

Maternity Services Review Newsletter

Issue 1 - April 2010

Information for staff, public and other interested parties

Introduction

NHS Grampian is reviewing its maternity services to support front line staff to continue to improve the services they provide to women and families. Our staff can and do improve many things locally, but some bigger improvements need co-operation from other services or support and approval from the wider organisation to happen.

Why is the review being carried out?

We get many compliments about the high quality of our services and have made improvements which we are proud of. But maternity services in Grampian face a number of challenges, including:

- more babies being born each year, especially in Dr Gray's Hospital, Elgin and Aberdeen's Maternity Hospital
- women have an increasing range of healthcare and social needs to support
- the way services are managed across Grampian leads to different experiences in the services received by women and families
- providing safe services as close to home as possible in both rural/remote and urban areas
- using resources (staff, buildings & equipment) effectively, efficiently and fairly.

What do we want to achieve?

The review aims to help all our maternity services rise to these challenges and deliver the best possible care consistently, both now and in the future. That means we want care that continues to be safer, more effective and sustainable but we want far more than that. Care should be closer to home whenever

possible, and should support families to enjoy a natural pregnancy and birth in pleasant surroundings, free from medical intervention whenever possible, but with high quality specialist support when needed.

Ultimately we want to support families to give their babies the best possible start, providing a firm foundation for a long and healthy life.

What services will the review include?

The review will include all maternity services in Grampian that provide care to women and families planning a pregnancy; during pregnancy, labour and birth and for the first weeks after giving birth.

This includes services at:

- Aberdeen Maternity Hospital
- Dr Gray's Hospital, Elgin
- Birth Units in Aboyne, Banff, Fraserburgh and Peterhead
- All community midwifery services and homebirth services.

Who is leading the review?

A Leadership Group has been established to oversee the review process. A Core Group, acting on behalf of the Leadership Group, meets more frequently to plan the review and involves:

Elinor Smith (Nurse Director)
Jenny McNicol (Acting Head of Midwifery)
Peter Danielian (Consultant Obstetrician),
Tracy Humphrey (Consultant Midwife)
Paul Welford (Strategic Change Manager)
Laura Dodds (Public Involvement Manager)

How will the review be carried out?

Like other projects being undertaken by NHS Grampian, the maternity review will follow the lean method to promote Continuous Service Improvement. This helps people look critically at every step of the “patient pathway” to decide which steps add value, which steps are needed for administrative reasons, and which steps are unnecessary. Importantly, we are taking time to listen to families and staff to find out what they value most. People then agree what the service would look like in an ideal world before looking at what is achievable within the resources available.

This method of Continuous Service Improvement has a range of techniques and tools which can be used. An important technique that will be used in the maternity review is called a Value Stream Analysis (VSA). This is a facilitated event to be held in June, in which the steps above are carried out rigorously with staff and public representatives.

How long will the review take?

We are aware that whilst many people welcome the review, many staff also want it to happen quickly to avoid uncertainty lasting too long. The above VSA event in June will only take five days but the timescales for stages after that depends on what changes are proposed. For example, at the end of the event, there should be a range of agreed actions, which may range from small improvements which can begin quickly to bigger changes that may need more discussion and assessment of how feasible they are.

How can I be involved?

NHS Grampian will inform, engage and consult with staff, women and their families and the public about the strengths to build on and the most important improvements needed to achieve the best possible service.

Information about the review will be made available by:

- distributing newsletters at key stages of the review
- putting regular updates on the website www.nhsgrampian.org
- developing a stakeholder list to ensure that those affected by any changes are informed and consulted

We already have representatives for staff and the public on the Leadership Group. Other activities to involve people include:

- holding discussion groups in May with women and families to find out their views and experiences
- carrying out a survey so that women and families can suggest improvements. This will also be available to complete on the website below during May.
- holding staff briefings
- members of the public and staff participating in a 5 day event in June 2010.

How can I find out more?

Go to www.nhsgrampian.org and click on the “Involving You” tab and then “Current Consultations” link.

Email paul.welford@nhs.net to request to be added to the distribution list for newsletters and review updates.

This newsletter is also available in large print and on CD.

Other formats and languages can be supplied on request.

Maternity Services Strategic Review

Newsletter 2 – September 2010

Information for staff, public and other interested parties

Introduction

NHS Grampian is reviewing maternity services to ensure they deliver the best possible care now and in the future. The review aims to ensure care continues to be safer, more effective, sustainable and closer to home whenever possible; supporting families to enjoy a normal pregnancy and birth in pleasant surroundings, free from medical intervention whenever possible, but with access to high quality specialist support when needed. Ultimately, we want to support families to give their babies the best possible start in life.

Public Survey Results

In May, we asked women and families who were using, or had recently used, maternity services about their experiences. We asked people what was good about their care, what they would improve and how. Over 200 people took part – the results included a lot of praise for the care and treatment women had received but also suggestions for improvement across a range of areas.

Although aspects of clinical care, processes and systems were highlighted; much of the feedback related to how staff communicate with women and their partners throughout pregnancy, labour, birth and postnatal care.

Most women had good things to say about their care, but others had poor experiences to share. Importantly, women had very strong feelings across a range of experiences.

Several examples illustrated that a good experience, where women received support and reassurance from staff, built a sense of confidence and trust which carried through into the whole journey of care. However, a negative experience, no matter how small,

often led to a loss of confidence and heightened anxiety. To reduce the negative experiences, there is a need for the supportive, reassuring and sensitive approach used by many staff to be more consistently adopted.

Staff Survey Results

We also asked staff for their views about what was good and what and how they would improve the care they provide. Staff said they feel they generally work well as teams that co-ordinate care. For example, they strive to offer choice and continuity of care to women through community based teams, with easy access to highly specialist care when needed.

Community staff felt that it is possible to provide care close to home throughout pregnancy for many families; staff at Dr Gray's Hospital, Elgin, were proud of their high normal birth rate; Aberdeen Maternity Hospital (AMH) staff felt they were open to adopting new practices: a recent example was helping women affected by domestic abuse to say so confidentially.

Staff everywhere felt they would have more time to care for women and families if there was less duplication, better matching of tasks to skill levels of staff and more co-ordination of processes. Other improvements suggested included: giving more one to one care during labour in Aberdeen's Midwife Unit; fairer rotas for community staff and making sure services are in the right place.

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Review Event Success

We have just held an event to bring together a lot of the review's activity. This was postponed from June until August to allow key staff to attend. Over 50 people attended, including staff and public representatives from across Grampian. During the week we looked at problems in the service (like those above) before agreeing what an ideal service would look like. We looked at what parts of the ideal service were possible to achieve, despite the constraints facing the service such as funding. The main achievements were:

- a vision for future maternity services which will form the outline of NHS Grampian's next maternity strategy
- a range of changes to improve safety, efficiency and the experiences of women such as:
 - involving communities in parent support programmes
 - improving the quality of information we provide and making it available electronically
 - moving to a single telephone service for women needing urgent advice
 - consistent clinical management and clinical procedures across Grampian
 - matching antenatal clinics to areas of Grampian to reduce waiting times
 - reducing unnecessary interventions and improving the normal birth rate, for example, by increasing one to one care in labour at AMH and improving the information and support given to women after a caesarean section
 - better management of operating theatres so that emergency operations don't delay planned ones
- agreement for the need to assess how maternity services are set up -looking at what they provide, who provides it, and where they are located. This is to ensure services can cope with challenges such as rising birth numbers.

Feedback from people who attended the event was very encouraging with three quarters rating all aspects of the event as positive.

Actions and Timescales

At the event, we agreed when actions would happen and have started on many of them:

- A draft of the new strategy will go to NHS Grampian's October Board meeting. We will then consult on the strategy for six weeks with the aim of having it approved in December.
- The process to assess the service's ability to cope with challenges and meet the aspirations, will start after the strategy's approval. We plan to start this during the first quarter of 2011.
- A group is being set up to recommend new managerial arrangements (to ensure consistent procedures) from April 2011. In the meantime, the existing Clinical Management Board will ensure that consistency is more widely implemented immediately.
- Other work has started on improving information, normal birth rates and theatre management. Timescales for these will be agreed shortly.

Improving Length of Stay

Given the community midwife support available we know that many women stay in hospital longer after giving birth than they need to. We started work on tackling this problem before the event and have already shown success. Unnecessary long stays after normal births have been significantly reduced, and this has released beds and staff time for other women who need them more.

Involving Staff and the Public

NHS Grampian is committed to involving staff and the public when we are making changes to services. Involvement activity in the review so far has helped us achieve all of the above and we will continue to inform, engage and consult staff and the public using a range of ways throughout all stages of the review.

How can I find out more?

Go to www.nhsgrampian.org and click on the "Involving You" tab and then "Current Consultations" link. Email paul.welford@nhs.net to be added to the distribution list for review updates.

Maternity Services Strategic Review

Newsletter 3 – February 2011

Information for staff, public and other interested parties

Introduction

NHS Grampian is reviewing maternity services to ensure they deliver the best possible care now and in the future.

The review aims to ensure care continues to be safer, more effective, sustainable and closer to home whenever possible; supporting families to enjoy a normal pregnancy and birth in pleasant surroundings, free from medical intervention whenever possible, but with access to high quality specialist support when needed. Ultimately, we want to support families to give their babies the best possible start in life.

Improvement Event Summary

In the last newsletter, we explained what had been achieved at an improvement event involving staff and public representatives that took place in August 2010.

The main achievements were:

- a) a vision for future maternity services
- b) identifying a range of changes to improve safety and efficiency and the experiences of women
- c) agreement for the need to assess how maternity services are set up -looking at what they provide, who provides it, and where they are located.

The rest of this newsletter explains the progress we have made in these three areas.

a) New Strategy for Maternity Services

The vision that was agreed at the event was used as the outline to develop a new maternity strategy for NHS Grampian.

The vision of the strategy is one where all maternity related services and communities work closely together to support women and families give their children the best possible start in life.

The strategy lays out:

- the biggest improvements we will make over the next 5 years
- why those improvements are important
- the challenges to achieving them and the solutions that will help

The strategy was agreed after a 6 week consultation during the autumn. An excellent response was received with the views expressed having a real influence on the final document.

The NHS Grampian Board approved the NHS Grampian Maternity Strategy 2010-2015 at its meeting on 7 December 2010.

Based on some of the consultation feedback received, a summary version of the strategy is now being produced and will be available shortly.

To read the strategy and consultation report: www.nhsgrampian.org/maternityreview

b) Improvements to Services

Work has started on a wide number of changes required to improve services. Recent activities include:

- Making proposals for redesigning the antenatal clinic and scanning process at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital.
- Inviting women who have used our services, colleagues and other agencies along to a Spring Day event

on 2 March 2011 to plan ways of working more closely together.

- The Review Leadership Group agreeing to establish a Grampian wide Maternity Service Liaison Committee - a forum where staff and users of maternity services work together to improve services.

c) Option Appraisal

At its December meeting, NHS Grampian Board approved plans to conduct an option appraisal during the first quarter of 2011. The aim of the option appraisal is to make recommendations about how services should be configured i.e. what they should provide, who will provide them and where they should be located.

An Option Appraisal is a process that can be used when looking at a new way to provide services. Option Appraisals allow a wide number of views to be considered and as robust an assessment of options as possible to be created. Option Appraisals look at all the ways in which a service could be provided and the most promising options will then be assessed by comparing their benefits, risks and costs. The aim is to select the option with most benefit and least cost, keeping in mind the need to work within the resources available.

A series of workshops are being held during February and March 2011 and participants include a range of clinicians, managers and service user representatives. The Scottish Health Council, whose role is to ensure NHS Boards meet their patient focus and public involvement responsibilities, is also in attendance.

A report of the option appraisal will be written up and agreed by the Maternity Services Leadership Group, which includes service user representatives. The completed Option Appraisal will include a clear explanation of why the preferred option(s) was chosen and why other options weren't considered feasible. It will be presented to NHS Grampian's Board in June 2011. The Board

will then make a decision about the recommendation(s) of the Option Appraisal. If there is the potential for major service change a three month formal public consultation will be conducted.

Involving Staff and the Public

NHS Grampian is committed to involving staff and the public when we are making changes to services. Involvement activity in the review so far has helped us achieve all of the above and we will continue to inform, engage and consult staff and the public using a range of methods throughout the review.

How can I find out more?

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Maternity Services Strategic Review

Newsletter 4 – May 2011

Information for staff, public and other interested parties

Introduction

NHS Grampian is reviewing maternity services to ensure they deliver the best possible care now and in the future.

Why is the review being carried out?

We get many compliments about the high quality of our services and have made improvements which we are proud of. But maternity services in Grampian face a number of challenges, including:

- more babies being born each year
- women with an increasing range of healthcare and social needs to support
- the way services are managed across Grampian leads to different experiences in the services received by women and families
- providing safe services as close to home as possible in both rural/remote and urban areas
- using resources (staff, buildings & equipment) effectively, efficiently and fairly.

What do we want to achieve?

The review aims to help all our maternity services rise to these challenges and deliver the best possible care consistently, both now and in the future. That means we want care that continues to be safer, more effective and sustainable. Care should be closer to home whenever possible, and should support families to enjoy a natural pregnancy and birth in pleasant surroundings, free from medical intervention whenever possible, but with high quality specialist support when needed.

Ultimately we want to support families to give their babies the best possible start, providing a firm foundation for a long and healthy life.

Who is leading the review?

A Leadership Group has been established to oversee the review process. It meets once a month and its membership includes doctors, midwives, managers and public representatives.

What does the review cover?

The review is made up of 3 distinct but related aspects:

1. Agreeing and making changes to individual parts of the service to improve safety, efficiency and the experiences of women and families e.g. scanning, discharge from hospital.
2. Development of a new NHS Grampian maternity strategy for 2010-2015 which was approved by the NHS Grampian Board in December 2010
3. Carrying out an option appraisal. This newsletter explains what has happened during the option appraisal so far and what will happen next.

Option Appraisal

At its December meeting, NHS Grampian Board approved plans to conduct an option appraisal during the first quarter of 2011.

Why carry out an Option Appraisal?

The aim of the option appraisal is to come up with recommendations about how services should be set up i.e. what they should provide, who will provide them and where they should be located.

What is an Option Appraisal?

An Option Appraisal is a process that is often used when considering a new way to provide services. Option Appraisals allow a wide

number of views to be considered and as robust an assessment of options as possible to be created. Option Appraisals look at all the ways in which a service could be provided and the most promising options are then assessed by comparing their benefits, risks and costs. The aim is to select the option with most benefit for least cost. In other words, to come up with the best possible model for the maternity service that NHS Grampian can afford.

Who took part in the Option Appraisal?

Six workshops were held during February, March and April 2011 and participants included a range of clinicians (doctors and midwives), managers and 7 public representatives from across Grampian. An average of 30 people attended the workshops and the contribution of the public representatives was significant. The Scottish Health Council, whose role is to ensure NHS Boards meet their public involvement responsibilities, has also been in attendance.

What did the group do?

Participants were given information and the opportunity to ask questions about the current service and the difficulties staff and women and families experience because of the way the service is set up.

Participants then developed a list of detailed benefits which they would like to see any option (service model) deliver. The 9 benefits were then put in order of importance and given a weighting as to how important they are. The benefits are:

- Safe
- Sustainable
- Reduce health inequalities
- Improve health outcomes for women and babies
- Accessible
- Improve normality
- Women and family centred
- Manage interdependencies (with other NHS services and with partner organisations)
- Improved (physical) environment

Participants then developed and debated a wide range of options for the way the service could be set up. The different models covered pre/early pregnancy care, pregnancy, labour, birth and after pregnancy.

Participants then scored 12 models (11 potentially new as well as the current service) against how well they met the 9 benefits e.g. how safe they were likely to be. All the individual scores were added together resulting in a list of scored models. At the same time, work was done to cost the 11 potentially new models.

At the final workshop, it was agreed that the models that scored the highest would be written up in more detail and the costs further refined. This work has started and will be completed over the coming weeks.

There are many parts of the different models that will be similar for the way care is provided during pregnancy and after delivery and which participants agreed will improve the experiences of women and families. The main differences between the models are the number and type of maternity units for labour and birth across Grampian.

What happens next?

The report of the option appraisal which is currently being written up will need to be agreed by the Maternity Services Leadership Group. The report will explain the process that was followed and include a clear explanation of why the shortlisted options were chosen and why other options weren't considered feasible. The plan is to present this report to the NHS Grampian Board in August 2011.

The Board will then make a decision about the recommendation(s) of the Option Appraisal. The options will all affect the way maternity services may be delivered in the future. This means that, before the Board make a decision about which option they prefer, a three month formal public consultation will be conducted. This will give members of the public, staff and other interested parties the opportunity to give their views on the different options. The results of

the consultation will be presented to the Board for a decision. It is anticipated that this will be in December 2011.

Involving Staff and the Public

NHS Grampian is committed to involving staff and the public when we are considering making changes to services. Involvement activity in the review so far has helped us achieve all of the above and we will continue to inform, engage and consult staff throughout the review.

How can I find out more?

Go to www.nhsgrampian.org/maternityreview

Email nhsq.involve@nhs.net to be added to the distribution list for review updates.

This newsletter is also available in large print and on CD. Other formats and languages can be supplied on request.

Maternity Services Strategic Review

Newsletter 5 – September 2011

Information for staff, public and other interested parties

Introduction

NHS Grampian is carrying out a review of maternity services to ensure they deliver the best possible care now and in the future.

Maternity services are facing a number of challenges and the review aims to help services rise to these.

The review aims to ensure care continues to be safer, more effective, sustainable and closer to home whenever possible; supporting families to enjoy a normal pregnancy and birth in pleasant surroundings, free from medical intervention whenever possible, but with access to high quality specialist support when needed.

What does the review cover?

The review is made up of three main parts:

1. Maternity Strategy
2. Option Appraisal
3. Other Service Changes

1. NHS Grampian Maternity Strategy

The Maternity Strategy 2010-15 sets out a vision where all maternity related services, agencies and communities work closely together to support women and families to give their children the best possible start in life.

The strategy explains the biggest improvements the service want to make, the goals that have been set and the changes that need to happen to make the strategy a reality.

2. Option Appraisal

Option Appraisal is a process that is often used when considering possible new ways of providing services.

The maternity service Option Appraisal involved clinicians (doctors and midwives), managers and public representatives meeting to come up with different options for how services could be set up i.e. what they should provide, who will provide them and where they should be located.

The different options covered pre/early pregnancy care, pregnancy, labour, birth and post natal care.

Although the different options include similarities for changes to aspects of pregnancy and postnatal care, there are differences between the options in relation to the numbers and type of maternity units for labour and birth across Grampian.

The report of the Option Appraisal is currently being written up. The report will explain the process that was followed, outline proposed changes to the service and explain why the recommended option(s) were chosen.

The aim is to present the report to the NHS Grampian Board in October 2011. Before the Board make a decision about the future of maternity services, a three month formal public consultation will be conducted. This will give members of the public, staff and others the opportunity to give their views on the proposed changes. The results of the consultation will then be presented to the Board. It is anticipated that this will be in February 2012.

3. Other Service Changes

Following a service improvement event held in August 2010, a number of areas in the maternity service were identified with the aim of improving safety, efficiency and the

experiences of women and families. Five priority areas have been agreed and an update on progress is provided below:

How the Service is Managed

Currently Grampian maternity services are managed separately in Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Moray. However, many women will use services in more than one area.

Work is underway to introduce a single management structure which will help improve communication, standardise the service and reduce unnecessary duplication of work.

Setting up a Triage System

Currently, when women think they are in labour or have any concerns, they often phone the hospital; when that happens, they are not always given consistent advice and may be asked to come into hospital when they don't need to and may experience long waits when they do arrive.

Work is underway to set up a triage system which would mean women would phone one telephone number which would be staffed by midwives who will ensure women receive advice, care and treatment that is appropriate to their needs.

Improving Length of Stay

Up until recently, many women have stayed in hospital longer after giving birth than they need to. Unnecessary long stays after normal births have now been significantly reduced, and this has released beds and staff time for those women who do need to stay in hospital for longer. Routine transfer has now been introduced in all areas of Grampian.

Labour Ward & Theatre Review

In Aberdeen Maternity Hospital (AMH), the majority of births happen in the Labour Ward, Midwives Unit and Labour Ward Theatre.

Following feedback from staff and women, this was identified as an area where improvements could be made. The labour ward review aims to improve the level of one

to one care offered to women and to map a woman's journey into theatre to identify delays and problems which can be addressed to help provide a better experience during labour and birth.

Antenatal Clinics and Scanning

Currently, we know that some women can experience long delays in the scanning department at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital or have to attend on different days for scanning and clinic appointments.

Work is underway to change the way clinics are run to reduce waiting times and reduce unnecessary journeys for women and their partners.

Involving Staff and the Public

NHS Grampian is committed to involving staff and the public when considering making changes to services. Involvement activity in the review so far has helped us achieve all of the above and we will continue to inform, engage and consult staff throughout the review.

How can I find out more about the review?

Go to www.nhsgrampian.org/maternityreview

Email nhsgrampian@nhs.net to be added to the distribution list for review updates.

Email Jenny McNicol, Head of Midwifery and Project Lead for the Maternity Review, on j.mcnicol@nhs.net

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Maternity Services Strategic Review Newsletter

Issue 6 – July 2012

Information for staff, public and other interested parties

Introduction

A review of the NHS Grampian maternity service started in 2010, to support staff to continue to improve the quality of care they provide to women and families, both now and in the future.

Some parts of the review have already been agreed: a Maternity Strategy for 2010-15; the development of a single management structure and service improvement activities across Grampian.

However, this is not enough to cope with all of the challenges staff are facing and achieve the vision in the Strategy: a vision where all maternity related services, agencies and communities, work closely together to support women and families to give their children the best possible start in life.

What services are currently provided?

The maternity service provides care and treatment from a range of units and locations across Grampian including:

- Two Consultant Units: one in Aberdeen and one in Elgin.
- Two Midwife Led Units: one in Aberdeen and one in Peterhead.
- Two Birth Units: one in Aboyne and one in Fraserburgh (Banff Birth Unit has been closed since August 2009).
- A home birth service.
- Community midwifery teams.
- Scanning & screening services and community based consultant clinics.

Why is change needed?

We know staff aim to, and do, provide excellent care to women and families every day, but they face a number of challenges that can make this difficult:

- More babies being born each year.

- An increasing number of women with more complicated health and social needs who require more care and support than they currently receive.
- Differences in the number of women that community midwives have on their caseload (from 30-60 to 120-140 in different parts of Grampian).
- Not all women in Aberdeen Maternity Hospital receive one to one care during labour, unlike other parts of Grampian.
- Local midwives find it difficult to maintain their confidence in their labour and birth skills because of the small number of women giving birth in the units in Aboyne and Fraserburgh and at home. (In 2011, there were 49 births in Aboyne, 23 births in Fraserburgh and 49 home births in Grampian).
- The locations of the Aberdeenshire Units are not in the best place to provide safe and accessible care for as many women and families as possible.
- Some buildings and facilities, in particular Aberdeen Maternity Hospital, do not meet the standards for maternity and neonatal care in the 21st century.

How were the proposals for changing services developed?

When the Grampian NHS Board approved the Maternity Strategy in December 2010, it also agreed to an Option Appraisal to consider what bigger changes were needed.

The proposals were developed by a group of women, clinicians and managers who took part in the Option Appraisal in 2011. The group considered a number of different ways that the service could be provided. After a comprehensive process,

the overwhelming majority agreed that the proposals presented to the Grampian NHS Board in December 2011 were their preferred option.

What proposals were consulted on?

- Two Consultant Units: one in Aberdeen and one in Elgin.
- Three Community Maternity Units (CMUs): one in Aberdeen, one in Inverurie and one in Peterhead.
- A home birth service across Grampian.
- Integrated community maternity teams across Grampian.
- Scanning & screening services and community based consultant clinics.
- Longer term aim to relocate Aberdeen Maternity Hospital on the Foresterhill site.

The proposals aim to provide a service that is safer and more sustainable and which will better meet the needs of all women and families across Grampian as well as women from Orkney, Shetland, Highland and Tayside who need specialist care at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital.

The proposals also aim to ensure resources (staff, budget and buildings) are used more fairly, effectively and efficiently.

Formal Consultation

At its meeting in December 2011, the Board approved a formal consultation on the proposals and requested that the results were brought back to the Board for discussion in advance of a recommendation being submitted to the Scottish Government for Ministerial approval.

How many people responded to the consultation?

The consultation, which ran from 9 December 2011 to 22 March 2012, used a range of ways to gather people's views on the proposals.

It is estimated more than 500 people took part (some participants used more than one method to give their views):

- Nearly 300 survey responses
- 171 people attended public meetings
- 93 women (and partners) took part in discussion groups
- About 100 staff came to staff briefings
- 29 people sent an email or letter
- Presentations were made to over 30 groups and committees

After the consultation, the Scottish Health Council stated it was satisfied that NHS Grampian has followed the Scottish Government's guidance on involving local people in service change.

What did people say about the proposals?

There was a high level of support for the overall aims and many of the individual aspects of the proposals. There was also an increase in the understanding of the challenges facing the service, particularly pressures at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital. There were some aspects of the proposals where concern was expressed, further information or reassurance was requested, or views were split. These were:

- Birth Units closures.
- Proposed CMU locations.
- Relocation of clinics from Huntly to Inverurie.
- Transport and access issues.
- Home birth service.
- How improvements will be made at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital.
- Availability of capital funding (for buildings) and when changes would happen.

NHS Grampian Response

Having fully considered the results, the Maternity Services Review Team:

- Has provided further information and clarity to the main questions and

concerns raised during the consultation (in consultation report and final proposal paper).

- Will ensure the views, experiences and suggestions of women and families inform the wider maternity review (not subject to consultation) e.g. antenatal care and education; postnatal care (including how the routine transfer policy is implemented).
- Recognises that views were split about the proposed Birth Unit closures and the location of the proposed CMUs.
- Considers that the proposed service is the best way to meet the challenges facing the service currently, will better meet the needs of more women and families and help to reduce health inequalities.
- Recommends no substantial change to the proposals; this would mean closing two Birth Units (third Unit in Banff is not operational); developing the existing Midwife Led Units in Aberdeen and Peterhead into Community Maternity Units and developing a third CMU in Inverurie.
- Recognises that the future location and frequency of scanning & screening and consultant outreach clinics requires further work and the service plans to take a systematic approach to reviewing this.
- Acknowledges that if the proposals are approved, there will be a loss of local, highly valued labour and birth facilities in Aboyne and Fraserburgh.

Grampian NHS Board Meeting

The Grampian NHS Board met on 12 June 2012 to consider the proposals in light of the consultation, and agreed to submit the final proposals to the Scottish Government for Ministerial consideration.

The Board made the decision after considering the results of the consultation, noting the Scottish Health Council's

approval of the consultation process, and considering the full proposal paper.

The strength of feeling among some individuals and some individual communities was also recognised by the Board. The Board acknowledged that one of the substantial challenges of these proposals was balancing this local feeling with the need to provide an integrated service for Grampian as a whole.

Next Steps

The proposals are now with the Scottish Government for Ministerial consideration.

NHS Grampian will continue to involve women and staff in other parts of the maternity review that are not subject to Ministerial approval. If the proposals are approved, the service will ensure that women and families, local communities and staff are involved in their implementation.

How can I find out more?

This newsletter provides an outline of the consultation process, results and final proposals.

If you would like more detail (copies of the maternity strategy, the full consultation report, the finalised proposals and other information) go to:

www.nhsgrampian.org/maternityreview

If you would like to be added to the distribution list for review updates, email: nhsgrampian@nhs.net.

This newsletter is also available in large print and other formats and languages, upon request. Please call NHS Grampian Corporate Communications on Aberdeen (01224) 551116 or (01224) 552245.