

Supervisors of midwives: How they can help you

Find out how supervisors
of midwives can support
you and your midwife



Who are supervisors of midwives?

Supervisors of midwives (SoMs) help midwives provide safe care for you, your baby and your family. They make sure that the care you receive from your midwife is right for you and will meet your needs. They also make sure that it is given in the right place and by the right person.

SoMs are experienced midwives who have had additional training and education to enable them to help midwives provide the best quality midwifery care. They oversee the work of the midwives and meet with them regularly to ensure that high standards of care are provided. They also guide and support midwives in developing their skills and expertise.

All midwives must have a SoM. This includes those who work in independent or private maternity units and are self employed or independent midwives.





How they can help you

A SoM can offer guidance and support about any aspect of your midwifery care. This includes:

- creating a comfortable and confidential environment for you to discuss your care with your midwife (for example, whether you would prefer to have your baby at home, in a birthing centre or in a hospital)
- providing advice about the various options for care available to you and any support you may need during your pregnancy and birth
- monitoring the ability and behaviour of your midwife to ensure that she meets the standards set by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)
- listening to any concerns you may have about the level of care you have received from your midwife (for example, you may have concerns about your birthing experience) and then discussing these concerns with the midwife if appropriate.

How do I contact a supervisor of midwives?

You should be able to contact a SoM at any time of day or night by calling your local maternity unit.

If for any reason you are unable to speak to a SoM, you can ask the maternity unit to ask the local supervising authority midwifery officer (LSAMO) to call you back. LSAMOs are experienced practising midwives who also have a leadership role. They are responsible for appointing SoMs and can give advice on the supervision of midwives.

You can also contact your LSAMO directly if you wish.

If things go wrong

SoMs have a number of options available to them if things go wrong. They may decide to deal with the problem locally, at your hospital for example, or they may refer the midwife to the local supervising authority. Where a SoM may have serious concerns about the ability and behaviour of a midwife, they may refer that midwife to the NMC where their fitness to practise can be investigated.

Raising your concerns with a SoM does not prevent you making a formal complaint about a midwife to the Nursing and Midwifery Council directly.



About the Nursing and Midwifery Council

The NMC is the nursing and midwifery regulator for England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Islands. We exist to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the public. We set standards for education, training, conduct and performance, and maintain the register of nurses and midwives. We have clear and transparent processes to investigate and deal with nurses and midwives who fall short of the NMC standards.

Midwives must be registered with the NMC in order to work in the UK.

Useful information

Visit www.nmc-uk.org for more information about the NMC and how to report a midwife to the NMC

Visit www.nmc-uk.org/code for information about the standards you can expect from nurses and midwives

Visit www.nmc-uk.org/supervision for more information about supervision of midwives

Visit www.midwife.org.uk for more information on local supervising authority midwifery officers and supervisors of midwives

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following organisations who supported us in developing this publication.

- Doula UK
- Ealing LINK
- Stillbirth & neonatal death charity (Sands)
- Social Action for Health (SAfH)
- National Childbirth Trust (NCT)

Contact us

Whether you require information about our register, are making an official referral, or want to make a confidential enquiry, don't hesitate to contact us.

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