 which has been produced in collaboration with all the stakeholders are as follows:

- To ensure that 95% of babies are cared for *within* the Network in a neonatal unit appropriately resourced to care for that baby.
- Ensure Capacity for our population is appropriate.
- Support the development of tertiary units and Birmingham Women's and Heart of England Foundation Trusts, ensuring they are working towards meeting the minimum standards agreed by the SWMNN, enabling care of the smallest and sickest infants to be centralized on these two level 3 units.
- To increase and develop the workforce to provide a quality outcome for the neonates and family.
- To provide safe transfer of mothers and babies when required.
- To promote, develop and facilitate collaborative perinatal research and audit across the network.
- To provide timely information to support neonatal care.
- Continue to work with obstetric and midwifery colleagues in the delivery of safe care to the mother and the newborn.
- Continue to work with parents, ensuring that the decisions made by the SWMNN have parental input.
- Continue to work with the Commissioners (WMSC) to identify funding to correct the identified shortfalls in nursing and medical staffing.
- To ensure the new Department of Health standards for neonatal care are understood and endorsed by all stakeholders in the Network and beyond.
- The Network will be rewriting its strategy this year to reflect the changes of care from the Department of Health Taskforce which will be published in June 2009.



Alex – 2 years on!

Concluding Comments

As I write these concluding comments at the end of my first year as the Network Clinical Lead, I feel I have witnessed further advances in organisation and delivery of newborn care across the South West Midlands, in partnership with our 2 other West Midlands Newborn Networks (the Staffordshire, Shropshire and Black Country, and Central Newborn Networks). Vish Rasiah and Alex Philpott were appointed as Leads for audit and education and training respectively, and have been extremely active in their new posts. The number of special care beds has been increased at City, Heartlands and the Women's Hospitals, achieving one of the aims in 2007. Fewer babies are having to be cared for outside the Network, and the Transport Service has transformed the way we all work. We are delighted to see the developments taking place at Redditch under the helmsmanship of Andrew Short, and very much look forward to the future service. There are also developments at City and Sandwell, and at the Heart of England Trust, which will mean changes for all.

Surgical services are under development, with a very active Project Lead in Jenny Turton.

The Neonatal Taskforce will be driving improvement in care delivery across the country, with Newborn care standards due for publication by the summer. Hopefully many SWMNN members will have taken the opportunity to comment on the proposed standards via the BAPM website.

I am looking forward to working with Bill Martin in his role as Obstetric Lead for the Network. Bill is held in high regard by his obstetric colleagues and I am sure will be able to forge links with units within the Network to ensure that mothers and babies receive the complete package of care.

The National "High Quality Care for All" (Lord Darzi's NHS Next Stage review) – focuses on quality of care provision. Commissioners are now "driven" by the "World Class Commissioning" initiative, so that Commissioning of care is very much dependent on delivery of high quality care for all. Our commissioners are the West Midlands Specialist Services Agency (WMSSA). Mick O'Donnell has been an inspirational commissioner who has made it his business to visit neonatal units and talk to parents and healthcare professionals delivering services. There are few commissioners who have as firm an understanding of a service as he does. We are very sad to see him moving on but wish him all the very best in his new post at Worcestershire PCT. Melody Bridges has taken on many of his duties while a replacement is appointed. She has wasted no time in becoming extremely involved with the Network, and as Mick did, familiarise herself with parents and staff alike.

This year – we are given the financial incentive to meet the requirements of a quality improvement plan (QUIP). The focus is on ensuring improved data collection within all SWMNN units, so that we all have reliable and robust data collecting systems in place by 2010. We very

much hope that full implementation of the “Badger” system across the Network will achieve this aim. There has certainly been great enthusiasm and commitment of individuals and teams within all the units, so hope are high that we will all achieve this QUIP.

In the future, beyond 2010, funding will be linked to “Commissioning for quality and improvement” or “CQUINs”. We will have to deliver services which meet the standards as set by the National Neonatal Audit Project. All SWMNN units using the Badger system will now receive monthly returns – which will be shared with our commissioners telling us how we are performing compared to other units.

Our Parent Group has grown in number and we have been extremely fortunate to have Jo Bussey, Vicki Bailey, and Tony and Andrea Goan. Parent’s voices are increasingly heard and acted upon. Our hope is that more parents develop the confidence to become involved in shaping services of the future.



Alison Bedford Russell
Clinical Lead, SWMNN

Contacting the Network Office

The Network office provides a central base for receiving and distribution of information, and is always happy to help with any queries. The office is staffed full-time by our Executive Assistant, Teresa Meredith; who says:-

"I am lucky to have worked for the Network since April 2007, and I really enjoy my role. I work closely with Mary Passant and the other members of the Network team, and they are a pleasure to work with. Everyone is really friendly and helpful, and I admire the work which they do. It is such a worthwhile cause and helps so many babies and families, and I'm really proud to be associated with the Network.

I'm always pleased to be able to help, and enjoy being involved with staff from all Units in the Network, including the parent representatives. As well as the main office number, I can also be contacted on the mobile number if we are out at meetings or other events (numbers given below). The office is usually staffed Monday to Friday, full-time. Please feel free to give me a call if you have any queries at any time."



Teresa Meredith, Executive Assistant, SWMNN (left) with **Mary Passant**, Network Manager/Lead Nurse

Address and contact numbers (until Summer 2009):

The Network is hosted by Solihull Care Trust, and is currently based at the following address:

2ND FLOOR, MELL HOUSE
46 DRURY LANE
SOLIHULL
B91 3BU

Telephone: 0121 712 8366 (Mary Passant)
0121 712 8379 (Teresa Meredith)

Mobile: 07870249257

N.B New address from summer 2009 (date to be notified):

The Care Trust is moving offices in the summer of 2009, at which time the Network's new address will be:

3 THE GREEN,
STRATFORD RD,
SHIRLEY,
BIRMINGHAM
B90 4GW

Telephone numbers to be notified.

SOUTHERN WEST MIDLANDS NEWBORN NETWORK

Hereford, Worcester, Birmingham, Sandwell & Solihull

<http://www.newbornnetworks.org/southern>



SWMNN comprises:

Birmingham Woman's Neonatal Unit	(Level 3 Unit)
City Hospital Neonatal Unit	(Level 2 Unit)
Heartlands Neonatal Unit	(Level 3 Unit)
Good Hope Neonatal Unit	(Level 1 Unit)
Hereford Special Care Baby Unit	(Level 1 Unit)
Redditch Mother and Baby Unit	(Level 1 Unit)
Sandwell Hospital Special Care Unit	(Level 1 Unit)
Worcester Neonatal Unit	(Level 2 Unit)
Birmingham Children's Hospital Surgical Unit	

“Working together has empowered the Network to do more to support the improvement in care for the very youngest patients.”

Robert Bacon, Chair, SWMNN

